

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT REPORT ON POLICE USE OF FORCE 2019 AND 2020

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A Study by the Institute for Municipal  
and Regional Policy (IMRP) at UConn

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## Introduction

The fundamental duties of the police are to serve the community and respect the constitutional rights of all persons. To meet those mandates, the police are responsible for maintaining public order and safety, protecting persons and property, enforcing the law, and preventing, detecting, and investigating criminal activities. They are also tasked with responding to a wide range of social problems like substance abuse, homelessness, and mental illness and to resolve personal conflicts and quality-of-life issues.

Society permits the police to use force in the course of their duties. There is no single, universally agreed-upon definition of use of force by police. The International Association of Chiefs of Police describes the use of force as “the amount of effort required by police to compel compliance by an unwilling subject.”<sup>1</sup> Force by the police may be lethal resulting in the death or serious injury to another person or less-lethal that is not likely to cause serious physical injury or death.

In general terms, the use of force by a police officer may become necessary and is permitted under specific circumstances including in self-defense or in the defense of another individual or group. The use of force doctrine broadly establishes that police officers should use only the amount of force necessary to mitigate an incident, make an arrest, or protect themselves or others from physical injury or harm. No two situations are the same, nor are any two officers. In a potentially threatening situation, an officer will quickly tailor a response and apply force, if necessary.<sup>2</sup> The level of force used by a police officer, therefore, varies based on the situation. The use of force, specifically that which may cause physical injury or death, should be a police officer’s last option.

The consistent standard in research and public policy is that the appropriate amount of police force is that which is *reasonably necessary* to achieve citizen compliance. Determining what constitutes “reasonable” force, however, is not always an easy task since why and how force is applied must be determined in each incident.<sup>3</sup> There is an extensive body of scholarship that examined types of force police officers use, officers’ view of force, the use of excessive force, potential determinants of force, and the number of officers and citizens involved in force incidents. Despite learning a great deal from this research, a report by the National Institute of Justice found the research “does not address the transactional, or step-by-step unfolding, of police-public encounters. Was suspect resistance the result of police use of force, or did police use force after experiencing suspect resistance?”<sup>4</sup>

This is not to say that the use of force is never justified against a person suspected of committing a low-level or nonviolent crime or during a citizen contact incident if the person uses physical force or their use of physical force is imminent while an officer is trying to resolve an incident, arrest the person, or prevent

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<sup>1</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police, *Police Use of Force in America, 2011*, Alexandria, VA 2011

<sup>2</sup> National Institute of Justice, *Overview of Police Use of Force*, March 5, 2020

<sup>3</sup> William Terrill, *Police Use of Force: A Transactional Approach*, Justice Quarterly, March 2005

<sup>4</sup> National Institute of Justice, *Use of Force by Police: Overview of National and Local Data*, US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, NCJ 176330, 1999.

his or her escape<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, officers' apprehension of "imminent use of physical force" does not necessarily require an overt threat by the person involved.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In 2010, for example, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit held that it was objectively reasonable for police officers to "tase" two nonviolent protesters who were "not threatening the safety of any person with their behavior" and were suspected only of the "relatively minor crimes of trespass and resisting arrest." The protesters had chained themselves to a "several hundred-pound barrel drum" and police had "attempted to use other means to effect the arrest, none of which proved feasible, and used the taser only as a last resort, after warning plaintiffs and giving them a last opportunity to unchain themselves." *Crowell v. Kirkpatrick*, 400 Fed. Appx. 592 (2d Cir. 2010)

<sup>6</sup> For example, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit recently found that the use of force was "reasonable" when an officer "tased" a man who stood up after he had been told to kneel. The man was suspected of criminal activity and had just led police on a car chase. *MacLeod v. Town of Brattleboro*, 548 Fed.App. 6 (2d Cir.2013).

## Background

This is the first report of use-of-force incidents reported by state and municipal police departments in accordance with Public Act 19-90. The data reviewed in this report cover a two-year period, 2019 and 2020. This report was prepared for the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) by the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP), at the University of Connecticut (UConn) <sup>7</sup>.

In 2019, the Connecticut General Assembly passed, and Governor Lamont signed Public Act 19-90, *“An Act Concerning the Use of Force and Pursuits by Police and Increasing Police Accountability and Transparency.”* Section 1 of the public act required the OPM’s Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD) to collect and report data gathered on use-of-force incidents by police officers. Beginning in February 2020, and annually thereafter, each police department was required to submit data from use of force incidents to OPM CJPPD.

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy began collecting use-of-force incident reports on behalf of OPM CJPPD in 2020. Most reports submitted to the IMRP were submitted on paper forms and data from those reports were manually entered into an electronic database. The IMRP quickly discovered two significant problems with the reporting system established in the 2019 law. First, police departments in Connecticut use a variety of different forms for reporting use-of-force incidents. Public Act 19-90 did not require a standard method for collecting and reporting these incidents. The variation in reporting standards made it extremely challenging to collect universal data from all incidents. Second, departments used different standards to determine when an incident needed to be reported to the state. The law does not require that all use of force incidents be reported to the state, and the reporting requirement established in Public Act 19-90 resulted in numerous interpretations of when to forward those reports to the state.

In 2020, the IMRP and OPM CJPPD requested changes to the law to clarify when an incident needs to be reported to the state and to develop a uniform data collection system. Public Act 20-1, *An Act Concerning Police Accountability*, modified the 2019 law to standardize how police collect and report use of force incident information to the state. Beginning on July 1, 2022, all police departments in Connecticut are required to complete a standard use-of-force reporting form. The Police Officers Standards and Training Council (POSTC) was also granted the authority to provide clarification to departments on when an incident needs to be reported to the state. Departments have gone through extensive training on the new reporting system and the standard that should be applied when determining if an incident must be reported. It is anticipated that these changes will significantly improve the state’s ability to collect and analyze use-of-force data in the future.

The data reviewed in this report were compiled prior to any standard reporting system being developed. Public Act 19-90 required that each law enforcement unit report a record of any use-of-force incident that meets the following criteria:

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<sup>7</sup> Prior to October 1, 2021, the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy was located at Central CT State University.

1. When a police officer witnesses another police officer use what the witnessing officer objectively knows to be unreasonable, excessive, or illegal use of force or is otherwise aware of such force by another police officer.
2. When a police officer uses physical force that is likely to cause serious physical injury, as defined in C.G.S. 53a-3<sup>8</sup>, to another person or the death of another person, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Striking another person with an open or closed hand, elbow, knee, club, or baton
  - b. Kicking another person
  - c. Using pepper spray, or an electronic defense weapon, as defined in C.G.S. 53a-3<sup>9</sup>, or less lethal projectile on another person
  - d. Using a chokehold or other method of restraint applied to the neck area or that otherwise impedes the ability to breathe or restricts blood circulation to the brain of another person
  - e. Discharges a firearm, except during a training exercise or in the course of dispatching an animal.

In 2015, the FBI created the National Use of Force Data Collection to provide nationwide statistics on the use-of-force incidents involving police officers. The FBI began collecting the data in 2019, and participation by federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies was voluntary. The FBI database included the number of use-of-force incidents and basic information on the circumstances and the persons and police officers involved.

According to the FBI portal, [CDE: Use-of-Force \(cloud.gov\)](#), less than 10 percent of police departments in Connecticut submitted use of force data in 2019 and 2020 (11 and 12 departments respectively) to the voluntary statewide system. The FBI only releases the use of force data once 40 percent of the total police departments in a state participate in the program. Therefore, data for Connecticut is not currently available.

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<sup>8</sup> “Serious physical injury” means physical injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes serious disfigurement, serious impairment of health or serious loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.

<sup>9</sup> “Electronic Defense Weapon” means a weapon which by electronic impulse or current is capable of immobilizing a person temporarily but is not capable of inflicting death or serious physical injury, including a stun gun or other conductive energy devices.

## I. Police Authority to Use Force

The authority for police officers to use force against citizens is established in the United States Constitution, state law, and federal and state case law. Departmental policies and training requirements for police officers establish the guidelines for using force and specific weapons or tactics.

### I.A. CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

The Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution Bill of Rights sets the standard that government action be reasonable. The Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments protect against government infringements of personal liberty, including the infliction of physical injury. Constitutionally, reasonableness has substantive and procedural components. Two United States Supreme Court cases are especially relevant to the police use of force: *Graham v Connor* (490 U.S. 386, 1989) and *Tennessee v Garner* (471 U.S. 1, 1985).

In 1985, the Court ruled that the police shooting at unarmed or otherwise dangerous fleeing suspects as a method of stopping them from escaping was unconstitutional and therefore prohibited. The Court emphatically found the use of deadly force to prevent the escape of all felony suspects who do not pose immediate threats to the officer or others, whatever the circumstances, was unreasonable. While the Court later recognized that a suspect fleeing in a speeding car might pose an immediate threat and danger to others (*Scott v Harris*, 550 U.S. 372, 2007), it did not expand that to include an unarmed individual fleeing on foot.

In 1989, the United States Supreme Court established a broader standard of “objectively reasonable” for determining the legality of any use of force by a police officer, not just those cases specifically involving lethal force against a fleeing felony suspect. This assessment must be made from the perspective of a “reasonable” police officer on the scene, including what facts the officer knew at the time. The *Graham* decision did not overrule or limit the *Garner* prohibition, but the court set an “objective reasonableness” standard for evaluating excessive force allegations against police officers.

The *Graham* standard has since been criticized as too vague and indeterminate to curb use of force by police. It’s viewed as establishing broad guidelines while failing to provide specific guidance to law enforcement agencies on the best types of use-of-force policies. This has resulted in many states and agencies going beyond the minimum standard established in *Graham v Connor*.

### I.B. CONNECTICUT STATE LAW

Deadly physical force is statutorily defined (CGS §53a-3(5)) as physical force that can be reasonably expected to cause death or serious physical injury. Serious physical injury is defined as (CGS §53a-3(4)) physical injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes serious disfigurement, serious impairment of health, or serious loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.



Connecticut state law (CGS §53a-22(c)) authorizes police officers to use deadly physical force only when they reasonably believe it is necessary to:

- defend themselves or protect another person from the use of imminent deadly physical force by a third person;
- arrest a person they reasonably believe has committed or attempted to commit a crime that involved the infliction of serious physical injury; or
- to prevent the escape from custody of a person they reasonably believe has committed such a felony that involved death or the infliction of serious physical injury.

Police officers are required to provide a warning, when feasible, of their intent to use deadly physical force.

Recently, the circumstances under which police officers are justified in using deadly physical force were narrowed (Public Acts 20-1 and 21-4). Police officers are no longer authorized to use deadly physical force against another person for **threatened** infliction of serious physical injury.

Police officers engaged in a motor vehicle pursuit are prohibited from discharging a firearm into or at a fleeing vehicle unless the officer has a reasonable belief that there is an imminent threat of death to the officer or another person posed by the fleeing vehicle or an occupant in the vehicle. Police officers may not intentionally position themselves in front of a fleeing vehicle unless such action is a tactic approved by the employing police department.

**Reasonableness Standard.** Pursuant to Connecticut law (CGS §53a-22(a)), a reasonable belief that a person has committed an offense means a reasonable belief in facts or circumstances which, if true, would constitute an offense. The factors to be considered when determining whether a police officer's use of deadly physical force was reasonable include whether the:

- person upon whom deadly physical force was used possessed or appeared to possess a deadly weapon;<sup>10</sup>
- officer engaged in reasonable de-escalation measures before using deadly physical force; and
- officer's unreasonable conduct led to an increased risk of the situation that preceded the use of deadly physical force.

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<sup>10</sup> Connecticut law (CGS §53a-3) defines deadly weapon as any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot can be fired. A dangerous instrument is defined as any instrument, article, or substance which, under the circumstances is used, attempted or threatened to be used, can cause death or serious physical injury, and can include a vehicle. Dangerous weapons are specifically defined as (CGS §53-206) as (1) slung shot, (2) air rifle, (3) BB gun, (4) blackjack, (5) sand bag, (6) metal or brass knuckles, (7) dirk knife, switch blade, or other knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade over one and one-half inches in length, (8) a stiletto or other knife with an edged portion of the blade over four inches in length, (9) any martial arts weapon, (10) any electronic defense weapon, and (11) any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument.

For an officer's use of deadly physical force to be justified specific conditions must be met, and the officers' actions must be objectively reasonable given the circumstances at that time (*State v Smith*, 73 Conn. App. 173, 2002). A police officer must:

- reasonably determine that there are no available reasonable alternatives to the use of deadly physical force;
- reasonably believe that the force employed creates no unreasonable risk of injury to a third person; and
- to prevent an escape, reasonably believe the escaping person poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to others.

### **I.C. CONNECTICUT POLICE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING COUNCIL POLICY**

The POSTC use of force policy states, "a peaceful resolution is the best, most desired outcome in all situations" between the police and the public, and "police officers must use only the minimum level of force necessary to achieve a lawful purpose." Any use of force by a police officer must be reasonable, proportionate to the threat, and employed in a manner consistent with the POSTC policy. (Refer to Appendix A for a copy of POSTC General Notice 21-5, Use of Force Policy.)

POSTC provides guidance and training on the use of lethal and less-lethal force based on the United States Supreme Court and Connecticut Supreme Court case law and Connecticut state law. Police officers receive pre-and in-service training on the conditions, criteria, and decision-making in which the use of force may be allowed. Officers are trained in the use of strategies and techniques to reduce the intensity of or stabilize a conflict of a potentially volatile situation (de-escalation techniques) and the use of tactics and weapons including:

- verbal commands,
- physical controls tactics such as pressure point, control hold, leg sweeps, kicks, and takedown,
- chemical munitions,
- oleoresin capsicum spray ("pepper spray"),
- electronic defense weapon ("taser"),
- canine,
- impact weapon and baton,
- Less lethal projectile (e.g., rubber, sandbag or foam rounds, tear gas, flash-bang devices, etc.), and
- firearms.

POSTC policy requires the use of force by a police officer must be "necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the threat encountered" and only be used to achieve a lawful purpose. An officer should consider the following when deciding to use force:

- immediacy of the threat;
- nature and severity of the crime or circumstances;
- nature and duration of actions taken by the person;
- whether the person is actively resisting being taken into custody;

- whether the subject is attempting to evade arrest and escape;
- number of persons involved in comparison to the number of officers on the scene;
- physical condition of the person in comparison to the officer;
- person's history of violence, if known;
- presence of a hostile crowd or agitators; and/or
- whether the person is under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the extent it would affect their tolerance towards pain.

The POSTC policy allows that police officers may use proportionate physical force when necessary and reasonable to:

- gain control of a person who poses an imminent risk to the officer, themselves, or a third person;
- effect an arrest of a person whom the officer reasonably believes to have committed an offense or pursuant to a warrant;
- prevent the escape from custody of a person; or
- gain compliance to a lawful order.

Police officers are prohibited from using force against (1) a person whose health, age, physical condition, or circumstances make it likely that serious physical injury will result or (2) any handcuffed or restrained person except to counter active resistance, prevent escape, prevent the person from sustaining injury, or prevent the person from injuring another. They may not use physical force in retaliation.

Police officers are generally prohibited from employing the following tactics unless the circumstances are such that deadly force may be deemed reasonable and necessary: (1) intentional use of a chokehold, neck restraint, or standing on a person's neck; (2) intentional strikes to the head, neck, spine, or sternum with an impact weapon, improvised impact weapon, knee, kick, or hard object, or striking the head against a hard surface; and (3) intentional discharge of a less-lethal launcher projectile at close range to the head, neck, or chest.

Pursuant to POSTC policy, police officers should employ de-escalation techniques to resolve an intensifying incident and use force as a last resort but should not delay taking protective actions that are immediately necessary or to place themselves or others at imminent risk of harm. De-escalation techniques include but are not limited to: using a non-threatening, non-confrontational tone of voice, listening carefully and expressing empathy, slowing down the pace of an incident, waiting to take action until the threat subsides, placing additional space or barriers between the officer and a person, permitting a person to safely move about, permitting a person to ask questions or engage in conversation, tactical repositioning or seeking cover, and requesting additional resources

Police officers have a duty to intervene and attempt to stop any other officer, regardless of rank or department, using force that is excessive, unreasonable, or illegal. Officers are required to report all incidents of excessive, unreasonable, or illegal force. This does not apply to officers acting in an undercover capacity if intervening will significantly compromise their safety or the safety of another. Any officer who witnessed and failed to intervene in an incident involving excessive, unreasonable, or illegal use of force may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution for the actions taken by the offending officer.

A police officer may use less lethal force when reasonable and necessary to overcome the use or imminent use of force against an officer or another person. The level of less-lethal force used must be proportionate to the perceived or existing threat. Less lethal force may not be used against any person engaged in passive resistance.

## II. Data Limitations

It is acknowledged at the outset that the quality of data reviewed is insufficient, and a significant number of police departments failed to report data. It was difficult to interpret the data to provide a context to review the nuanced and complex issue of the police use of force. OPM and POSTC have worked to address reporting issues identified in this report. It is believed that future reports will provide a better understanding of when and why the police use force against citizens and if public policy and police training can be established or improved to provide clearer guidance to police officers. This section outlined some of the limitations of the current dataset.

Most importantly, there was no standardized use-of-force data collection form or consistent guidelines for police departments to use to define the use-of-force incidents to be reported during the reporting period of 2019 and 2020. Some police departments submitted one form per incident even if multiple police officers were involved while others submitted a form for each officer involved in an incident.

The statutory definitions of less-than-lethal force are open to interpretation among police departments. Identifying when an incident should be submitted to OPM was determined at the department level resulting in some inconsistencies. Therefore, the data cannot be used to compare police departments even if the characteristics of the incidents and uses of force appear to be similar. Any analysis must begin with the establishment of standard definitions of the levels of force and uniform data sources.<sup>11</sup> This report relied upon the definitions of Connecticut law and POSTC policy.

The data do not allow for identification or analysis of the sequence of actions taken by police officers and other persons during an incident. The complexities, decision-making, and reactions of all officers and persons involved are not known.

Perhaps due to the lack of standardization and guidance, many police departments failed to submit data in either 2019 or 2020. It appears from a review of submitted data that some reporting police departments may not have reported all incidents in which force was used. It seems likely that the number of reportable use-of-force incidents may be far greater than what is represented in the existing dataset. This may most likely be due to the lack of standard definitions of which incidents to report.

Given these inconsistent reporting practices and data limitations, this report provides a summary of the limited descriptive statistics gathered from the data that were reported. The data were not sufficient to complete a thorough analysis. Furthermore, a comprehensive analysis would require more than two years of data to identify and explain causal relationships and trends in the use of force by police.

A concern raised by researchers in reviewing the 2019 and 2020 data was that there was no independent evaluation of compliance with departmental or POSTC policies. While police supervisors are required to evaluate and report whether a use-of-force incident was reasonable and necessary, the data used for this report did not include information on the conclusions a supervisor made.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid

While the statute requires reporting of any injury suffered by a person as a result of any use-of-force action by a police officer, the submitted data do not provide information on the condition of the person prior to the police use of force specified. The form does not indicate whether reported injuries existed at the time of officers' arrival at the scene, were inflicted by third parties or by the person themselves or resulted from officers' application of force. Furthermore, while police policy generally mandates medical services be provided on scene or transportation to the hospital for persons sustaining injury as a result of police action, the data do not indicate whether persons involved in force incidents were transported to a hospital or received medical services on scene.

Evaluation of compliance with state statute and the POSTC policy was also limited by the absence of data on the crimes a person was suspected of or charged with or the sequence of actions and resistance on scene. In accordance with state law and the Fourth Amendment, the POSTC policy noted that the justification of any use of force depends in part on the severity of the crime suspected and the threat posed by the suspect. The data provide only basic information on what, if any, crime was cited and the sequence or escalation of actions during the incident.

Furthermore, many departments completed and submitted the use-of-force data all at once and close to the annual reporting deadline. This practice increases the likelihood that some force incidents may have been missed and not reported to OPM and that all necessary and relevant information was not submitted.

A problem with data collection methods on an organizationally sensitive and controversial act, such as the use of force by police, underscores the need for reliable, valid, and standardized measures. It is difficult to obtain information on the use of force and the data that are available are difficult to interpret.<sup>12</sup> Comprehensive research on the use of force by police utilized various data collection methods, including observational studies, surveys, reviews of citizen complaints, assessments of arrests with information from both officers and arrestees, and the aggregation of official agency data. Each method has strengths and weaknesses, but it is generally agreed that a variety of methods be used to best understand the factors and nuances that go into officers' decision-making, reactions, and practices when using force.

Like crime, not all uses of force are reported by the person upon whom the force was used. Some incidents are simply not reported by police officers for a variety of reasons. Some incidents are not considered "force" by police officers or departments but may be considered force if viewed by others. It is important to consider this when analyzing "all" use of force incidents by police statewide and over a specific period.

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<sup>12</sup> Pate and Fridell, 1993, Adams, 1995 and Klockars, 1995)

### III. Summary of Data Findings

This report reviews use-of-force data for a two-year period, 2019 and 2020. Data from only 55 municipal police departments, four special police departments, and the Connecticut State Police were available at the time the analysis was conducted and was included in this report<sup>13</sup>. The analysis included data from 41 departments in 2019 and 38 in 2020<sup>14</sup>. In 2019, there were 31 departments that reported that they had no incidents of force that met the criteria for reporting and a total of 9 police departments did not submit any information per the statute. In 2020, there were 24 departments that reported that they had no incidents of force that met the criteria for reporting and a total of 11 police departments did not submit any information per the statute. There was no standardized reporting form or process for the submission of use-of-force data in 2019 or 2020.

To provide context, there are approximately 7,250 sworn police officers in municipal, state, tribal, and university departments in Connecticut. This includes sworn police officers of all ranks. The majority are officers assigned to patrol, investigations, and supervisory positions that require regular contact with the public. According to the 2020 census, Connecticut's population is more than 3.6 million residents.

For this report, the database included reports for 1,261 incidents (626 incidents in 2019 and 635 incidents in 2020) where force was used by 60 police departments. All reported incidents involved 1,315 people (651 people in 2019 and 664 people in 2020)<sup>15</sup>. IMRP researchers examined all the use of force reports submitted to OPM by January 2022 and compiled a database containing all the information included in the reports. This database was the basis for the summary of the descriptive statistics on the uses of force by police.

The average number of submitted reports per department was 21. Of the 60 municipal, state, and special police departments that submitted incidents, 26 reported fewer than five incidents, 17 reported between five and 10 incidents, 13 reported between 11 and 100 incidents, and four departments reported more than 100 incidents. Departments that submitted more than 10 use of force incident reports accounted for 86% of all reported incidents. The 10 departments that submitted the most reports accounted for 76% of the statewide incidents that were reported. The top five departments are identified in Table 1. Three of the five departments with the largest number of reported use-of-force incidents also have the largest populations in Connecticut. Additionally, the Connecticut State Police is the largest police agency in Connecticut.

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<sup>13</sup> 22 departments in 2019 and 34 departments in 2020 provided use-of-force information after the analysis was completed. All records have been recorded in the state database.

<sup>14</sup> Many of the same departments submitted use-of-force incidents in both 2019 and 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Some incidents may involve more than one person.

Table 1: Total Number of Reports Submitted for 2019 and 2020 Combined (Top 5 Departments)

Department Name	Number of Reported Incidents	% Statewide Total	Use of Force per 1,000 Arrests
Bridgeport	264	20.9%	35.4
Waterbury	229	18.2%	19.8
Connecticut State Police	181	14.3%	11.1
New Haven	161	12.8%	11.4
Hartford	91	7.2%	6.5

The use-of-force reports submitted indicated wide variability in the number of incidents reported in towns of similar size. Given the inconsistent reporting practices, cross-departmental comparisons cannot be made, and any comparison must be viewed with great caution. Some departments reported incidents involving force that may not have been reported by other departments. Some departments completed reports in real-time while others completed them all at the end of the year, close to the deadline. It cannot be assumed, then, that submission of a larger number of reports necessarily indicated a larger number of reportable incidents of use of force by officers or a larger number of persons involved in force incidents. Cross-departmental comparisons are further complicated by the absence of information from many departments.

### III.A. USE OF FORCE COMPARED TO ARRESTS AND OTHER CITIZEN CONTACTS

In Connecticut, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) and OPM have responsibilities to regularly collect data and report annually on crime, arrests, traffic stops, and use of force by police. OPM's Division of Criminal Justice Policy and Planning also may conduct research on police-related topics as directed by the state legislature or governor. For the purposes of this report, crime and arrest data are presented to provide background and context to examine the use of force data for 2019 and 2020.

The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) has been collecting arrest data from state, county, and municipal police departments throughout the country since the early 1900s. This has evolved into the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Until January 1, 2021, crime data was reported through the UCR program. The UCR program is an aggregate monthly tally of crimes by each police department. Effective January 1, 2021, the FBI began to require reporting through the more detailed NIBRS system. NIBRS is designed to identify when and where crime takes place, what form it takes, and the characteristics of its victims and perpetrators.

The Connecticut State Police, within DESPP, operates the repository for arrest data from all police departments in the state. These data are submitted to the FBI to meet the UCR or NIBRS requirements. DESPP publishes an annual report of crime and arrest trends, *Crime in Connecticut*. Most historical crime data referenced in this report relies on data submitted through the UCR program. Future comparisons will be made with NIBRS data.

The historical crime data in Connecticut shows a crime rate that has been steadily decreasing for the past three decades. Additionally, statewide arrests were significantly impacted in 2020, likely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There were approximately 92,000 arrests in 2019 and 68,000 arrests in 2020.



According to the annual *Connecticut Traffic Stop Data Analysis and Findings Report*, published by the IMRP, there were approximately 510,000 traffic stops in 2019 and 240,000 traffic stops in 2020. Most traffic stops do not result in a custodial arrest.

Together, police responded to 160,000 arrest incidents and 750,000 traffic stops during the two-year period. That is a total of 910,000 incidents of contact between a police officer and a citizen.

It is important to consider that the number of incidents in which police respond is actually much higher. Not all incidents involve an active crime or are initiated as a traffic stop. The police respond to and attempt to aid and refer for a wide range of social problems like substance abuse, homelessness, and mental illness, and resolving personal conflicts and quality of life issues, and civil issues like landlord and tenant disputes, minor motor vehicle accidents, school-based issues, and other community service issues. Data on these incidents are not collected as are arrest and traffic stop data. There is currently not a good way to know the actual number of community contact incidents; individual police departments may have this data, but it is not collected on a statewide level. Given this, it can be estimated that the total number of police-and-citizen contacts each year is well over one million.

The number of reported use-of-force incidents is just more than one percent in 2019 and 2020 (1.1% in 2019 and 1.4% in 2020) of arrests in Connecticut<sup>16</sup>. When the number of arrests and traffic stop incidents are included to better understand general police contact, the rate of force incidents is even lower. And if the total number of police-community contacts was available, the rate would be lower still. However, the rate of force appears to have increased in 2020, when police-citizen encounters decreased, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For those agencies that reported use of force incidents, the rate of force per 100 arrests was calculated using Connecticut arrest data, and the use of force report data. In 2019 and 2020, on average there were two incidents of force reported per 100 arrests. The rate of force used per 100 arrests for each department can be found in Appendix C.

Although the variations are small, based on population size in 2019, the police departments that patrol communities with less than 50,000 people had a higher rate of force (1.45 per 100 arrests) than those that patrol communities larger than 50,000 people (0.93 per 100 arrests). In 2020, the use of force rate was almost the same for communities with less than 50,000 people (1.45 per 100 arrests) and communities with more than 50,000 people (1.43 per 100 arrests). The rate of force appears to have increased between 2019 and 2020 for those communities with more than 50,000 people. This is likely the result of two additional communities with populations greater than 100,000 reporting use of force incidents in 2020.

### **III.B. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR REPORTED USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS**

The largest percentage of reported use-of-force incidents involved individuals identified as Black (38%), approximately 33 percent were identified as White, and 20 percent as Hispanic. When compared to population demographics in Connecticut, this would suggest a significant racial and ethnic disparity in the application of force. However, if compared to arrest data, the disparity shrinks substantially. In 2019 and 2020, approximately 34 percent of the people arrested were Black, 21 percent were Hispanic, and 44 percent were White. A disparity still appears to exist in reported incidents of force involving Black

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<sup>16</sup> Arrest data was only used for the departments that reported use-of-force incidents in 2019 and 2020. The departments that reported force incidents in 2019 accounted for 56,707 arrests and 45,377 arrests in 2020.

individuals when compared to available arrest data. Table 2 presents race and ethnicity demographic data on persons who reported being involved in a use of force incident in 2019 and 2020.

Table 2: Use of Force Subject Demographics by Race and Ethnicity (2019 and 2020)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>%</b>
White	234	203	437	33%
Black	225	281	506	38%
Other	6	7	13	1%
Hispanic	122	146	268	20%
Unknown	64	27	91	7%

Females were much less likely to be involved in a reported incident of force than were males. The vast majority (87%) of persons involved in force incidents were males. Table 4 presents gender demographic data on persons who reported being involved in a use of force incident in 2019 and 2020.

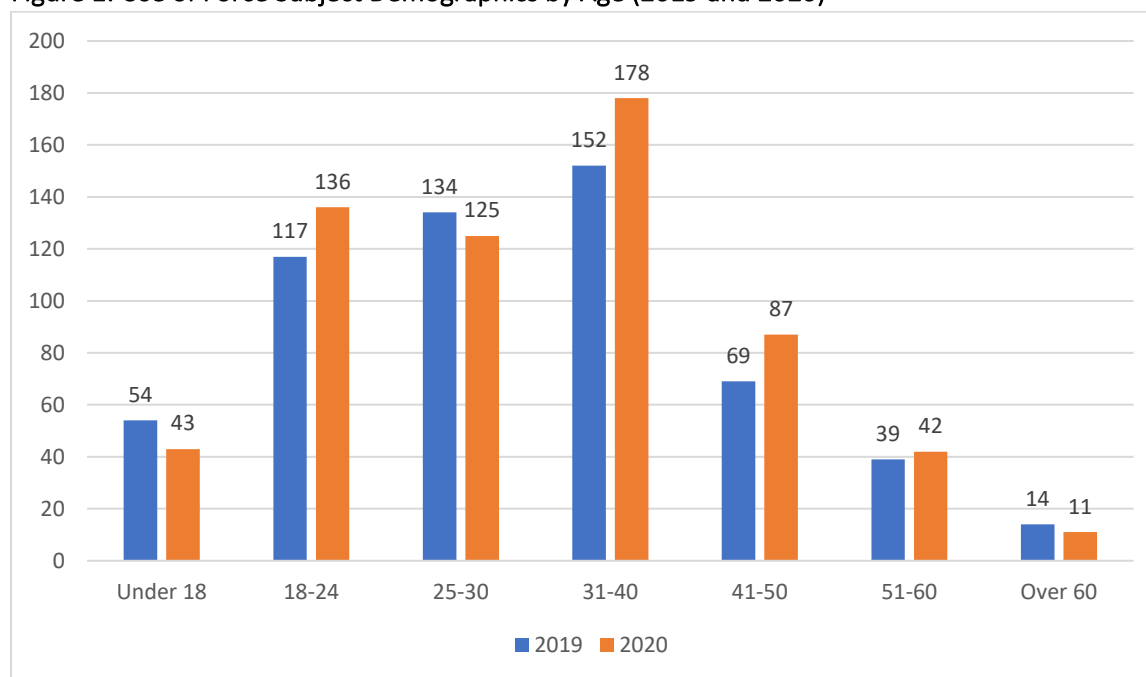
Table 3: Use of Force Subject Demographics by Gender (2019 and 2020)

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	562	587	1,149	87%
Female	75	74	149	11%
Unknown	14	3	17	1%

Police recorded the age of 1,201 of the 1,315 subjects involved in use of force incidents (579 subjects in 2019 and 622 subjects in 2020). In 2019, there were 54 persons under 18 reported to be involved in a use of force incident and in 2020 there were 43 persons under 18. During the same time, of the departments that reported force incidents, there were 7,173 arrests of a person under 18 (1.3% of these arrests resulted in force). A person under the age of 18 accounted for 8 percent of all reported use of force incidents and 7 percent of all statewide arrests for those departments that reported force incidents. Of the 97 persons under 18 involved in a use of force incident in 2019 and 2020 combined, 47 were Black (48%), 16 were White (16%), 26 were Hispanic (27%) and 8 were unknown (8%). The youngest person reported to be involved in a use of force incident in both calendar years was 8 years of age. Almost a quarter (24 of 97) people under 18 who were involved in use of force incidents were reported as “emotionally disturbed” or “suicidal.”

Forty-three percent of the subjects involved in a use of force incident were between the ages of 18 and 30. For comparison, only 36 percent of those arrested were between 18 and 30 years old. Approximately 27 percent of subjects involved in a use of force incident were between the ages of 31 and 40 (28% of arrests were of people between 31 and 40). Lastly, only 22 percent of use of force incidents involved a person over the age of 40 (29% of arrests were of people over 40). Four persons 65 years old or older were involved in a use of force incident in 2019 and 2 were involved in 2020. Of these 6 people, all were male, 5 were White, and the race/ethnicity was not recorded for one person. Figure 1 presents age demographic data on persons who reported being involved in a use of force incident in 2019 and 2020.

Figure 1: Use of Force Subject Demographics by Age (2019 and 2020)



### III.C. TYPE OF FORCE APPLIED DURING USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS

This section describes the type of force used on subjects as reported by the police. The use of force may be justified when an officer reasonably believes that such use of force is necessary to:

- arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person reasonably believed to have committed a crime; or
- defend the officer or another person from the suspect’s use or imminent use of physical force during an arrest or to prevent an escape.

Moreover, as the POSTC policy notes, “the severity of the crime that the officer believed the suspect to have committed or be committing” is a factor in determining whether a use of force is reasonable.

This is not to say that the use of force is never justified against a person suspected of committing a low-level or nonviolent crime if the person uses physical force or their use of physical force is imminent while an officer is trying to arrest the person or prevent his or her escape<sup>17</sup>. Moreover, officers’ apprehension of “imminent use of physical force” does not necessarily require an overt threat by the person involved.<sup>18</sup>

To assess whether the application of force complied with constitutional parameters, state law, and/or the POSTC policy, researchers would need to know the offense(s) the officer believed the person to have

<sup>17</sup> In 2010, for example, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit held that it was objectively reasonable for police officers to tase two nonviolent protesters who were “not threatening the safety of any person with their behavior” and were suspected only of the “relatively minor crimes of trespass and resisting arrest.” The protesters had chained themselves to a “several hundred-pound barrel drum” and police had “attempted to use other means to effect the arrest, none of which proved feasible, and used the taser only as a last resort, after warning Plaintiffs and giving them a last opportunity to unchain themselves.” *Crowell v. Kirkpatrick*, 400 Fed. Appx. 592 (2d Cir. 2010)

<sup>18</sup> For example, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit recently found that the use of force was “reasonable” when an officer tased a man who stood up after he had been told to kneel. The man was suspected of criminal activity and had just led police on a car chase. *MacLeod v. Town of Brattleboro*, 548 Fed.App. 6 (2d Cir.2013).

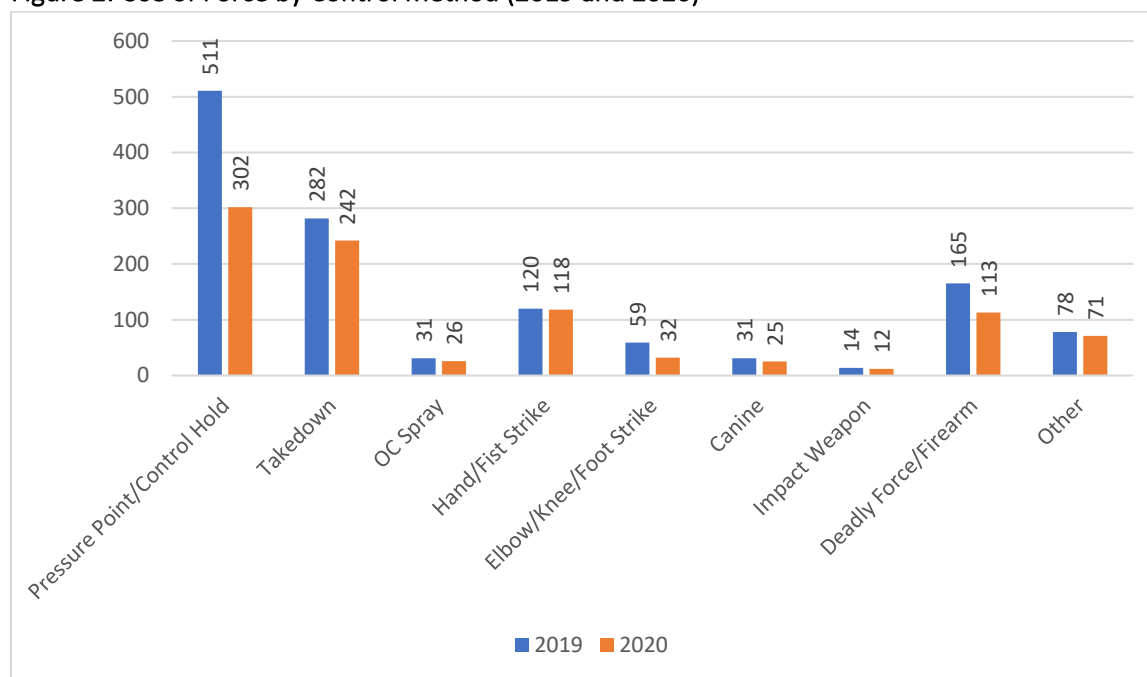
committed, whether an arrest was made, and the person's behavior while interacting with them. Unfortunately, because the use of force reports did not provide any information about offenses suspected or charged and provide scant information about the behavior of persons involved in reported use of force incidents, this dataset cannot be used to answer this question.

When police complete a use-of-force report, they are required to report all control methods used during an incident. There are 13 control method categories listed on a standard use of force form including:

1. Verbal Commands
2. Pressure Point/Control Hold
3. Chokehold/Restraint to the neck area
4. Takedown
5. Chemical Munitions
6. OC Spray
7. Hand/Fist strike
8. Elbow/Knee/Foot strike
9. Electronic Defense Weapon
10. Canine
11. Impact Weapon/Baton
12. Less Lethal Projectile
13. Deadly Force/Firearm

Many incidents where force is used also involve more than one officer. In 2019, there were 1,058 officers that used force on 650 subjects. In 2020, there were 977 officers that used force on 663 subjects. During the two combined years, 65 percent of incidents involved only one officer, 21 percent involved two officers, 9 percent involved three officers, and 4 percent involved more than three officers. For the purposes of this analysis, we will break down the control methods used by officers, not incidents. In other words, if 20 officers use deadly force, that does not mean that deadly force was applied to 20 individuals. Figure 2 presents the application of force by control method for both 2019 and 2020.

Figure 2: Use of Force by Control Method (2019 and 2020)



Verbal commands were used in the vast majority of all incidents. Researchers did not include some control methods in the chart above because they were reported being used so infrequently. For example, a chokehold or restraint to the neck area was reported 10 times in two years (4 in 2019 and 6 in 2020), chemical munition was only reported being used once in 2020, and a less lethal projectile was only used three times in two years (2 in 2019 and 1 in 2020).

A firearm was displayed by at least 16 percent of officers in 2019 and 12 percent of officers in 2020. However, in most cases, the firearm was displayed and pointed at a subject, but not discharged. The data does not do a good job of distinguishing between a firearm display and discharging a firearm. Having said this, the Division of Criminal Justice was required by law to investigate all incidents where a firearm was discharged by a police officer in both 2019 and 2020. In 2019, the division investigated seven<sup>19</sup> deadly use of force incidents that resulted in the death of six people, and in 2020 they investigated nine incidents that resulted in the death of five people. Therefore, it may be assumed that most cases involving a firearm, only involved the display of that firearm.

An electronic defense weapon (EDW), commonly referred to as a “taser”, was also reported as being used in both calendar years. The EDW can be used in two different ways: as a warning, or to deliver an electric shock. To warn a person, an officer may activate the laser sights or warning arc or may simply un-holster the weapon without activating it. Two modes of taser operation administer an electric shock to the subject (that is, “tase” them): drive-stun and cartridge deployment.

In 2019, a taser was reported as being used in a use of force incident by 268 officers and in 2020 it was reported by 381 officers. Of the combined 649 officers who deployed their taser in either 2019 or 2020, 40 percent involved the officer using the taser in cartridge or drive-stun mode. 33 percent of officers who

<sup>19</sup> One of the incidents in 2019 occurred at the New Haven Correctional Center and would not be reported in this dataset.

deployed a taser used the cartridge mode, 4 percent used drive-stun application<sup>20</sup>, and 3 percent used both a cartridge and drive-stun application. The remaining 60 percent of reported incidents involved a subject who was warned, but not tased. Table 5 presents electronic defense weapons used in use of force incidents for both 2019 and 2020.

Table 4: EDW used in a Use of Force incident by year (2019 and 2020)

Type of Deployment	2019		2020	
	N	%	N	%
Warning*	167	62%	222	58%
Cartridge	81	30%	132	35%
Drive Stun	12	5%	14	4%
Cartridge and Drive Stun	8	3%	13	3%

\*Warning includes laser sight only, warning arc, or removing the taser from the holster. Electric shock was not administered in any of these circumstances.

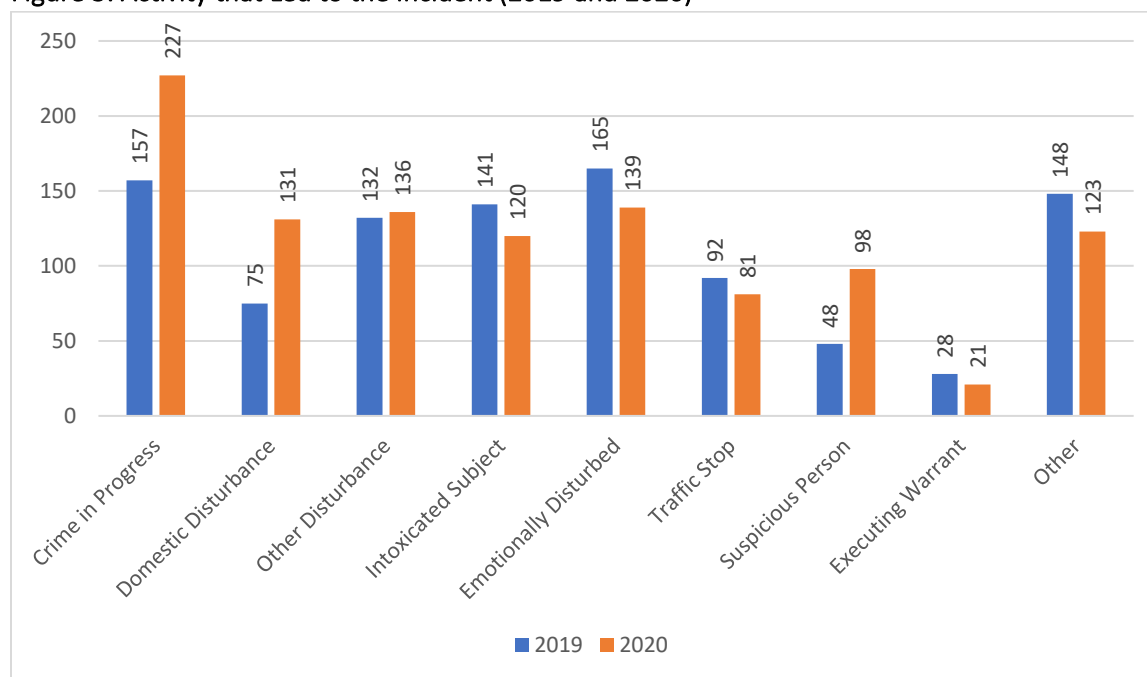
### III.D. ACTIVITY THAT LED TO THE INCIDENT

Police officers must report the activity that led to the incident. An officer reports whether the activity that led to the incident includes: (1) crime in progress, (2) domestic disturbance, (3) other disturbance, (4) intoxicated subject, (5) emotionally disturbed, (6) traffic stop, (7) suspicious person, (8) executing a warrant, or (9) other. Officers routinely identify multiple activities that lead to the interaction with police. Figure 3 outlines the activity that led to the incident for each of the calendar years.

There were some differences in the activities that led to an incident between the two calendar years. Incidents resulting from a crime in progress, domestic disturbance, and suspicious person all increased substantially in 2020. This likely reflects the impact of the COVID-19 quarantine protocols on society. In 2020, there was an increase in domestic violence arrests, and some crime categories increased. As more people were home during the pandemic, this could have led to a higher reporting of suspicious activity to the police. However, caution should be used in drawing too many conclusions from this data since the reporting standards were so different across agencies.

<sup>20</sup> The POSTC policy appears to discourage use of the taser in drive-stun mode. Paragraph 6G of the policy provides Deployment of the CEW in drive stun mode, from a policy perspective, is no different than a cartridge deployment. It is important to note that when the device is deployed in this manner, it is primarily a pain compliance tool: *is minimally effective compared to a conventional cartridge deployment*; and is more likely to leave marks on the subject's skin.

Figure 3: Activity that Led to the Incident (2019 and 2020)



Over 40% of persons involved in a reported use of force incident (43% in 2019 and 38% in 2020) were identified as “under influence of alcohol/drugs” or “possibly intoxicated.” White subjects involved in a use of force incident were more likely to be reported as under the influence of alcohol or drugs (47%) compared to Black (36%) or Hispanic (36%) persons. Males were slightly less likely to be identified as under the influence of alcohol/drugs (40%) compared to females (42%). Unfortunately, the use-of-force report provided little contextual information by which to better assess this finding. The use-of-force report offered no details as to the person’s suspected intoxicant.

#### Use of Force Incidents Involving “Emotionally Disturbed” Or Suicidal Persons

Police officers receive extensive training in identifying, responding to, and interacting with persons with emotional and/or intellectual disabilities or illnesses and suicidal persons. Nonetheless, it is not entirely clear what officers or administrators may have meant when they chose to check or not to checkboxes on the use of force form indicating that a person was “emotionally disturbed.” As with other data gleaned from these reports, departments and officers may have followed inconsistent reporting procedures with respect to identifying persons who might have been experiencing psychiatric distress.

For example, nine of 124 persons described as “suicidal” in the use of force reports were not described as being “emotionally disturbed”. It is possible that a police officer might describe a person as “emotionally disturbed” to mean agitated or distressed without suspecting any underlying psychiatric illness. The use of force reports, therefore, cannot be taken as a complete or accurate tally of the number of persons involved in force incidents who may have been exhibiting signs of mental illness or psychiatric crisis.

Of the 1,315 persons involved in a use of force incident in 2019 and 2020, 31 percent were reported to be emotionally disturbed. Females were more likely than males to be reported as emotionally disturbed. White persons involved in a use of force incident were also more likely to be reported as emotionally

disturbed compared to Black or Hispanic persons. Table 6 indicates the gender and race/ethnicity of the persons identified as emotionally disturbed involved in a use of force incident.

Table 5: Persons Reported as “Emotionally Disturbed” by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (2019 and 2020)

Race/Ethnicity	Reported as “Emotionally Disturbed”	
	N	%
White	169	38.7%
Black	133	26.3%
Hispanic	70	26.1%
Other	6	46.1%
Unknown	26	28.6%
Gender	N	%
Male	338	29.4%
Female	66	44.3%

The use of force form also contained a field in which it could be noted that a person was suicidal. Nine percent of reported force incidents involved persons described as “suicidal.” Suicidal persons were reportedly much more likely to be armed than other people involved in reported force incidents. The reports showed that 30% of suicidal persons were armed, compared to 13% of non-suicidal persons. Table 7 indicates the percentage of reportedly suicidal persons who were armed or unarmed.

Table 6: Persons Reported as “Armed” and “Suicidal” (2019 and 2020)

Race/Ethnicity	Armed		Unarmed	
	N	%	N	%
White	20	37.7%	33	62.3%
Black	6	14.6%	35	85.4%
Hispanic	8	33.3%	16	66.7%
Unknown	3	50.0%	3	50.0%
Total	37	29.8%	87	70.2%

### III.E. TYPE OF RESISTANCE THAT RESULTED IN USE OF FORCE

The use-of-force report required the officer to report the type of resistance that resulted in the use of force. Most people involved in reported use-of-force incidents exhibited more than one form of resistance. There were 586 persons involved in a use of force incident who were unarmed in 2019 and 565 in 2020. For both calendar years combined, the subjects who were unarmed were described as follows:

- Unarmed, but threatened use of a weapon (32 or 2% of all persons)
- Threat/Hostile (504 or 38% of all persons)
- Unarmed assault (147 or 11% of all persons)
- Fighting stance/combatative (498 or 38% of all persons)
- Fleeing (435 or 33% of all persons)
- Deadweight/non-compliant (358 or 27% of all persons)



For 306 unarmed people, the only form of reported resistance was listed as “fleeing,” “suicidal,” or “deadweight/non-compliant.” For purposes of this report and based on the limited information available to researchers, incidents where the subject’s only resistance was reported as “dead weight/non-compliant” will be categorized as “passive resistance.” In 106 reported use of force incidents (63 in 2019 and 43 in 2020), the only form of resistance was reported as “dead weight/noncompliant” Those incidents account for 8 percent of all use of force incidents. White persons involved in a use of force incident were slightly more likely than Black and Hispanic persons to be passively resisting when force was used. Table 8 summarizes the unarmed persons reported as passively resisting by race and ethnicity.

Table 7: Unarmed Persons “Passively Resisting” by Race/Ethnicity (2019 and 2020)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>% of incidents by race/ethnicity</b>
White	41	9%
Black	36	7%
Hispanic	19	7%
Unknown	10	11%
Total	106	8%

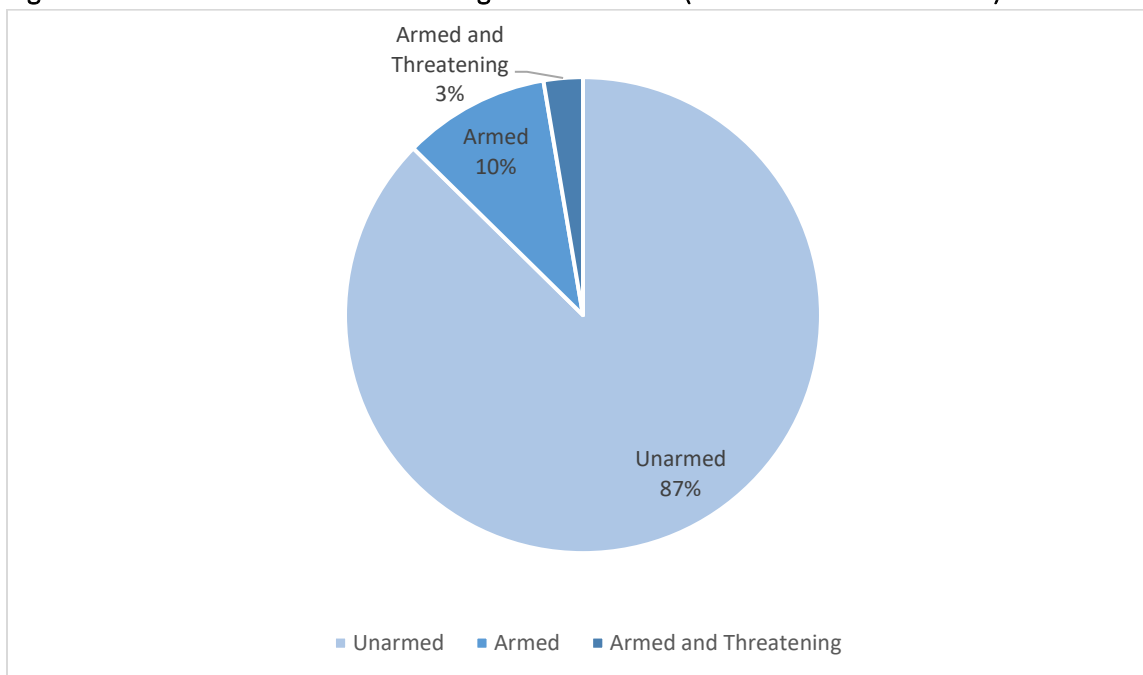
About one-third of persons involved in reported use of force incidents (37%) fled from police. Virtually all persons who fled were male (94%). Black and Hispanic persons were reported to have fled at a higher rate than White persons involved in a use of force incident. Table 9 summarizes the use of force incidents involving persons who fled police by race and ethnicity.

Table 8: Use of Force Incidents Involving Fleeing Persons (2019 and 2020)

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
White	138	32%
Black	193	38%
Hispanic	121	45%
Other	5	38%
Unknown	31	34%
Total	488	37%

An overwhelming majority of persons (90% in 2019 and 85% in 2020) involved in reported use of force incidents were reportedly unarmed. The use of force reporting form contains separate fields for whether the person was armed and for whether the person threatened to use a weapon. Of armed people involved in a use of force incident, only 21 percent (9 people in 2019 and 26 people in 2020) reportedly threatened to use the weapon. Thus, less than 3 percent of all persons involved in a use of force incident were armed and threatened to use the weapon. Over 22 percent of the people that were armed (37) were reportedly suicidal. Figure 4 illustrates the use of force incidents involving armed people and people threatening to use a weapon.

Figure 4: Use of Force Incidents Involving Armed Persons (2019 and 2020 combined)



There were no significant racial and ethnic or gender differences when comparing those individuals that were involved in a use of force incident who were armed. Although the number is small, females were slightly more likely to be armed (13%) than males (12%) involved in a use of force incident. In the combined two years, White males were armed in 13% of incidents, Hispanic males in 12% of incidents, and Black males in 12% of incidents. Table 10 indicates the number of persons who were armed and unarmed by race and ethnicity.

Table 9: Armed vs. Unarmed Subjects by Race and Ethnicity (2019 and 2020)

Race/Ethnicity	Armed		Unarmed	
	N	%	N	%
White	58	13.3%	379	86.7%
Black	60	11.8%	446	88.2%
Hispanic	33	12.3%	235	87.7%
All Other Races	1	7.7%	12	92.3%
Unknown	12	13.2%	79	86.8%
Total	164	12.5%	1,151	87.5%

The use of force reports indicates a general category for the type of weapon an armed person had. Most persons described as armed had an “edged weapon” (47%). The majority of “edged weapons” were described as knives. Almost 41 percent of persons armed were reported to have a firearm, 10 percent were armed with a blunt instrument, and 2 percent of persons were armed with a taser. Table 11 summarizes the type of weapon reportedly used by race and ethnicity.

Table 10: Type of Weapon Used by Race and Ethnicity (2019 and 2020)

Race/Ethnicity	Firearm		Edged Weapon		Blunt Instrument	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	25	6%	29	7%	4	1%
Black	29	6%	23	4%	8	2%
Hispanic	9	3%	20	7%	3	1%
Unknown	4	4%	6	7%	2	2%
Total	67	5%	78	6%	17	1%

### III.F. REPORTED INJURIES THAT RESULTED FROM USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS

Police officers must report any injuries sustained by themselves or the subject. The “subject condition” section of the use-of-force form, which provides for notation of injuries to persons involved in use-of-force incidents, does not ask for any information about how or when any of the injuries were sustained. It is unclear whether injuries reported on the form had occurred before the time officers arrived on the scene, whether they were inflicted by persons other than officers, or resulted from use-of-force by officers.

The POSTC policy prohibits physical force when “using physical force against a person whose health, age, physical condition, or circumstances make it likely that serious physical injury will result.” Most use-of-force forms collect data on a person’s height and weight, but not on any physical infirmity or condition. It may be difficult for officers to know whether a person is in ill health, has a pacemaker, or is pregnant.

The use-of-force reports provided no field in which to report the health of the person before force was used. Since the use-of-force forms did not request information about the health of persons involved in these incidents, there was no systematic collection of information as to the apparent health of persons involved in incidents. As a result, use-of-force reports cannot indicate much about how often force was used on people who might have been in “obvious ill-health.”

Of 1,315 persons involved in reported use-of-force incidents in 2019 and 2020, 697 persons (53%) did not have any injuries (353 persons in 2019 and 344 persons in 2020). The reports indicated that 618 people (47%) suffered at least one injury (298 persons in 2019 and 319 persons in 2020). Some persons who were involved in use-of-force incidents were reported to have suffered multiple injuries. Based on the descriptions provided, an overwhelming majority of the injuries appeared to be minor (i.e., probe puncture, bruise, and abrasions).

Of the reports submitted during the two-year period, there were five incidents that resulted in death. However, this does not match the number of deadly use-of-force incidents investigated by the Division of Criminal Justice during that time. There were five deadly use-of-force incidents in 2019 that resulted in death, but only four were reported<sup>21</sup>. Additionally, there were five deadly use-of-force incidents in 2020

<sup>21</sup> The Wethersfield Police Department did not submit a use-of-force report for the deadly use-of-force incident that occurred on April 20, 2019 resulting in the death of Anthony Vega Cruz.

that resulted in death, but only one was reported<sup>22</sup>. Table 12 identifies reported injuries to the 618 persons who were involved in a use-of-force incident.

Table 11: Subject Injuries Reported (2019 and 2020)

<b>Injury Type</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bruises	61	56	117
Abrasions	150	129	279
Blunt Trauma	1	3	4
Lost Consciousness	0	1	1
Breathing Difficulty	10	17	27
Probe Puncture	52	69	121
Gunshot	4	2	6
Death	4	1	5
Other	85	62	147

Of 2,038 officers involved in reported use-of-force incidents in 2019 and 2020, 1,554 officers (76%) did not have any injuries (900 officers in 2019 and 654 officers in 2020). The reports indicated that 484 officers (24%) suffered at least one injury (160 officers in 2019 and 324 officers in 2020). Some officers who were involved in use-of-force incidents were reported to have suffered multiple injuries. Based on the descriptions provided, an overwhelming majority of the injuries appeared to be minor (i.e., bruises and abrasions). Of the reports submitted during the two-year period, the most significant injury appeared to have been a gunshot wound, which was the result of friendly fire. Table 13 identifies reported injuries to the 484 officers who were involved in a use-of-force incident.

Table 12: Officer Injuries Reported (2019 and 2020)

<b>Injury Type</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bruises	50	41	91
Abrasions	66	56	122
Blunt Trauma	6	5	11
Lost Consciousness	1	0	1
Breathing Difficulty	0	2	2
Probe Puncture	4	4	8
Gunshot	1	0	1
Death	0	0	0
Other	56	85	141

<sup>22</sup> The following departments did not submit a use-of-force report for incidents that resulted in death during the 2020 calendar year, Connecticut State Police (Mubarak Soulemane, January 15, 2020), Waterbury (Edward Gendron, Jr., January 20, 2020), Manchester (Jose Enrique Soto, April 2, 2020), and Hartford (Shamar Ogman, December 26, 2020).

## IV. Findings and Recommendations

Across the country, national debate and political scrutiny have focused on policing, race, and community relations. There have been increasing concerns about police use-of-force, specifically the use of excessive or fatal force and particularly involving individuals of color and within disenfranchised communities and individuals in mental health or behavioral health distress. Although most police and community interactions do not involve force, recent events have shifted the debate from “is there a problem” to identifying its causes and effective remedies.

Data collection is inexcusably deficient. There have been attempts to quantify police uses of force at the federal and state levels, but there has been inconsistent and incomplete data collection, a lack of standardized definitions and metrics, and varying methodologies. Connecticut is currently one of only a few states that are collecting and analyzing police use-of-force data. However, the data must be much more reliable and comprehensive before it can show any causal relationships based on race, ethnicity, gender, underlying behavior, or crime rates that might identify and explain any trends and disparities. That analysis may then be used to address systemic deficiencies and establish ways to control and remedy the use of excessive, unjustifiable, or unnecessary force. The goal should be to use data to help craft policies, procedures, and interventions to reduce the need for police to use force.

Public Acts 19-90 and 20-1 set an ambitious agenda for Connecticut to make policing more accountable and transparent. The state-recognized policing, particularly under the current public and political scrutiny, is difficult. Police officers are responsible for protecting communities, preventing and solving crimes, responding to complex social issues, and interacting with individuals who may present complicated medical, mental health, behavioral, and disability concerns. The complexity of the job only underscores the need for an improved quantitative understanding of the effectiveness of police policies and procedures.

### IV.A. SUMMARY OF DATA FINDINGS

This section provides preliminary findings based on the review of the use-of-force data submitted by 60 police departments in 2019 and 2020 and a review of reporting practices used during that period. This is the first set of data on the use of force by police, excluding the data on the use of electronic defense weapons that have been collected since 2015<sup>23</sup>. It is therefore not possible to identify trends or causal relationships or to draw substantive conclusions on whether the use of force by police is generally reasonable or necessary. The descriptive statistics presented in this report raise many questions, they cannot be used to establish when and why police use force against citizens. This report can, however, help to further the discussion about the use of force by police and to better understand the nuances of this complex issue to improve public policy and policing practices and training.

While no causal relationships can or should be identified at this early stage of tracking and analyzing the use-of-force data, this information can serve as a baseline to interpret future data. Although future reports will include a more thorough statistical analysis of information, the lack of standard data reporting

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<sup>23</sup> Annual reports on police use of tasers were published in 2016 and 2017 but were not issued for subsequent years. The requirement to submit use-of-taser data is now included in the mandated reporting of use-of-force data.

requirements and data quality issues made any statistical analysis unreliable. Further analysis will be conducted in the future to measure disparities in a more reliable way. The below information is a summary of some of the descriptive statistics that we chose to highlight in this report.

- For departments included in this analysis, the number of reported use-of-force incidents was just more than 1% of all arrests made by those agencies in 2019 and 2020.
- When the number of traffic stop incidents was included and other police-community encounters were considered, the percentage of use-of-force incidents dropped significantly and was statistically negligible.
- When compared to residential census data, Black and Hispanic males were more likely to be involved in reported use-of-force incidents by police. However, when compared to reported arrest statistics, the disparities decreased.
- Younger people between the ages of 18 and 40 were more likely to be involved in reported use-of-force incidents than people over the age of 40.
- Almost half (40%) of individuals involved in a reported force incident were identified as under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or possibly intoxicated.
- Females were more likely than males to be reported as emotionally disturbed.
- Most incidents where force was used (65%) involved only one police officer.
- The most common application of force used by police was pressure point/control hold tactics, takedown maneuvers, and hand and fist strikes, which are generally used to control or subdue a non-compliant or aggressive individual.
- There were differences in the activities that led to a force incident in 2019 and 2020, which may be attributed to the effects of the COVID-19 quarantine protocols resulting in more people being home. Given that, reported force incidents were initiated as a crime in progress, domestic or other disturbances, intoxicated or emotionally disturbed individual, suspicious person, and other crimes.
- Most people involved in the use-of-force incidents exhibited more than one form of resistance, including unarmed but threatened use of a weapon, threatening or hostile language or behavior, unarmed assault, fighting or combative stance, fleeing, and dead-weight noncompliance.
- An overwhelming majority of persons involved in force incidents were unarmed (90% in 2019 and 85% in 2020).

## **IV.B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Improve the data collection system to ensure full compliance with the reporting standards.**

There were 9 police departments in 2019 and 11 police departments in 2020 that failed to submit use-of-force reports. During this period, there was no standardized reporting system or clear guidelines on how and what to report to ensure compliance by police departments. This most likely was the cause of some departments not reporting all use-of-force incidents and others not submitting any reports.

This issue has been addressed by the development of a standardized reporting system to be used by all police departments beginning July 1, 2022. The POSTC also published a general notice that provides clear guidance and general definitions to improve reporting compliance. Please see Appendix B for a

copy of the new standardized form that will be required to be submitted as part of the new reporting system.

All police departments should also ensure that their policies and procedures are updated to reflect the changes made by POSTC regarding the collection and reporting of use-of-force incidents. Departments should also ensure that an internal oversight system is in place to make sure that the use-of-force forms are completed properly, and all qualifying incidents are reported to the state in a timely manner.

## **2. Develop a robust analytical framework to analyze future use-of-force data.**

It is acknowledged that this report, while it may be interesting, is not particularly useful to understand the issue or to make substantive recommendations to change state law, departmental policy, or police procedures or training. What it can be used for is to identify the questions that may be answered in future analyses of improved data. For example, what is the relationship, if any, between departmental policy and policing practices with respect to the use of less-lethal and lethal force? What medical, behavioral, and situational factors are associated with the police using force? What types of injuries are sustained by police and citizens during encounters where force is used? Finally, are there alternatives to using force in certain situations such as de-escalation techniques, deploying other resources like social workers, or other first responder personnel?

Identifying the metrics to answer these questions is difficult and may need several iterations to ensure an accurate and fair analysis of use-of-force data. The Department of Justice attempted to develop a national methodology but has not yet succeeded. Connecticut has experience in conducting a nuanced examination of complex policing issues; its Racial Profiling Prohibition Project collects and analyzes police traffic stop data utilizing a comprehensive system of metrics. This project can serve as a model for the development of a project to examine police force incidents.

Future reports should analyze use-of-force through a variety of statistical tools, that may vary in terms of their level of statistical significance. Some of the future analytical tools that should be considered include:

1. Descriptive Statistics: this would include a summary of data, similar to what was presented in this report.
2. Bivariate Analysis: assess the relationship between two factors such as race and force or gender and force.
3. Time-series Analysis: assess whether there are shifts in trends that correspond to period-specific events.
4. Benchmark Analysis: compare incidents of force to a pre-established benchmark such as population, arrests, or reported crime suspect information.
5. Multivariate Regression Analysis: measure the likelihood that force may be used in a similar situation.

## Appendix A: Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council Use of Force Policy



## **Police Officer Standards and Training Council**

### **Use of Force Policy**

#### **1. Purpose**

The law enforcement profession recognizes and values the sanctity of human life and respect for every person's rights and dignity. As guardians of a lawful and ordered society, police officers are vested with significant authority, the judicious use of which serves to protect public safety while fortifying public confidence in the legitimacy of the police. A peaceful resolution is the best, most desired outcome in all situations. To that end, police officers must use only the level of force necessary to achieve legitimate, lawful purposes and resolve each situation they face fairly and safely. Acknowledging that circumstances may compel the use of physical force upon a person, up to and including deadly force, police officers must view the use of force as a last resort.

#### **2. Policy**

Police officers must use only the minimum level of force necessary to achieve a lawful purpose. Any use of force must be reasonable, proportionate to the threat, and employed in a manner consistent with this policy. While not an actual use of force, the mere presence of a police officer can be intimidating to some. Therefore, officers should be mindful of their body language and tone of voice upon arrival at a scene and throughout their interaction with subjects, complainants, and witnesses.

#### **3. Definitions**

- A.** "Acting in a Law Enforcement Capacity" means any on-duty police officer or any off-duty police officer who identifies themselves as such and asserts their law enforcement authority.
- B.** "Active Resistance" means any physical act undertaken by a subject against an officer that could reasonably impede or defeat the officer's lawful attempt to gain control of the subject.
- C.** "Chokehold/Neck Restraint" means a physical maneuver or other method of restraint applied to the neck area or that otherwise impedes the ability to breathe or restricts blood circulation to the brain.
- D.** "Deadly Force" means any force that is likely to cause serious injury or death.
- E.** "Deadly weapon" means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.
- F.** "De-escalation" means the use of strategies and/or techniques to reduce the intensity of or stabilize a conflict or potentially volatile situation.

- G.** “Imminent” means likely to occur at any moment; impending.
- H.** “Last resort” means a final course of action, used only when other reasonable options are unavailable or have failed.
- I.** “Less-Lethal Force” means any force that is not likely to cause serious physical injury or death. Less lethal force includes weaponless defensive and control techniques (such as open hand strikes, elbow or closed fist strikes, leg sweeps, kicks, and forcible restraint), weapons and munitions (such as OC spray or chemical agents such as tear gas, CEW, projectiles like rubber bullets and bean-bag rounds, batons and other impact weapons, and flash bang devices), and K9.
- J.** “Mitigation” means the action of reducing the danger, severity, seriousness, or potential harmfulness of a condition or circumstance.
- K.** “Necessary” means an action chosen when, in an officer’s judgement, no effective alternative exists.
- L.** “The objectively reasonable standard” is the legal standard used to determine the lawfulness of a use of force under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Supreme Court established this standard in its ruling in *Graham v. Connor* (490- U.S. 386, 1989).
- M.** “Officer created jeopardy” means situations where officers needlessly put themselves in a position where they must use deadly force to protect themselves.
- N.** “Passive Resistance” means an unarmed, non-violent person’s failure or refusal to cooperate with a police officer’s lawful directions, such as in an act of civil disobedience or by a non-violent handcuffed person. Passive resistance generally involves lack of voluntary movement by the resister.
- O.** “Police officer,” as used in this policy, means any Connecticut “peace officer,” as defined in CGS 53a-3.
- P.** “Physical Force” means any intentional contact used upon or directed toward the body of another person, including restraint and confinement.
- Q.** “Positional Asphyxia” is a condition where the supply of oxygen to a person’s body is deficient because their body position prevents them from breathing adequately, usually as a result of an airway obstruction or limitation in chest wall expansion.
- R.** “Proportional Force” means force that is reasonably necessary to overcome the level of resistance, aggression, or threat an officer confronts.
- S.** “Reasonable” means sound, fair, sensible, and not excessive under the circumstances.
- T.** “Reasonable belief that a person has committed an offense” means a reasonable belief in facts or circumstances which if true would in law constitute an offense. If the facts or

circumstances would not legally constitute an offense, an incorrect belief that they do, even if reasonable, does not justify the use of physical force.

- U.** “Serious Physical Injury” means physical injury that creates a substantial risk of death, serious protracted and obvious disfigurement, a serious health impairment, or an extended loss or impairment of any body part or bodily organ.
- V.** “Unreasonable Force” means any force applied in a manner inconsistent with this policy or applicable law.
- W.** “Unreasonable Risk” means unwarranted exposure to the possibility of a negative consequence.

#### **4. Moral and Ethical Obligations Regarding the Use of Force**

All police officers must comply with this policy and uphold the legal, moral, and ethical obligations of their sworn service to the public, including:

##### **A. Duty to Render Aid**

An officer shall render aid and request an emergency medical service (EMS) response as soon as possible for any person who sustains an injury, complains of injury, or otherwise exhibits signs of medical distress including shortness of breath, altered mental status, or loss of consciousness.

An EMS response shall be requested for any person subjected to the use of a firearm, impact weapon, impact projectile, conducted energy weapon (CEW), oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray, or K-9 apprehension. A supervisor shall be immediately notified of any EMS response initiated under these conditions, and injuries shall be documented and photographed whenever possible.

##### **B. Duty to Intervene**

Any police officer acting in a law enforcement capacity who witnesses the use of force by any other officer, regardless of rank or department, that the witnessing officer knows to be unreasonable, must intervene to attempt to stop such use of force. The witnessing officer shall intervene in any manner necessary to stop any unreasonable, excessive or illegal use of force, including by verbal or physical means or both. Unreasonable force is any force applied in a manner inconsistent with this policy or applicable law.

These requirements do not apply to officers acting in an undercover capacity if intervening will significantly compromise their safety or the safety of another.

In rare cases, exigent circumstances may prevent an officer from complying with these requirements. For example:

- (1) An officer may be engaged in a simultaneous attempt to apprehend another person.
- (2) An officer may be actively engaged in rendering aid to a seriously injured person.
- (3) An officer may be separated by space, elevation, physical barriers, terrain, or other hazards or impediments that prevent access necessary to intervene.

If circumstances prevent or impede effective intervention, these circumstances shall be promptly reported and documented.

Any officer who fails to intervene in an incident involving unreasonable use of force that they witness may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution for the actions the offending officer took.

#### **C. Duty to Report**

Any police officer acting in a law enforcement capacity who witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of the use of force by any other officer, regardless of rank or department, that the witnessing officer knows to be unreasonable shall notify a supervisor as soon as practicable. The witnessing officer shall also prepare a written report that thoroughly explains how force was used and submit that report as prescribed by Department procedures.

Any officer who fails to report any unreasonable use of force as required by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.

#### **D. Prohibition Against Retaliation**

The Department and its employees are strictly prohibited from taking any retaliatory, discriminatory, or punitive action against any officer who acts in good faith in accordance with this policy or cooperates in any internal or criminal investigation related thereto.

### **5. De-escalation and Mitigation**

Officers should use force as a last resort and employ de-escalation and mitigation techniques to the greatest extent practicable. Officers are not required to delay taking protective measures that are immediately necessary or to place themselves or others at imminent risk of harm in order to attempt de-escalation, but they should consider the following options that might minimize or avoid the use of force:

- A. Using a non-threatening, non-confrontational tone of voice
- B. Listening carefully and expressing empathy
- C. Slowing down the pace of an incident
- D. Waiting to take action until the threat subsides

- E. Placing additional space or barriers between the officer and a person
- F. Permitting a person to move about
- G. Permitting a person to ask questions or engage in conversation
- H. Tactical repositioning or seeking cover
- I. Requesting additional resources

De-escalation is most effective when done purposefully, with patience and flexibility. These techniques should only be employed when circumstances permit, and it is safe to do so.

## **6. Use of Physical Force**

The use of force by an officer shall be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the threat encountered. Physical force may only be used to achieve a lawful purpose. Before resorting to physical force and whenever safe and feasible, officers should first make reasonable attempts to gain compliance through verbal commands and allowing appropriate time under the circumstances for voluntary compliance.

### **A. Considerations**

Before deciding to use physical force, an officer should consider the following:

- (1) The immediacy of the threat
- (2) The nature and severity of the crime or circumstances
- (3) The nature and duration of actions taken by the subject
- (4) Whether the subject is actively resisting custody
- (5) Whether the subject is attempting to evade arrest by flight
- (6) The number of subjects in comparison to the number of officers
- (7) The size and condition of the subject in comparison to the officer
- (8) The age, health, and condition of the subject
- (9) The subject's violent history, if known
- (10) The presence of a hostile crowd or agitators
- (11) Whether the subject is under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the extent it would affect their tolerance towards pain

### **B. Permissible Purposes for the Use of Physical Force**

When necessary and reasonable, an officer may use proportionate physical force to:

- (1) Gain control of a subject who poses an imminent risk to the officer, themselves, or a third person.
- (2) Effect an arrest of a person whom the officer reasonably believes to have committed an offense unless the officer knows the arrest is not authorized.
- (3) Effect an arrest pursuant to a warrant unless the officer knows the arrest warrant is invalid.
- (4) Prevent the escape from custody of a person unless the officer knows the custody is not authorized.
- (5) Gain compliance to a lawful order.

**C. Prohibitions on the Use of Physical Force**

The following actions are prohibited:

- (1) Using physical force against any handcuffed or restrained person except to the extent necessary to counter active resistance, prevent escape, prevent the person from sustaining injury, or prevent the person from injuring another.
- (2) Using physical force for the purpose of retaliation.
- (3) Using physical force against a person whose health, age, physical condition, or circumstances make it likely that serious physical injury will result.
- (4) Standing on or kneeling on the neck of another person.

**D. Restrictions on the Use of Physical Force**

The following are prohibited except under circumstances where deadly force is deemed reasonable and necessary, consistent with this policy:

- (1) *The intentional use of a chokehold or neck restraint. Including but not limited to: (1). Arm bar hold, (2). Carotid artery hold, (3). Lateral vascular neck restraint, (4). Neck restraint or hold with a knee or other object is prohibited. The use of a choke hold or neck restraint may only be used when the use of deadly physical force is necessary.*
- (2) Intentional strikes to the head, neck, spine, or sternum with an impact weapon, improvised impact weapon, knee, kick, or hard object, or striking the head against a hard surface.
- (3) The intentional discharge of a less-lethal launcher projectile at close range to the head, neck, or chest.

## **7. Positioning of Persons Under Officer's Control**

Restrained persons shall be positioned so that breathing is not obstructed. Restrained persons should be maintained in a seated position or placed on their side. Restrained persons should not be placed in a prone or other position that increases the risk of positional asphyxia.

## **8. Less Lethal Force**

An officer may use less lethal force when reasonable and necessary to overcome the use or imminent use of force against an officer or a third person. The level of less lethal force used must be proportionate to the threat, perceived or existing. Less lethal force may not be used against any person engaged in passive resistance.

## **9. Use of Deadly Physical Force**

Deadly force must be used as a last resort. Any use of deadly force must be reasonable and necessary. When feasible and consistent with personal safety, an officer shall give warning of his or her intent to use deadly physical force.

### **A. Permissible Purposes for Deadly Force**

A police officer is justified in using deadly force upon another person only when his or her actions are objectively reasonable under the given circumstances at that time and the officer reasonably believes the use of deadly force is necessary to:

- (1) Defend himself or herself or another person from the use or imminent use of deadly physical force, or
- (2) Effect an arrest of a person if the following circumstances exist:
  - a. The officer reasonably believes the person has committed or attempted to commit a felony that involved the infliction of serious physical injury and
  - b. The officer has determined there are no available reasonable alternatives to the use of deadly force and
  - c. The officer believes that the use of deadly force creates no unreasonable risk of injury to any other person.
- (3) Prevent the escape of a person if the following circumstances exist:
  - a. The officer reasonably believes the person has committed a felony that involved the infliction of serious physical injury and poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to others.
  - b. The officer has determined there are no available reasonable alternatives to the use of deadly force.

- c. The officer believes that the use of deadly force creates no unreasonable risk of injury to any other person.

## **B. Prohibitions on the Use of Deadly Force**

- (1) Deadly force may not be used against any person for the purpose of protecting property.
- (2) Deadly force may not be used against any person who poses a threat only to themselves.

## **C. Use of Firearms**

The discharge of a firearm by an officer in any setting other than a training or testing exercise, or to dispatch an animal, shall be considered a use of deadly force. The discharge of a firearm against another person should be considered a last resort.

The discharge of a firearm is prohibited:

- (1) When, in the professional judgment of the officer, doing so will unnecessarily endanger an innocent person.
- (2) In the defense of property.
- (3) To summon assistance, except in an emergency and no other reasonable means is available.
- (4) When fired as a warning shot.
- (5) When fired at or into a moving or fleeing vehicle, except:
  - a. To counter an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury from an occupant by means other than the vehicle.
  - b. When a driver is intentionally placing others in the vehicle's path causing an imminent risk of serious injury, such as driving into a crowd of assembled persons or into an occupied area not intended for vehicular traffic.
  - c. When an officer is unavoidably in the path of a vehicle and cannot move to safety. Officers are strongly discouraged from positioning themselves in the actual or potential path of travel of any vehicle.

## **D. Post Event Review of Deadly Physical Force Incidents**

A post event review regarding any use of force shall determine whether any involved officer acted in a manner consistent with or inconsistent with this policy.



Officers must be aware that they are subject to the standards set forth by State Law. In accordance with State Law, evaluations of an officer's actions related to a use of deadly force will consider, *but are not limited to*, the following factors:

- (1) Whether the person possessed or appeared to possess a deadly weapon
- (2) Whether the officer engaged in reasonable de-escalation measures prior to using deadly force
- (3) Whether any unreasonable conduct of the officer led to an increased risk of an occurrence of the situation that precipitated the use of deadly force.

Officers should be aware that the statutory language "but are not limited to" may mean that factors not specified in law or in this policy are considered in the evaluation of an officer's actions.

## **10. Reporting Uses of Force**

### **A. Required Reporting and Review**

A reportable use of force is any use of force described in this policy, including:

- (1) Striking another person with an open or closed hand, elbow, knee, club or baton, kicking another person
- (2) Using OC spray, CEW, or less lethal projectile
- (3) Using a chokehold or neck restraint
- (4) Pointing a firearm, less lethal launcher, or CEW laser sight at a person
- (5) The discharge of a firearm, for other than training, testing, or to dispatch an animal
- (6) Any action that results in, or is alleged to have resulted in, injury or death of another person

The electronic State of Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council *Use of Force* form shall be completed for any incident that involves a reportable use of force. A separate form shall be completed for each person subjected to a reportable use of force. Except as provided below, the officers involved shall complete the form as soon as is practical. The required supervisory review of any use of force shall be completed in a timely manner.

The Office of the Chief State's Attorney Inspector General shall investigate any incident in which an officer uses deadly force or in which a death occurs as a result of any use of force, and shall direct the completion of reports as deemed necessary.

The department shall document and maintain a record of any incident in which an officer reports or is aware of an unreasonable, excessive, or *illegal* use of force as specified in this policy. This record shall include, at minimum, the name of the officer(s) involved; the date, time, and location of the incident; a description of the circumstances; and the names of any victims and witnesses present, if known.

#### **B. Annual Use of Force Reporting**

Each year, but not later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year, the department shall ensure that a copy of each completed *State of Connecticut – Police Officer and Standards Training Council - Use of Force Report* and any other required documents are submitted in electronic form to the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division of the Office of Policy and Management. Prior to the submission of these reports, the department shall redact any information that may identify a minor, victim, or witness.

### **11. Training**

The Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC) will oversee development and implementation of a single, standardized training curriculum to include lesson plans and presentation material regarding all aspects of this policy for the purposes of in-service or review training. To qualify for POSTC credit, Use of Force training must be delivered by a POSTC certified Use of Force instructor. The Department may elect to offer additional training in any area of this policy, but such training may not supplant any portion of the POSTC approved training module. Any additional training offered must be delivered by a POSTC certified Use of Force instructor using a POSTC approved lesson plan.

All Departments shall ensure that every peace officer bound by this policy completes all required POSTC Use of Force training prior to December 31, 2022 unless granted an extension by the DESPP/POSTC Academy Administrator. Thereafter, the Department shall ensure that every officer completes the POSTC recertification training module no less than once annually.

### **12. Related Policies**

Other policies related to this and department use of force policies include but may not be limited to:

- A.** Oath of Office
- B.** Ethics
- C.** Firearms
- D.** Controlled Electrical Weapon
- E.** Less-Lethal Weapons/Munitions
- F.** Pursuit

- G.** Crowd Control
- H.** Body Camera/In-Car Camera
- I.** Canine Unit

Appendix B: Police Officer Standards and Training Council Use of Force  
Reporting Form (Effective July 1, 2022)



# State of Connecticut - Police Officer Standards and Training Council USE OF FORCE REPORT

## CASE AND SUBJECT INFORMATION SECTION

### Police Department Information

Case Number # PD Town Agency #

Date of Report

### Incident Information

Date of Inc. T.O.D. ☐ AM ☐ PM

Incident Apt/Unit #

Incident Street Address

Incident City State CT

### Subject's Information

First Name Last Name Date of Birth

Apt/Unit #

Address Street

Address City

State

Race

Hispanic

☐ Yes ☐ No

Sex  
☐ Male ☐ Female

Subject Height & Weight

Feet  Inches  Pounds

## PRE-INCIDENT INFORMATION SECTION

Officer's First Name Officer's Last Name Officer's Badge Number Officer Self Identified

☐ Yes ☐ No

Origins of Initial Contact Officer's Assignment Officer's Arrival Transport Officer's Arrival Uniform

- - - -

Officer's Arrival Notes

### Activity That Led To Incident (Check All That Apply)

☐ Welfare Check ☐ Possible Crime in Progress

☐ Medical Emergency

☐ Potential Mental Health Incident

☐ MV/Traffic Stop

☐ Execute Warrant

☐ Other

Crime #1 -

Crime #2 -

Crime #3 -

Crime #4 -

Crime #5 -

### Location Environment (Check All That Apply)

☐ Subject's Residence

☐ Indoors - Public Building

☐ Other Residence

☐ Indoors - Private Property

☐ Outdoors - Public Area

☐ Educational Facility

☐ Outdoors - Priv. Property

☐ Commercial Establishment

Type

## OFFICER ASSESSMENT OF SCENE AND SITUATION SECTION

### Officer's Initial Perception of Subject (Check All That Apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/> Actively Aggressive (Verbal)
<input type="checkbox"/> Previous Hostility Toward LEO	<input type="checkbox"/> Actively Aggressive (Physical)
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Under the Influence	<input type="checkbox"/> Armed with <input style="width: 400px;" type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotionally Disturbed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input style="width: 400px;" type="text"/>

### Subject's Initial Resistance Resulting in Use of Force (Check All That Apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Threat/Hostile	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting Stance/Combative
<input type="checkbox"/> Dead Weight/Non-Compliant	<input type="checkbox"/> Threatening Use of Force
<input type="checkbox"/> Fleeing	<input type="checkbox"/> Un-Armed Assault
<input type="checkbox"/> Suicidal	<input type="checkbox"/> Armed Assault with <input style="width: 300px;" type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input style="width: 400px;" type="text"/>	

## APPLICATION OF FORCE NARRATIVE SECTION

☐ Use of Force Warning Provided to the Subject?

### OFFICER'S ACTIONS

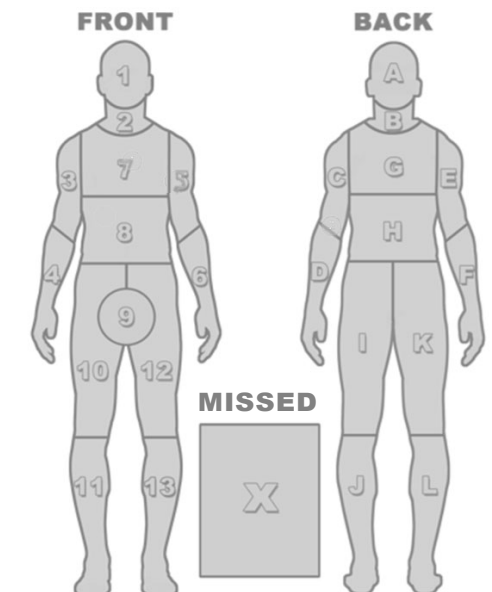
#	Control Category	Control Method	Body Region	# of Strikes
1	-	-	-	-
2	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	-

### SUBJECT'S ACTIONS

Response Category	Response Method
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

### Use of CEW Details

Serial # on CEW(s) Deployed	<input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
Serial # on Cartridge(s) Deployed	<input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
Type of Cartridge	<input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
# and Length of Display of Arc (sec.)	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
# and Length of Drive-Stun Applications (sec.)	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
# and Length After Probe Contact (sec.)	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
Time Between Applications (sec.)	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
CEW was Downloaded by Whom?	<input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>



Body Regions Template

**Use of OC Spray Details**Yes No ☐ N/ASubject Permitted to De-contaminate After Transport? ☐☐Medical Treatment Required? ☐☐Was OC Spray Effective? ☐☐

Number of OC Spray Applications

**Use of K-9 Details**

K-9 Handler First Name K-9 Handler Last Name

Officer Badge #

K-9's Name K-9's Badge #

**POST - INCIDENT INFORMATION SECTION****OFFICER Injuries (Check All that Apply)**

- ☐ None  
☐ Officer Complaint of Pain  
☐ Officer Contusion/Bruise  
☐ Officer Abrasion/Laceration  
☐ Officer Blunt Trauma/Concussion  
☐ Officer Fracture/Dislocation  
☐ Officer Chest Pains  
☐ Officer Breathing Difficulty  
☐ Officer Probe Puncture Only  
☐ Officer Gunshot  
☐ Officer Death  
☐ Unknown  
☐ Other

**SUBJECT Injuries (Check All that Apply)**

- ☐ None  
☐ Subject Complaint of Pain  
☐ Subject Contusion/Bruise  
☐ Subject Abrasion/Laceration  
☐ Subject Blunt Trauma/Concussion  
☐ Subject Fracture/Dislocation  
☐ Subject Chest Pains  
☐ Subject Breathing Difficulty  
☐ Subject Probe Puncture Only  
☐ Subject Gunshot  
☐ Subject Death  
☐ Unknown  
☐ Other

**Checked by Medical?**☐ Yes ☐ Refusal ☐ N/A☐ Yes ☐ Refusal ☐ N/A**Transported to Hospital?**☐ Yes ☐ Yes **INCIDENT ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY SECTION****Was Supervisor Notified?**☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A Time of Notification   **Was Supervisor at the Scene?**☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Supervisor's First Name

Supervisor's Last Name

Supervisor's Badge #

Video Footage Available?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Video Footage Type?

(Hold Control Button for Multi-Selection)

Body Worn

Cell Phone

Commercial Building

Motor Vehicle

## Officer Comments

Officer's Comments

Officer's First Name

Officer's Last Name

Officer's Badge Number

Or

Officer's  
Digital Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Officer's Ink Signature

**Email to Supervisor**

## Supervisor Comments

☐

I find this use of force by this officer to be within POSTC policy.

☐

I find this use of force by this officer to be outside POSTC policy, but reasonable and necessary.

☐

I find this use of force by this officer to be outside POSTC policy.

☐

Needs further review.

## Supervisor Narrative Supporting Findings (Mandatory)

Supervisor's Evaluation

Supervisor's First Name

Supervisor's Last Name

Supervisor's Badge Number

Or

Supervisor's  
Digital Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Ink Signature

**Email for Review**

☐

Yes

☐

No

Dept. use only: This incident meets the POSTC requirement for submission to the State.



## Appendix C: Summary of Use of Force Reports submitted by Department (2019 and 2020)

Table C.1: Use of Force Incidents per 100 Arrests (2019)

Department Name	Incidents	Arrests	UOF Per 100 Arrests
Ansonia	18	854	2
Avon	3	101	3
Berlin	0	202	0
Bethel**	3	230	1
Bloomfield*	2	536	0
Branford	23	497	5
Bridgeport	144	4,154	3
Bristol*	5	1,192	0
Brookfield	0	219	0
Canton	1	60	2
Central CT State University	0	57	0
Cheshire	10	178	6
Clinton	0	456	0
Connecticut State Police	99	9,342	1
Coventry*	1	171	1
Cromwell*	6	424	1
Danbury*	4	1,961	0
Darien	0	109	0
Department of Motor Vehicle	0	200	0
Derby	0	421	0
East Hampton	1	92	1
East Hartford	2	1,298	0
East Haven*	2	697	0
East Lyme	0	179	0
East Windsor	18	334	5
Eastern CT State University	No Records Reported		
Easton	1	27	4
Enfield	36	1,007	4
Fairfield	11	824	1
Farmington*	2	612	0
Glastonbury	0	467	0
Granby	0	143	0
Greenwich	2	568	0
Groton City	3	333	1
Groton Long Point	0	1	0
Groton Town	6	857	1
Guilford	2	187	1
Hamden*	11	934	1
Hartford	26	7,878	0
Ledyard*	3	496	1
Madison	8	55	15
Manchester	0	2,228	0
Mashantucket Pequot	6	488	1
Meriden	1	2,299	0
Middlebury	0	46	0

\* Records were submitted or entered into the state database after the completion of the report. These records were not included in the report analysis.

\*\* A summary of incidents was submitted, but individual use-of-force reports were not.

Table C.1: Use of Force Incidents per 100 Arrests (2019)

Department Name	Incidents	Arrests	UOF Per 100 Arrests
Middletown	0	1,243	0
Milford*	3	704	0
Mohegan Tribal	0	311	0
Monroe	0	160	0
Naugatuck	5	1,267	0
New Britain	No Records Reported		
New Canaan	No Records Reported		
New Haven	56	7,637	1
New London*	5	698	1
New Milford	0	627	0
Newington	1	837	0
Newtown	0	203	0
North Branford	0	142	0
North Haven	3	297	1
Norwalk*	75	2,000	4
Norwich*	75	1,913	4
Old Saybrook	2	622	0
Orange	19	515	4
Plainfield*	16	379	4
Plainville*	2	576	0
Plymouth	0	231	0
Portland	No Records Reported		
Putnam	1	287	0
Redding	0	41	0
Ridgefield	0	108	0
Rocky Hill	7	254	3
Seymour	10	302	3
Shelton	No Records Reported		
Simsbury	0	160	0
South Windsor	2	305	1
Southern CT State University	0	17	0
Southington*	17	692	2
Stamford*	66	2,675	2
State Capitol Police	0	5	0
Stonington	No Records Reported		
Stratford	4	1,374	0
Suffield	0	102	0
Thomaston	No Records Reported		
Torrington	No Records Reported		
Trumbull*	1	789	0
University of Connecticut	5	106	5
Vernon	28	1,098	3
Wallingford	4	578	1
Waterbury*	150	6,997	2
Waterford	5	532	1

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\*\* A summary of incidents was submitted, but individual use-of-force reports were not.

Table C.1: Use of Force Incidents per 100 Arrests (2019)

Department Name	Incidents	Arrests	UOF Per 100 Arrests
Watertown*	7	408	2
West Hartford	9	1,264	1
West Haven	0	1,352	0
Western CT State University	0	6	0
Weston	1	21	5
Westport*	4	211	2
Wethersfield	10	623	2
Willimantic	6	1,110	1
Wilton	4	175	2
Windsor*	5	554	1
Windsor Locks	No Records Reported		
Winsted	0	89	0
Wolcott	0	222	0
Woodbridge	0	108	0
Yale University	7	135	5

\* Records were submitted or entered into the state database after the completion of the report. These records were not included in the report analysis.

\*\* A summary of incidents was submitted, but individual use-of-force reports were not.

Table C.2: Use of Force Incidents per 100 Arrests (2020)

Department Name	Incidents	Arrests	UOF Per 100 Arrests
Ansonia	1	666	0
Avon	0	54	0
Berlin	2	226	1
Bethel*	1	228	0
Bloomfield*	3	513	1
Branford*	22	408	5
Bridgeport	120	3,308	4
Bristol*	4	926	0
Brookfield	2	125	2
Canton*	1	60	2
Central CT State University	0	19	0
Cheshire*	4	153	3
Clinton	2	337	1
Connecticut State Police	82	6,953	1
Coventry*	3	140	2
Cromwell	6	379	2
Danbury*	7	1,429	0
Darien	0	100	0
Department of Motor Vehicle	0	169	0
Derby*	2	374	1
East Hampton*	2	74	3
East Hartford	0	850	0
East Haven*	2	553	0
East Lyme*	4	176	2
East Windsor	16	300	5
Eastern CT State University	No Records Reported		
Easton	0	32	0
Enfield*	11	688	2
Fairfield	2	572	0
Farmington	5	411	1
Glastonbury	0	367	0
Granby	0	72	0
Greenwich*	4	459	1
Groton City*	4	268	1
Groton Long Point	0	2	0
Groton Town*	7	406	2
Guilford	0	147	0
Hamden	2	729	0
Hartford	65	6,019	1
Ledyard*	3	243	1
Madison	0	46	0
Manchester	3	2,097	0
Mashantucket Pequot	No Records Reported		
Meriden**	162	1,656	10
Middlebury*	2	44	4

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\*\* A summary of incidents was submitted, but individual use-of-force reports were not.

Table C.2: Use of Force Incidents per 100 Arrests (2020)

Department Name	Incidents	Arrests	UOF Per 100 Arrests
Middletown	0	905	0
Milford*	3	704	0
Mohegan Tribal	7	232	3
Monroe	No Records Reported		
Naugatuck	10	910	1
New Britain	No Records Reported		
New Canaan	No Records Reported		
New Haven	105	6,529	2
New London*	6	679	1
New Milford	1	432	0
Newington	2	696	0
Newtown	0	94	0
North Branford	0	115	0
North Haven	5	298	2
Norwalk*	51	1,149	4
Norwich*	63	1,378	5
Old Saybrook	0	368	0
Orange	6	270	2
Plainfield*	13	396	3
Plainville*	3	387	1
Plymouth	2	185	1
Portland	No Records Reported		
Putnam*	8	241	3
Redding*	2	25	8
Ridgefield*	1	58	2
Rocky Hill	0	217	0
Seymour	14	301	5
Shelton	2	354	1
Simsbury	0	126	0
South Windsor	0	246	0
Southern CT State University	0	6	0
Southington*	14	553	3
Stamford	17	1,770	1
State Capitol Police	0	4	0
Stonington	No Records Reported		
Stratford*	5	1,095	0
Suffield*	3	87	3
Thomaston	No Records Reported		
Torrington	No Records Reported		
Trumbull	0	388	0
University of Connecticut	0	53	0
Vernon	30	804	4
Wallingford	3	414	1
Waterbury	79	4,551	2
Waterford*	11	452	2

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\*\* A summary of incidents was submitted, but individual use-of-force reports were not.

Table C.2: Use of Force Incidents per 100 Arrests (2020)

Department Name	Incidents	Arrests	UOF Per 100 Arrests
Watertown*	1	276	0
West Hartford	15	1,143	1
West Haven	1	1,125	0
Western CT State University	0	2	0
Weston	1	8	13
Westport	0	101	0
Wethersfield*	8	495	2
Willimantic	3	852	0
Wilton	6	134	4
Windsor*	3	539	1
Windsor Locks	No Records Reported		
Winsted	0	70	0
Wolcott*	1	154	1
Woodbridge	1	83	1
Yale University	No Records Reported		

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\*\* A summary of incidents was submitted, but individual use-of-force reports were not.