



BOLTON POLICE DEPARTMENT  
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June 11, 2020

As I stated in my June 1, 2020 letter, all Officers of the Bolton Police Department condemn the Minneapolis officers' actions that resulted in the tragic death of George Floyd. Massachusetts law enforcement agencies have long been in front of the curve when it comes to the advancement of police procedures designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens we protect. I understand the concerns that the community has about law enforcement and have received many questions regarding Bolton Police operations. My hope is that you will find the answers to these questions reassuring that your Bolton Police Officers are highly trained and professional.

**Question:** Does Bolton PD have body-worn cameras or cruiser cameras?

**Answer:** Bolton PD currently does not have either. We have reached out to one of the major vendors that manufacturers tasers, body-worn cameras, and cruiser cameras for a preliminary quote. If we were to implement this program tomorrow, we would need to invest roughly \$400,000 for the equipment and approximately \$200,000 for staffing as well as \$200,000+ annual recurring costs. At this time, there are no grants available to assist police departments in covering some or all of these costs.

**Question:** Does Bolton PD have any surplus military equipment from the Federal government 1033 program?

**Answer:** Yes, we received a tv and typewriter approximately 20+ years ago. We do not have any military surplus guns or tanks nor did we ever receive any.

**Question:** Does Bolton PD have a citizen Review Board?

**Answer:** We do not have a citizen review board. The department has a close connection with the community with frequent interaction. When an issue arises, the public has easy access to the Chief of Police to voice their concerns.

**Question:** Does Bolton PD receive de-escalation training?

**Answer:** Yes, Officers are required to learn de-escalation during the Massachusetts Police Training Committee (MPTC) recruit academy training program and are required to undergo additional de-escalation training during the annual in-service training programs as required by the MPTC. We have updated our Use of Force policy with the following language: *De-Escalation: Taking an action or communicating verbally or non-verbally during a potential force*

*encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary. Whenever it is determined, based on an officer's training and experience, that circumstances of a situation allow, an officer shall use de-escalation techniques and other alternatives before resorting to force and to reduce the need for force. De-escalation techniques include, but are not limited to the following:*

- a. Command presence*
- b. Advisements*
- c. Warnings*
- d. Verbal Judo and persuasion*
- e. Tactical re-positioning*

**Question:** Can Bolton Officers shoot at a moving car?

**Answer:** Officers are not permitted to shoot at a moving vehicle, except in the very limited circumstance where, consistent with the standard set forth in *Graham v. Connor* and *Tennessee v. Garner*, doing so is required to defend themselves or another when the occupants of the vehicle are employing deadly force, which the officer reasonably perceives as an immediate threat of death or serious physical injury to themselves or another (including situations where the vehicle itself is being used as a deadly weapon and the officer is unable to escape the path of travel), and the officer reasonably believes that they will not endanger innocent persons. It is imperative that officers not position themselves in such a way as to create a likelihood of being struck by an occupied vehicle.

**Question:** Are Bolton Officers required to use a force continuum?

**Answer:** Yes, Officers are all trained to use only that level of force objectively reasonable based upon the totality of the circumstances. We have updated our Use of Force Policy with the Force Continuum Model, Baton Chart, and Taser Chart.

**Question:** Are Bolton Officers required to file Use of Force reports?

**Answer:** Yes, Offices are required to complete a use of force report for each instance where force is used.

**Question:** Do Bolton Officers have a duty to intervene?

**Answer:** Yes, all officers are trained and required to intervene when they recognize that any other officer or supervisor, of any rank, is acting contrary to the law or policy. We have updated our Use of Force policy with the following language: *All officers of the Bolton Police Department should be aware of their personal responsibility during a use of force encounter. Officers shall have an affirmative duty to intervene should they observe a situation in which they perceive more than the necessary use of force is being deployed by a fellow officer.*

**Question:** Are Bolton Officers allowed to use chokeholds or strangleholds?

**Answer:** No, these techniques are not part of the defensive tactics curriculum as instructed by the MPTC. We have updated our Use of Force policy with the following language: *An officer*

*shall not use lateral vascular neck restraints, chokeholds, or strangleholds except in circumstances where lethal force is justified.*

**Question:** Are Bolton Officers required to warn before shooting?

**Answer:** Yes, consistent with the standards set forth in *Graham v. Connor* and *Tennessee v. Garner*, officers may only use that level of force that is objectively reasonable based upon the totality of circumstances. Officers will always attempt to use the lowest level of force in order to effectuate the lawful objective and will attempt to warn individuals prior to using any level of force, provided that they have the time and opportunity to do so. There may be, however, some very limited instances, where it is impossible for officers to provide a warning prior to using force, such as when doing so is necessary in order to preserve human life.

The changes that we have made to our policies represent what our philosophy has always been at the Bolton Police Department. However, given the recent events we believe it is time to formally incorporate them into our policies. I as well as any of the Bolton Police Officers would be more than happy to discuss any concerns with you. Please stop and speak with any of the officers you may see out on the road or at the station. It is our hope that you have found the answers to your questions beneficial and of value. The updates to our Use of Force policy may be viewed on our website.

Finally, I want to remind everyone that we are still amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and we still need to observe social distancing, wear masks, and wash your hands frequently. During this pandemic your officers have been at work every day protecting and serving your community.

Sincerely,

Warren E. Nelson, Jr.  
Chief of Police