



## Review of the Evanston Police Department's Use of Force Policy September 2020

### Introduction

2020 has seen communities throughout the country battered by two major crises: a public health crisis in which the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a devastating economic and social toll, particularly in communities of color; and a continuing crisis of legitimacy in policing that has strained already fragile perceptions of safety in many of the same communities. The murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, and even more recently the police-involved shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, WI, have unleashed weeks of civil unrest and a public reckoning on the role of law enforcement in providing public safety. There are urgent calls for transformation, and for reimagining the social structures and institutions that have been built and are now struggling to keep our communities safe.

The City of Evanston has not been immune to these events. In late May, an EPD officer was involved in a use of force incident in the [arrest of Trent Hunt](#), a 20-year-old Black man who stopped to record a police encounter involving another young, Black man. In response to local and national events, the Evanston community has marched and rallied in support of social justice and racial equity.<sup>1</sup> In June, Evanston Mayor Stephen Hagerty announced the city's participation in the Obama Foundation's [Commit to Action Pledge](#), which calls on mayors to, within 90 days, address their police department's use of force policies. In July and August 2020, the mayor hosted several virtual community conversations on policing, with topics including use of force, training, budgeting, youth perspectives, and the complaint process, among others. In mid-August, the Evanston Police Department (EPD) asked the Northwestern Neighborhood & Network Initiative (N3) to review its current Use of Force Policy<sup>2</sup> and offer recommendations to strengthen the policy, which in turn, may lead to additional reforms aimed at greater equity, transparency, and accountability.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Evanston Residents Join the Black Lives Matter Movement*, The Daily Northwestern (June 22, 2020) available at <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2020/06/22/city/evanston-residents-join-the-black-lives-matter-movement/>; Faith Community Calls for Change in Jacob Blake Lament, (August 30, 2020), available at <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2020/08/30/city/faith-community-calls-for-change-in-jacob-blake-lament/>

<sup>2</sup> EPD Policy Manual Section 304 (2020).

The impact of police use of force extends beyond an individual officer or civilian to families, networks, neighborhoods, and broader communities. The impact of police violence also extends beyond the loss of life with several studies pointing to associations with elevated blood pressure, obesity, and loss of sleep, among other negative physical and mental health outcomes.<sup>3</sup> Police shootings, however, represent only the most extreme and visible form of police violence, abuse, and misconduct. For every shooting reported in the media, there are hundreds of instances of non-lethal use of force, verbal abuse, demeaning interactions, and other problematic police behaviors. For example, between 2004 and 2014 police in Chicago fired their weapons at citizens approximately 696 times, deployed their tasers 4,128 times, and were involved in more than 67,000 other forms of non-lethal interactions that required some “tactical response.”<sup>4</sup>

While the city of Evanston is not wrestling with comparable levels of police violence, it is important to take stock of police conduct and misconduct. In 2018, the year for which the most recent data is available, EPD reports [27 Use of Force](#) incidents with the highest numbers involving weaponless impact and the use of tasers. Use of Force data available in the public data portal only goes back to 2017, but, according to conversations with EPD, there have been four (4) Use of Force incidents involving deadly<sup>5</sup> force (3 shootings; 1 fatality) over the last ten years. Although some of instances of use of force or other problematic behaviors (including police involved killings) may not constitute “misconduct” under a department’s rules or legal statutes, each has a profound consequence for the communities, families, and individuals subjected to force and public perceptions of policing. In addition, such figures likely fail to capture the countless interactions between civilians and police every day—ranging from demoralizing to traumatizing—that generate feelings of mistrust, cynicism, and estrangement that undermine the relationship between the community and police that is crucial for public safety.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, EPD’s commitment to examining its Use of Force policy is recognition of this profound moment, which puts into sharp focus how a single incident of police use of force can affect the legitimacy of an entire department and profession.

N3 developed this brief report and recommendations following a review of EPD’s current Use of Force Policy, a review of data on EPD use of force made available through the city’s public data portal, and research on best practices in use of force, training, and transparency and

---

<sup>3</sup> Bor J, Venkataramani AS, Williams DR, Tsai AC. Police killings and their spillover effects on the mental health of black Americans: a population-based, quasi-experimental study. *The Lancet*. 2018; Sewell, Alyasah Ali, Justin M Feldman, Rashawn Ray, Keon L Gilbert, Kevin A Jefferson, and Hedwig Lee. 2020. "Illness spillovers of lethal police violence: the significance of gendered marginalization." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*:1-26.

<sup>4</sup> Citizen’s Office for Police Accountability. Case Portal. [www.chicagocopa.org/data-cases/case-portal/](http://www.chicagocopa.org/data-cases/case-portal/). Published 2019. Accessed August 19, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> EPD Use of Force Policy Section 300.1.1. defines deadly force as “[f]orce reasonably anticipated and intended to create a substantial likelihood of causing death or very serious injury.”

<sup>6</sup> Bell, Monica C. 2016. "Police reform and the dismantling of legal estrangement." *Yale IJ* 126:2054; Desmond, Matthew, Andrew V Papachristos, and David S Kirk. 2016. "Police Violence and Citizen Crime Reporting in the Black Community." *American Sociological Review* 81(5):857-76.

accountability.<sup>7</sup> Due to the quick turn-around required, the scope of N3’s recommendations is limited solely to the use of force policy. However, we recognize that there is a suite of companion policies on use of force<sup>8</sup> that will need to be aligned, and additional areas that must also be addressed to achieve comprehensive reform. We note these areas in the conclusion. The remainder of this document provides an overview of the current policy and identifies opportunities to strengthen current policy.

## Current EPD Policy

EPD’s use of force policy is publicly available online through the City of Evanston [website](#). The current policy was drafted by [Lexipol, LLC](#), a private corporation that crafts policy and provides updates to ensure that the policy meets basic state and federal legal requirements. The EPD policy document provides introductory and definitional statements on use of force, sets forth core guidelines for use of force, and provides guidance on procedures required following an incident involving use of force, such as incident reporting, notifying supervisors, and administering medical attention. The policy also includes provisions on training and follow-up analyses of use of force incidents. For purposes of providing a high-level, general overview of the policy, we’ve divided the policy document into three main categories: Introduction and Definitions (Sections 300-300.2.1); Guidelines on Use of Force (300.3-300.4.2); and Protocol following a Use of Force incident (Sections 300.5-300.9).

**Introduction and Definitions [Sections 300 – 300.2.1].** EPD’s policy includes an affirmative values statement that acknowledges the “value of all human life” and defines use of force as a means of “carrying out [officer’s] duties” in a manner that demonstrates “true appreciation for [officers’] authority and limitations...with respect to overcoming resistance while engaged in the performance of law enforcement duties.”

Current policy restates the standard set in the United States Supreme Court Case *Graham v. Connor*, 490. U.S. 386 (1989) which held that use of force by a police officer shall be judged by whether the use of force was “objectively reasonable” in light of the facts and circumstances facing the officer. The introduction also briefly states officers’ duty to intervene “when it is safe and reasonable to do so.”

---

<sup>7</sup> In addition to a review of policies from departments that have already taken steps to incorporate best or promising practices, additional resources not otherwise cited include: *Report on Police Reform and Racial Justice*, U.S. Conference of Mayors (2020), available at [https://www.usmayors.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/20.55.USCM\\_Police-Reform.Report.MEC\\_.pdf](https://www.usmayors.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/20.55.USCM_Police-Reform.Report.MEC_.pdf); Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing (2015), available at [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf); *The Prosecutor’s Role in Addressing Officer-Involved Fatalities and Critical Incident: A Toolkit for Prosecutors and Communities*, By Prosecutors and Communities, Institute for Innovation in Prosecution, John Jay College of Criminal Justice (2019) available at <http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/documents/Officer-Involved-Fatalities-Toolkit.PDF>; *Principles of Procedurally Just Policing*, The Justice Collaboratory at Yale Law School (2019), available at [https://law.yale.edu/sites/default/files/principles\\_of\\_procedurally\\_just\\_policing\\_report\\_11.18.19.pdf](https://law.yale.edu/sites/default/files/principles_of_procedurally_just_policing_report_11.18.19.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> E.g. EPD Policy Manual Sections 301-305.

**Guidelines on use of force [Sections 300.3 – 300.4.2].** These sections direct officers to consider a number of factors in using force, which is broadly defined as “the use of physical techniques or tactics, chemical agents or weapons [toward] another person” and implied to be permissible so long as it meets the standard of “reasonableness.”

These sections also describe the circumstances in which the use of deadly force is justified. For example, officers may use deadly force “to protect him/herself or others from what he/she reasonably believes would be an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury,” or to “stop a fleeing subject when the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has committed, or intends to commit, a felony involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious bodily injury or death to any other person if the subject is not immediately apprehended.” In the latter case, a verbal warning should precede the use of force, when possible.

These sections also provide restrictions on the use of force. These include a ban on warning shots, a ban on chokeholds unless deadly force is justified, and restrictions on shooting at or from moving vehicles.

**Protocol following a use of force incident [Sections 300.5 – 300.9].** EPD policy requires officers to submit a report following the use of force, or after an incident where an action by police “results in, or is alleged to have resulted in, injury or death to another person.” Reports will be submitted “to the officer’s immediate supervisor before completion of the officer’s tour of duty.” Officers are also required to notify supervisors “as soon as practicable” following a use of force, or an incident where force, harm, or sustained discomfort has been alleged.

Once notified, supervisors are expected to respond to the scene and ensure injured parties are treated, check the vicinity for evidence, and “evaluate the circumstances surrounding the incident and initiate an administrative investigation if there is a question of policy non-compliance.” Medical assistance is to be provided “prior to booking or release,” and individuals exhibiting signs of physical distress after an encounter should be continuously monitored until the individual can be medically assessed. In cases where officers “reasonably suspect a medical emergency [officers] should request medical assistance as soon as practicable.”

Once annually, the Office of Professional Standards is required to prepare a report for the Chief of Police, to detail “any trends in the use of force by members,” as well as training, equipment, and policy revision recommendations.

### **Revision Recommendations**

EPD’s current use of force policy has several areas of strength: the department bans chokeholds, warning shots, and shooting at and from moving vehicles. It also includes provisions regarding officers’ duty to intervene and a general statement on the use of de-escalation techniques when appropriate. Beyond the policy itself, the department

acknowledges the need for transparency and accountability, at least nominally, by making some data publicly available. In addition, oversight appears to be a key part of the recent decision to establish the [Citizen Police Review Commission](#), although the full impact of this reform is not yet known.

As noted, the “reasonableness” standard set forth in EPD’s departmental policy follows the legal standard established in *Graham*. *Graham* sets minimum requirements and broad principles on how police use of force is to be judged. While *Graham* establishes a legal floor for determining what is excessive use of force, it does not prevent police departments from going beyond this standard and providing additional guidance and/or restrictions on use of force. EPD already goes beyond the *Graham* standard. For example, the policy includes the requirement that officers consider an extensive list of circumstances in determining whether force in a particular situation is reasonable; and requires that use of force be not only reasonable, but also *proportionate* to the situation.

Nevertheless, there is opportunity to strengthen the policy further, and EPD can explicitly affirm that it aspires to go beyond the *Graham* standard in any revised policy. The remainder of the report provides recommendations to build upon this solid foundation. The recommendations are grouped by the current EPD policy structure outlined above, and are anchored by three guiding, best practice principles:

- **Sanctity of life:** A use of force policy should reflect a departmental duty to preserve equally the lives of officers and civilians. The act of using force must be accompanied by a responsibility to address the consequences of such an action.
- **Proportionality:** A use of force policy must direct officers to use only the level of force that is necessary. Policies should also promote and prioritize de-escalation.
- **Accountability and oversight:** A use of force policy must clearly articulate what happens when the policy is not followed. Policies should specify standards for how officers, supervisors, and the department will respond to incidents involving the use of force. The policy should provide processes to ensure transparency regarding incidents involving use of force.

Where appropriate, we provide excerpts and examples from use of force policies of departments that are recognized by the field as effective or model policies.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> For example, the [Camden County Police](#) Department’s use of force policy, which was most recently revised with the help of the [Policing Project](#) at NYU School of Law has been hailed as a comprehensive, model policy.

## Introduction and Definitions [Sections 300 – 300.2.1]

**Recommendation 1. Require that officers use force as a last resort (Sanctity of life).** *The policy should require that officers exhaust all reasonable means before exercising force.*

**Commentary:** Requiring officers to exhaust all reasonable means, including in cases leading up to the use of deadly force reinforces the importance of de-escalation (discussed further below). The requirement of “reasonableness” should extend to actions that officers take up leading up to the use of deadly force, in addition to the act of using deadly force itself. The department should ensure that officers are properly trained to give them the critical decision-making tools necessary to consider, in these often challenging and stressful moments, whether there are other options available that will help them achieve their objective safely, without resorting to force at all.

*Camden County: “Officers should exhaust all other reasonable means before resorting to the use of force. Using force only as a last resort means that officers do not engage in unnecessary, overly aggressive, or otherwise improper actions that create a situation where force becomes needed. Using force only as a last resort also means that an officer shall not use force if a safe alternative would achieve the law enforcement objective.” (Core Principle #2, §10).*

*Los Angeles: “...The reasonableness of an officer’s use of deadly force includes consideration of the officer’s tactical conduct and decisions leading up to the use of deadly force.” (Special Order No. 5, §III. Policy).*

**Recommendation 2. Provide a clear statement on policy for noncompliance (Accountability and oversight).** *The policy should provide clear and concrete consequences for policy violations.*

**Commentary:** The current EPD policy is silent on consequences for noncompliance. A statement on the possible consequences should an officer violate the policy will reinforce the principle of accountability. Though EPD has a disciplinary procedure, evoking that procedure in this particular policy may help foster greater transparency and accountability with the community.

*Camden County: “...[O]fficers have an affirmative, individual duty to ensure compliance with this directive and with applicable state and federal laws. This applies to the officer’s own conduct, as well as observation or knowledge of the conduct by other employees. This directive reinforces the responsibility of officers to take those steps possible prevent or stop illegal or inappropriate uses of force by other officers. Actions inconsistent with this directive may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. At the same time, officers whose actions are consistent with the law and the provisions of this directive will be strongly supported in any subsequent review of their conduct regarding use of force.” (Policy, §4).*

## Guidelines on use of force.

### **Recommendation 3. Provide specific guidance on the principle of proportionality**

**(Proportionality):** *The policy should expressly require that any use of force meet the test of proportionality.*

**Commentary:** While police use of force must be “objectively reasonable,” the principle of proportionality goes beyond the minimum legal standard to require that the any use of force also be proportionate. Proportionality requires consideration of whether the use of force incident is proportional to the threat faced by the officer, under the totality of the circumstances.<sup>10</sup> It requires officers to consider whether they are using the minimal level of force necessary to mitigate a threat, as well as how the public will perceive the use of force. The principle of proportionality does not require that an officer jeopardize his or her own safety, but it does require that the officer consider multiple factors, to the extent possible, before resorting to force. These factors may include: 1) the risk of harm presented by the individual; the risk of harm to the officer or innocent bystanders by using force; if there is a practical, less harmful alternative available to the officer; the seriousness of the law enforcement objective; whether further de-escalation techniques are feasible, including the time available to an officer to make a decision, and whether additional time could be gained through other tactical means;; mental or physical disability, medical condition, and other physical and mental characteristics; and whether there are other exigent/emergency circumstances.<sup>11</sup>

*Camden County* “Officers encounter a wide range of situations in the field, but the sanctity of human life should be at the heart of every decision an officer makes. When force cannot be avoided through de-escalation or other techniques, officers must use no more force than is proportionate to the circumstances...Officers may only use force that is objectively reasonable, necessary, and as a last resort...” (*Core Principle #3, §11*).

**Recommendation 4. Commitment to de-escalation (Proportionality):** *The policy should provide a clear statement requiring de-escalation, highlighting the importance of tactics such as verbal and nonverbal communication, creating distance, continual assessment of a situation, and the use of time to calm a potentially volatile situation.*

---

<sup>10</sup> *30 Guiding Principles on Use of Force*, PERF, 27 (2016), available at <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/30%20guiding%20principles.pdf>. On May 24, 2017, members of the American Law Institute approved the following black letter text on the principle of proportionality: “Officers should not use more force than is proportional to the legitimate law enforcement objective at stake...”, available at <https://www.policingproject.org/ali-use-of-force>

<sup>11</sup> Camden County Use of Force Policy available at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58a33e881b631bc60d4f8b31/t/5d5c89c2e3bc4c000192f311/1566345667504/CCPD+UOF+Policy+%288.21.19%29+%28FINAL%29.pdf>.

**Commentary:** Including a separate statement on de-escalation within the use of force policy will signal the department’s commitment to not only the sanctity of life, but to the principle of proportionality. The inclusion of de-escalation as a policy must be aligned with appropriate de-escalation training.

Seattle: *“Selection of de-escalation options should be guided by the totality of the circumstances with the goal of attaining voluntary compliance; considerations include: [c]ommunication...[t]ime...[d]istance...[s]hielding...” (Title 8.100 – De-Escalation, §1c).*

Baltimore: *“...Members may be justified in using force at one moment, but not justified in using force several seconds later due to the changing dynamics of a situation . . . When possible, members should "slow down" the situation and re-assess how they can achieve the most peaceful outcome.” (Core Principles, §6).*

Camden County: *“ It should be every officer’s goal to resolve all situations without using force. To make this more likely, officers must use de-escalation and force-mitigation tactics and techniques whenever doing so will not put the officer or another person at undue risk.” (Core Principle #2, §7).*

**Recommendation 5. Duty to intercede (Accountability and oversight).** *The policy should expand the guidance on officers’ duty to intercede, including requiring an affirmative responsibility on the part of supervisors to issue direct orders to stop any known violation of the use of force policy. The policy should also prohibit retaliation against individuals who report and cooperate with use-of-force investigations.*

**Commentary:** When officers fail to intervene to stop problematic behaviors of other officers, it erodes the legitimacy of the officers, the department, and in many cases, the entire profession. An officer’s role in preventing or stopping excessive or unreasonable use of force should be reinforced and clearly delineated in policy, including the role of a supervisor in these instances. Moreover, to further empower and encourage officers to cooperate with any use of force investigations, the policy should explicitly prohibit retaliation in these cases.

Baltimore: *“Members shall intervene to stop any member from using excessive force. Failure to intervene may subject a member to disciplinary action. Members must immediately, or as soon as safety allows, notify a permanent-rank supervisor after such an intervention.” (Directives, Required Action, Duty to Intervene).*

Camden County: *“Every employee has an obligation to ensure compliance, by themselves and others, with Department directives and regulations, as well as all applicable laws, regarding use of force. Any employee who observes an officer about to use force that is illegal, excessive, or otherwise inconsistent with this directive must, absent extraordinary circumstances, do whatever he/she can to interrupt the flow of events before the fellow officer does something that makes any official action necessary . . . If a supervisor observes such a violation, the supervisor must issue a direct order to stop the violation.” (Core Principle #6, §28).*



[Chicago](#): *“Retaliation Prohibited. The Department prohibits any form of retaliation, interference, intimidation, or coercion against a Department member for: reporting misconduct, including a use of force that is allegedly in violation of this directive, or cooperating with any complaint or misconduct investigation. (V. Duty to Intervene and Report, ¶D).*

**Recommendation 6. Prohibit the use of force on restrained persons (Sanctity of Life).** *The policy should prohibit the use of force on restrained persons unless necessary to prevent injury or escape. For example, the policy should prohibit restraining subjects by tying rear-cuffed hands to restrained ankles or legs and prohibit transportation of subjects in a face down position within any vehicle.*

**Commentary:** Codifying policy related to the restraint of individuals further acknowledges the totality of use-of-force, in that force should not be applied to those who pose no threat.

[New York City](#): *“Members of the service **SHALL NOT** . . . “Use any level of force on handcuffed or otherwise restrained subjects unless necessary to prevent injury, escape or to overcome active physical resistance or assault . . . Connect or tie rear-cuffed hands to cuffed or restrained ankles or legs . . . Transport a subject facedown....” (Force Guidelines, Prohibitions, §2).*

[Baltimore](#): *“...If restrained, persons are not to be positioned facedown as it may cause positional asphyxia, and placing restrained persons on their back may lead to radial nerve damage to the wrists and forearms. Restrained persons are to be placed in a seated position or on their sides.” (Core Principles, Duty to Provide Medical Assistance, §10).*

**Recommendation 7. Ensure additional protections for vulnerable populations (Sanctity of Life).** *The policy should require officers to exercise additional care and caution with vulnerable populations including, but not limited to children, the elderly, individuals with pre-existing conditions, and individuals who exhibit symptoms of known or perceived mental illnesses, intellectual or developmental disabilities, or substance use disorders.*

**Commentary:** Although current EPD policies on restraints and electronic control devices provides some restrictions on the use of these devices<sup>12</sup>, a requirement to take into account the physical and mental state of a more inclusive list of individuals with whom officers interact reinforces the department’s commitment to the sanctity of all life. Its inclusion also acknowledges the potential impact of a use of force incident on individuals and others more broadly, and emphasizes the department’s commitment to minimize harm.

[San Francisco](#): *“The use of force against vulnerable populations - including children, elderly persons, pregnant women, people with physical and mental disabilities and people with limited English proficiency - can undermine public trust and should be used as a last resort, when all other reasonable means have been exhausted.” (General Order 5.01, 1(H)).*

**Protocol following a use of force incident.**

---

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. EPD Policy 302 and 304.

**Recommendation 8. Reinforce the need to provide and/or seek medical care (Sanctity of Life).**

*The policy should direct officers to render aid, when necessary, and provide for officers to be trained on the appropriate use of tools and strategies available to provide such aid. The policy should require, when necessary, that medical assistance should be requested from emergency medical officers or provided by transporting the individual directly to the nearest hospital emergency room.*

**Commentary:** A use of force incident does not end with the act of force. Instead, officers should consider the entirety of the event, which may require providing or obtaining care for any physical injuries inflicted on an individual or aggravated by the force used. Including an affirmative responsibility to provide or request aid or transport individuals needing medical attention affirms the sanctity of life principle.

*Baltimore: “Whenever there is an obvious injury, complaint of injury, or medical attention is requested by any individual, members shall immediately render aid consistent with his/her training and experience and notify the Communications Unit. Members shall request that a medic respond to the scene or transport the individual directly to the nearest hospital emergency room. The member shall then notify their supervisor and the Communications Section.” (Required Action, Duty to Provide Medical Assistance, §1).*

**Recommendation 9. Improve data collection and access (Accountability and oversight).** *The policy should require that EPD track and make publicly available comprehensive use of force data.*

**Commentary:** While EPD makes its use of force data available through a [public data portal](#), the data is only reported in aggregate form by use of force category. This provides little information of value. For greater transparency, the policy should mandate that EPD gather and report data to include - *at a minimum* – race, age, gender, geography. EPD should make public the Office of Professional Standards’ annual report on use of force, while balancing any necessary due process or privacy concerns.

*Camden County: “The Department will collect and analyze its use of force data in the Risk Management Use of Force database. The Use of Force statistics and analysis will include at a minimum: a. The type of force b. The types and degree of injury to suspect and officer C. Date and time d. Location of the incident e. Officer's unit f. District station where the use of force occurred g. Officer's assignment h. Number of officers using force in the incident i. Officer's activity when force was used (ex. Handcuffing, search warrant, pursuit) j. Subject's activity requiring the officer to use force k. Officer's demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity, rank, number of years with SFPD, number of years as a police officer) 1. Suspect demographics including race/ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, primary language and other factors such as mental illness, cognitive impairment, developmental disability, drug and alcohol use/addiction and homeless.” (Use of Force Data Collection & Analysis, §41).*

*San Francisco: “The Department will collect and analyze its use of force data in the Risk Management Use of Force database. The Use of Force statistics and analysis will include at a*

*minimum: a. The type of force b. The types and degree of injury to suspect and officer C. Date and time d. Location of the incident e. Officer's unit f. District station where the use of force occurred g. Officer's assignment h. Number of officers using force in the incident i. Officer's activity when force was used (ex. Handcuffing, search warrant, pursuit) j. Subject's activity requiring the officer to use force k. Officer's demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity, rank, number of years with SFPD, number of years as a police officer) 1. Suspect demographics including race/ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, primary language and other factors such as mental illness, cognitive impairment, developmental disability, drug and alcohol use/addiction and homeless..." (General Order 5.01, VII(C)).*

[Indianapolis Metropolitan PD](#) has a detailed dashboard displaying detailed demographic information on use of force.

[Los Angeles](#) releases its annual use of force reports in a user-friendly and accessible format.

## Conclusion & Next Steps

Despite the challenges facing the field of policing, opportunities remain to strengthen the relationship between police and the communities they serve. The concept of police reform often feels inadequate to the demands for justice, the task of transformation, and the ability to address the underlying issues of inequality. For many, this tension is not one to be reconciled. But police reform - working towards transparency, equity, accountability, and legitimacy in policing - remains a critical component to a comprehensive approach to public safety. The City of Evanston and EPD have embraced the significance of this moment in part by publicly committing to addressing EPD's Use of Force Policy. It is important to note that while the development of a clear, detailed, and transparent policy is critical, it is only the beginning. A police department may have good policy on paper, but the implementation of that policy is equally, if not more, important. An effective Use of Force Policy must be accompanied by effective training, greater data transparency, and strong accountability measures such as a comprehensive internal review process and external oversight.

Recommended next steps include:

1. **Commit to revising EPD's current Use of Force Policy.** As already noted, although EPD has a solid foundation from which to build, there is room for improvement. EPD can make clearer its commitment to the principle of the sanctity of life and accountability and provide officers clear guidance that will help ensure the safety of officers and community members. As part of a formal revision process, EPD may wish to expand its outreach to other national organizations dedicated to police reform such as the [Policing Project at NYU School of Law](#), the [Police Executive Research Forum](#) (PERF), or the [Center for Policing Equity](#), which recently participated in the Mayor's June 2020 conversation on Use of Force & Body Cameras.

2. **Provide opportunity for feedback.** Evanston has a history of robust community engagement and dialogue, and many Evanstonians and local organizations are actively engaging in these very issues. The city and EPD should provide a forum or process for stakeholders to provide input on any new proposed policy. In addition, as part of the city and EPD’s ongoing commitment to engaging in constructive dialogue on racial inequities more broadly, the city and EPD should consider launching a formal [racial reconciliation process](#). The National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, which has facilitated this effort for several jurisdictions, describes the work as one aimed at helping “communities and law enforcement to come to a position of respect and trust by recognizing real historical harms and experiences, building empathy, and finding common ground and a mutually supported way forward.”<sup>13</sup>
3. **Review and update Use of Force training.** Should the Use of Force policy be revised, EPD must, at a minimum, commit to reviewing and updating its training. The updated training should reflect any revisions made to the Use of Force Policy to ensure EPD officers have the tools to implement the policy effectively, and are informed on policies and procedures for noncompliance.
4. **Consider additional reforms needed to bolster any revised Use of Force Policy.** A complete assessment of additional, complementary reforms needed is beyond the scope of this review, but an effective Use of Force policy is bolstered by strong policies across multiple issue areas, particularly in the area of transparency and accountability. EPD should explore complementary reforms that may be needed, such as those to enhance data gathering and reporting. EPD should also consider an assessment of its internal investigations and complaints process, and its early intervention systems to ensure they align with any updates to the use of force policy and also reflect best practices.

The [Northwestern Neighborhood & Network Initiative](#) (N3) promotes new ways for faculty, experts, and students at Northwestern University’s Institute for Policy Research to engage communities, civic partners, and policymakers to address core problems facing the residents of Chicago and surrounding communities. Specific projects and types of engagement are linked by a focus on how the social relationships among networks, geographic communities, and the constellation of groups, organizations, and civic partners affect what we feel, think, and do—and how understanding, building, and leveraging this sort of network-thinking can improve neighborhoods, the city, and our region.

---

<sup>13</sup> See *Reconciliation Between Police and Communities: Case Studies and Lessons Learned*, National Network for Safe Communities (2018), available at <https://nnscommunities.org/guides/reconciliation-between-police-and-communities-case-studies-and-lessons-learned/>.