



Minneapolis Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Number:
7-800

Volume Seven – Field Operations

Tactical Response

7-802 De-escalation

(08/23/25)

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I. Purpose

MPD and its members shall uphold the sanctity of life (P&P 0-102 and P&P 5-301) by striving to protect and preserve human life in all situations and keep the community and MPD members safe from harm.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members use de-escalation techniques and tactics to reduce threats, gain people's voluntary compliance, and safely resolve a situation. Using de-escalation techniques and tactics can reduce the need for force and allow members to provide for their own safety as well as the safety of the public.

II. Duty to De-escalate

- A. Sworn members have a clear affirmative duty to de-escalate and use de-escalation techniques and tactics whenever feasible, to minimize the need to use force, to resolve incidents without the use of force when possible, and to increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance with legitimate and lawful orders.
- B. Members shall respect the humanity, dignity, and civil rights of people, including community members and Department members, when using de-escalation techniques and tactics and when identifying the proper use of such techniques and tactics.
- C. Members' duty to de-escalate continues throughout the entire encounter.
- D. Encounters with vulnerable populations such as minors and people experiencing a crisis or a behavioral health challenge require a more nuanced and individualized response with particular emphasis on de-escalation techniques and tactics (P&P 5-301 and P&P 7-803), as such situations may be more unpredictable and a typical approach may not work or be appropriate.

III. Avoid Escalation and Unnecessary Risk

- A. Members shall not use tactics that unnecessarily escalate an encounter or create a need for force. Members shall use tactical positioning, other sound tactics and other available options during encounters to maximize the likelihood that they can safely control the situation.

- B.** Members shall not use words or actions that a reasonable person would conclude are intended to incite or escalate reactive behavior. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to taunting people.

IV. Procedures/Regulations

- A.** As with all situations, members should implement the steps of the critical decision-making model to inform their actions (P&P 7-801).
- B.** Members shall consider, based on their actual observations and the totality of the circumstances, whether the person's lack of compliance is a deliberate attempt to resist or whether the person may be noncompliant due to factors such as:

- Mental health or medical conditions.
- Behavioral health challenges.
- Developmental or intellectual disabilities or conditions.
- Visual or hearing impairments.
- Language barriers.
- Drug or alcohol use.
- A crisis situation (P&P 7-803).
- Whether a person is acting out of fear.

The person may not comply with commands immediately, and members may need to try multiple times without resorting to force or the threat of force.

- C.** The foundations of de-escalation are patience, flexibility, and the desire to resolve each situation peacefully. De-escalation techniques and tactics include, but are not limited to:
- Using the critical decision-making model to reevaluate force options and consider legal authority to act.
 - Using communication techniques, such as:
 - Talking to the person using a tone of voice and language that is not aggressive or confrontational.
 - Explaining the member's actions and responding to questions (e.g., directly answering questions about why the police are there or taking action).
 - Having one member take the lead in verbal communication.
 - Giving clear commands to be followed and affording the person a reasonable opportunity to comply.
 - Verbal persuasion such as explaining, without threats, how the person would benefit from cooperation.
- D.** Providing warnings in an effort to reduce the intensity of a situation.

- Attempting to slow down or stabilize the situation.
 - Using additional members, Behavioral Crisis Response (BCR), specially trained members or units (such as negotiators), and other resources to help minimize the overall force used and make more force options available (P&P 7-801 Critical Decision Making and P&P 7-803 Crisis Intervention).
 - Delaying contact, delaying custody, planning to make contact or pursue enforcement at a different time or under different circumstances.
 - Waiting out the person when there is no immediate need for enforcement action or escalation of the encounter.
- Considering tactical positioning to optimize the reactionary gap, including by using distance, cover or concealment.
 - Placing barriers between the person and a member.
 - Attempting to isolate the person and contain the scene.
- Physical disengagement.
- Tactical disengagement.
 - Members may choose to tactically disengage to avoid resorting to physical force, if continued contact with a person may result in an unreasonable risk to the person, the public or members, consistent with the critical decision-making model (P&P 7-801).
 - Members should make the decision to tactically disengage based on the information gathered, the risks assessed and the authority to act. The decision to tactically disengage must be based on the level of offense and risk to public safety.
 - In crisis situations, members shall only tactically disengage in accordance with P&P 7-803, including the approval requirements in that policy.

V. De-Escalation Reporting Requirements

Any time a Use of Force details page is required for an incident, the member shall also complete the de-escalation section in the Use of Force details page (P&P 5-302) and shall document their de-escalation efforts in the Narrative Text.

VI. Definitions

Critical Decision-Making Model (CDM): A tool that allows members to organize situational factors and inform their decisions as they respond to police incidents of all degrees of complexity. All sworn members are trained in using the critical decision-making model (CDM). (P&P 7-801)

De-escalation: Techniques and tactics to reduce the intensity of a situation. These strategies serve to increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance, minimize the need to use force, and

uphold the sanctity of life by enabling members to resolve situations without the use of force or with the lowest degree of force necessary. (P&P 7-802)

Physical Disengagement: When physically engaged with a person, disengagement is breaking contact or physically creating space between the member and the person to allow for reassessment of the situation.

Tactical Disengagement: A strategic decision to leave, delay contact, or delay custody of a person when there is not an immediate need to detain them.

Totality of the Circumstances: All facts known to the member at the time, including the conduct of both the member and the person leading up to the action (such as the use of force).