



# Poulsbo Police Department

Honor \* Integrity \* Teamwork \* Professionalism

Dan Schoonmaker, Chief of Police

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Dan Schoonmaker  
FROM: Deputy Chief Troy Grossman  
SUBJECT: 2019 Use of Force & Pursuit Analysis  
DATE: April 20, 2020

The Poulsbo Police Department reviews every use of force. When an officer uses force, it is documented in their report and a supervisor is notified. The supervisor will review all related documentation, review body camera video, and interview involved parties when necessary. The supervisor will complete a policy review, which is forwarded through the Deputy Chief and Chief to ensure the actions of the officer hold true to current law, policy, and best practice.

In 2019, the Poulsbo Police Department documented and reviewed twelve incidents requiring officers to use force.<sup>1</sup> Of the twelve, eleven were found to be within policy. The final use of force involved is a lethal force deployment that is still under investigation.

Use of Force: Type of Force	
Physical Control	10
Taser: Probe deployment	
Taser: Contact deployment	
OC/Chemical	
Impact Weapons (Baton)	
Personal Strikes	1*
Impact Munitions (Bean Bag)	
Vascular Neck Restraint	
Firearm	1
Total	12

*\*Strike was accidental while suspect was being taken into custody*

Use of Force by Ethnicity	
Caucasian	9
African American	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2
Asian	1
Hispanic	0
Unknown/Other	0
Total	12

<sup>1</sup> Poulsbo Police Department Policy - §300 - Use of Force



# Poulsbo Police Department

Honor \* Integrity \* Teamwork \* Professionalism

Use of Force by Gender	
Male	11
Female	1
Unknown	0

Use of Force - Associated Factors	
Intoxicated/Drugs	6
Mental Health	2

Use of Force - Call Types	
Officer Initiated Contact (car stop)	1
Misdemeanor Crime Response	5
Felony Crime Response	5
Other Response (i.e. mental health)	1

		Treatment			
Use of Force Injuries		Injuries (visible or complaint of pain)	On scene Aid	Hospital	Deceased
Suspect	3	2			1
Officer	2	1			

## Additional Notes/Trends:

- There was a total of 12 uses of force for 2019, down from 21 in 2018<sup>2</sup>
- Poulsbo Police Officers responded to 11,618 calls for service<sup>3</sup>
- % of 2019 incidents in which force was used: 0.10%

## ANALYSIS:

The way we analyze and evaluate all uses of force is critical. It assists in developing training plans, ensure accountability of our employees, and most important, it builds trust between our department and the community.

In 2019, we maintained focus on training as an agency. Some of the training directly related to the use of force included: Daily Training Bulletins on policy, defensive tactics (OC Spray and Baton), Less-lethal training (Taser & 40mm re-certification), handgun and rifle qualifications, and classroom lectures on the use of force, deadly force, and the expectations for our employees.

In 2019, we had a total of twelve uses of force. This was roughly a 25% decrease from 2018. One of the uses of force was related to a fatal police shooting that is still under investigation. Two incidents resulted in minor injury to the suspect (no hospitalization required). The remaining nine uses of force had no reported injuries.

<sup>2</sup> 2018 Use of Force stats included 6 “displays of force only” of the 22 incidents

<sup>3</sup> Kitsap 911 – 2019 Law Enforcement Activity Report



# Poulsbo Police Department

Honor \* Integrity \* Teamwork \* Professionalism

Most applications of force (10 of 12) involved officers using physical control (taking uncooperative suspect to the ground). This is a tactic used to control aggressive or uncooperative suspects so they can be taken into custody.

The use of force listed a “personal strike” was incidental contact during the arrest of a theft suspect who had fled on foot and was taken into custody. It was documented by the officer as a use of force out of an abundance of caution. Again, no injuries were reported by the subject.

There were no significant trends noted as part of this analysis.

## DISPLAYS OF FORCE

The Poulsbo Police Department takes a conservative approach in our documentation and review of all uses of force. This includes documenting any time an officer displays force, such as pointing a firearm or Taser at a suspect, without any other physical force being applied. Our intent is to emphasize the impact of our decision-making process and to promote an understanding of the significance of our actions, even when physical force is not used.

There were four “displays of force only” on 2019. In each of the four cases, they were unrelated to any of the uses of force analyzed in this report. All were found to be consistent with state law and department policy.

## VEHICLE PURSUITS

### **RCW 46.61.024 – Attempting to elude a police vehicle**

Any driver of a motor vehicle who willfully fails or refuses to immediately bring his or her vehicle to a stop and who drives his or her vehicle in a reckless manner while attempting to elude a pursuing police vehicle, after being given a visual or audible signal to bring the vehicle to a stop, shall be guilty of a class C felony. The signal given by the police officer may be by hand, voice, emergency light or siren. The officer giving such a signal shall be in uniform and the vehicle shall be equipped with lights and siren.

### **Poulsbo Police Department Policy §307 – Vehicle Pursuits**

An event involving one or more law enforcement officers attempting to apprehend a suspect, who is attempting to avoid arrest while operating a vehicle by using high-speed driving or other evasive tactics, such as driving off a highway, turning suddenly or driving in a legal manner but willfully failing to yield to and officer’s emergency signal to stop.



# Poulsbo Police Department

Honor \* Integrity \* Teamwork \* Professionalism

Our policy allows officers to initiate a pursuit when it is reasonable to believe that a suspect, who has been given an appropriate signal to stop by a law enforcement officer, is attempting to evade arrest or detention by fleeing in a vehicle. There are numerous factors for the officer and supervisors to consider such as the risk to community safety should the suspect escape, and whether other methods would be safer and more effective.

All pursuits are reviewed by a supervisor and command staff to ensure they hold true to the law, policy, best practice and department expectations.

Pursuit Statistics	2019
Day	
Night	5
Within Policy	5
Policy Violation	

Reasons for Pursuit	
Traffic Violation	1
Misdemeanor	2
Felony	1
Other Activity	1

Concluding Events	
Discontinued by Officer	3
Discontinued by Supervisor	
Collision	
Stop Stick	1
Vehicle Voluntarily Stopped	1

## **ANALYSIS:**

In 2019, all officers attended our annual Emergency Vehicle Operation Training and were provided training on our pursuit policy throughout the year. In addition, command staff expectations during pursuits were discussed at an all hands meeting.

The analysis of our vehicle pursuits in 2019 shows a 28% reduction in the overall numbers from 2018 (5 vs. 8). Each of the pursuits that occurred were reviewed by command staff and determined to be in policy. In three of the five pursuits, officers used their judgement and discretion and self-terminated the pursuit after balancing the risk to the public of continuing the pursuit versus the need to apprehend the suspect.

All pursuits occurred during the night shift hours (6:00 p.m. through 6:00 a.m.) Only one pursuit involved the application of a "stop stick" pursuit intervention device. There were no accidents reported because of any pursuits.



# Poulsbo Police Department

Honor \* Integrity \* Teamwork \* Professionalism

Based upon my review, I conclude that our current vehicle pursuit policy and expectations, are effective, our officers understand them, and they are strictly abiding by them.

---

Review by Dan Schoonmaker, Chief of Police

August 27, 2020

Date