



Use of Force Incidents ~ 2016

The University of New Hampshire Police Department recognizes and respects the value and special integrity of each human life. In vesting police officers with the lawful authority to use force to protect the public welfare, a careful balancing of all human interests is required. Therefore, it is the policy of this department that police officers shall use only that force which is reasonably necessary to effectively bring an incident under control, while protecting the lives of the officer and/or another.

In 2016, the University of New Hampshire Police Department reported twenty-six (26) use-of-force incidents by its personnel – the same number as 2015. There were no uses-of-force which resulted in an internal investigation brought about by either an administrative review or a civilian complaint. A total of sixteen (16) different officers (12 – UNH Police Department; 3 – Town of Hampton Police Department; and, 1 – Dover Police Department) were identified as having applied some measure of force during the course of their duties. In two (2) of the instances where force was necessary, a TASER® was displayed during the event. In an additional two (2) instances, a TASER® was deployed. All four (4) events involving a TASER® were able to reviewed, and the deployment of force was both judicious and appropriate in all four (4) events. Of the twenty-five (25) reported instances whereby force was used against an individual(s) – a total of (29) individuals were involved. The application of said force was reviewed both by certified use-of-force instructors, as well as the executive management of the University of New Hampshire Police Department. These reviews were conducted to make certain the deployment of force was done within the strictest and most reasonable parameters of law, administrative rule, and department standard operating procedures.

The University of New Hampshire Police Department holds its personnel to the standards set forth in NH RSA 625:5 titled Physical Force in Law Enforcement, and it is this objective standard against which all instances of the use-of-force are gauged.

Of the twenty-six (26) times personnel deployed force to effect an arrest and/or bring an incident under control, all were deemed an appropriate and judicious use-of-force. The vast majority of those events involved individuals taking flight upon either being approached, or during an interaction with, our police personnel, and they were ultimately taken into custody. These events are still documented as uses-of-force, while not necessarily being dynamic events between members of the public and our Officers. We maintain it is in the interest of complete transparency that every event involving any use-of-force, no matter how seemingly inconsequential, be documented and accounted for; and, all of those police personnel involved are evaluated and objectively critiqued as to the both the appropriateness of the deployment of force as well as their decision-making process. To this end, none of the reviews resulted in findings whereby fault could be assigned to an Officer or Officer(s) in any of the instances whereby force was utilized by a University of New Hampshire Police Officer, and/or a police officer from an outside-agency assigned to our campus community to augment the staffing of our public safety and law enforcement capabilities.

It should be noted, during the 2016 calendar year, the University of New Hampshire Police Department made 652 arrests. Of those 652 arrests, University of New Hampshire Police Department personnel used physical force twenty-six (26) times (NOTE: (1) event resulted in the display of an expandable baton during a crowd disturbance, however, there was no physical application of force upon any individual thereby bring the number to 25) meaning force was utilized during approximately 3.8% of the interactions.