

The City of Urbana held three “Listening Sessions” on Urbana Police Department’s Use of Force Policy. The comments and questions below are from the sessions and from follow-up input sent to UseofForcePolicy@urbanaininois.us. The comments have been combined and edited for clarity. City responses to comments and questions are given to the extent that they are immediately available.

† *Connotes the most frequent comments/questions*

Consolidated Use of Force Listening Sessions Public Input Questions and Comments
and City of Urbana Response/Commitment

Questions Pertaining to Culture, Environment, Training and Other	
Public Comments and Questions	City of Urbana Response
1. Urbana Police should incorporate trauma-informed policing into practices.	Some members of Urbana Police Department have received training on trauma-informed policing practices. We will continue to send officers to trauma-informed policing training in the future.
2. Urbana Police should have racial-biased/implicit-biased informed policing practices.†	All members of the Urbana Police Department have received training on racial-bias and implicit-bias and have for approximately 10 years.
3. Urbana Police needs to build more trust with the community.	We agree. This is an on-going effort and the department and community would benefit from mutually earned and maintained trust.
4. There should be more training; for example for Tasers.	We agree; the department could always benefit from more training. (Urbana police officers who TASERS receive twice as much training on the use of TASERS as is required, in addition to 40 hours of training as Crisis Intervention Team officer.)
5. Community Welfare should be the goal of the policy.	The goal of the policy is that the appropriate level of force is used by officers. That means that the welfare of the public and the officers is considered. Both are equally important to the City of Urbana.
6. There needs to be a culture change: There should be no 'Blue Code of Silence' and officers should be encouraged to report officers for violations.	Officers have a duty to intervene and report when any officer sees a violation of this policy.
7. How can people or police intervene if they see a use of force violation?	Officers have a duty to intervene and report when any officer sees a violation of this policy. This policy governs police officers and not the general public. If the public sees something inappropriate, they should immediately call for more assistance to help stabilize the situation.
8. Disciplinary procedures and union/labor practices and procedures need to reflect changes in a new use of force policy. There needs to be better balance with union (FOP) rights.	As noted, this is a subject of collective bargaining. There are ongoing initiatives on the state and national level regarding labor law that constrain and dictate what we are able to do on the local level.
9. Restorative Justice Circles should be incorporated into policy.	The Department would be open to participating in restorative justice practices,

	but given that we are unable to order civilians or officers to participate, we are unable to include it in our policy.
10. The hiring process for police officers should be reevaluated to create more diversity and mindfulness in Police Department.	The department is always searching for qualified candidates. Hiring is and has become more difficult as fewer people are interested in becoming police officers.
Questions Pertaining to Oversight Structure and Policy Creation	
Public Comments and Questions	City of Urbana Response
1. There should be more and continual opportunities for public input about the Use of Force Policy including the ability to review and comment on proposed changes.	There are certain policies of great concern to the public (and Use of Force is among them) that are appropriately vetted with the community.
2. A good public input tool would Annual Survey for feedback.	Agreed; creating a statistically significant survey would require additional resources that are currently unavailable.
3. The Use of Force Review Committee should have a civilian member and is otherwise not diverse enough and not independent enough of the Police Department.	We have a draft training module for a civilian to be added to the Use of Force Review Board.
4. The public at large should be able to review uses of force cases/incidents.	The Police Department reviews about 120-130 cases of use of force per year. It is impractical to expect that the untrained and/or inexperienced public can effectively review such incidents for policy compliance.
5. City Council should approve the Use of Force Policy, not the Police Chief.	The City Council is a legislative body that establishes a broad policy framework. Operational affairs are the purview of the Mayor and her delegates. The Use of Force Policy is an operational policy that may be influenced by broad policy established by the Council.
6. Civilians should have more review power; CPRB should have subpoena powers.	The CPRB does have subpoena power, but it does not apply to police officers.
Questions Pertaining to Incident Review, Accountability and Transparency	
Public Comments and Questions	City of Urbana Response
1. In what ways is the Urbana Police Department transparent with information?†	All police report information is available on the open data portal. Police officers wear body-worn cameras that document interactions. The Department routinely issues press releases on noteworthy incidents. The Department uses social media often. Generally speaking, the kind of information that the Department shares is aggregated and not specific to a single incident.
2. How are officers held accountable to policy? It does not seem like there is any accountability.	The Department has a process to identify and review use of force cases. That process includes various levels of supervision and a Use of Force Review Board. When an officer does not comport with policy, training and/or

	progressive discipline is used to achieve compliance.
3. How are internal reviews audited?	There are layers of supervision in the use of force review process. It starts with the immediate supervisor, goes to the Use of Force Review Board, and is potentially reviewed by the division lieutenant, Use of Force Board lieutenant, the deputy chief of police and finally the police chief.
4. Youth/demographic information should be kept.	The Department records and maintains records as required by state law, including age, race, and other demographic information.
5. There should be a standard procedure that allows for transparent, independent and unbiased review; it should be independent of police department.	Such an independent review would be inconsistent with the FOP collective bargaining agreement and a would require a significant commitment of additional resources on the part of the City. In the case of serious uses of force like officer involved shootings, those investigations are conducted by the Illinois State Police.
6. More data should be made available.	Police report information is available on the open data portal. The Department also publishes a media press release log of police reports daily.
7. The process and ease of making complaints should be improved.	The CPRB is working to improve its processes to continuously improve the public's level of trust and willingness to use the complaint process.
Questions Pertaining to Use of Force Policy Specifics	
Public Comments and Questions	City of Urbana Response
1. De-escalation policies should be included and they should be clear. †	Yes, de-escalation needs to be and will be a part of Use of Force Policy.
2. Policy language should be more specific and strict. Vague language ('reasonable', 'where possible', 'when feasible') deters accountability. †	"Reasonable" comes from case law; U.S. Supreme Court case Graham v. Connor addresses this. The language that is considered to be vague, in fact, acknowledges the unpredictable nature of incidents.
3. Escalation in force should be step-by-step/proportionality and minimal amount. †	U.S. Supreme Court case Graham v. Connor addresses the proportionality of force concept. Strict adherence to a "step-by-step" concept risks the safety of all that are present at an incident.
4. Weapons displays should be considered a use of force.	They have been and will continue to be.
5. Failure to turn on body-worn camera should be a fire-able offense.	The Department practices progressive discipline. Repeated failures to turn on the body-worn camera could lead to termination.
6. Use of force itself should be a fire-able offense	Sadly, the use of force is an essential part of police work. The intent of the policy (among other things) is to provide guidance to officers

	about the appropriate level of force to be used in any given interaction.
7. Physically restraining suspects should be done by more than one officer.	This is a principle that is taught in the police academy. There are some situations, however, where this is not possible. This is the preferred method as it generally reduces the amount of force used and the duration of a scuffle.
8. There should be restrictions to officer language such as yelling (especially at trauma victims), respectfulness, no racist or sexist language.†	Officers are expected to act in professionally. During tense and uncertain situations, strong language is sometime appropriate and can actually prevent the use of physical force. Verbal persuasion is the first level of force officers use.
9. Officers should give people more time to process and respond to events and officers should not react aggressively to rudeness.	De-escalation elaborates on this concept. There are times when it is appropriate to “give people more time” and there are times when it is not.
10. De-escalation should still be included for gun calls.	The department does use de-escalation techniques and has been for years. That being said, sometimes there is no time for talking and action is required immediately. It is entirely situationally dependent.
11. Foot pursuit should be reevaluated and restricted.	The department does not currently have a foot pursuit policy. The department will consider this.
12. Shooting from vehicles should be restricted.	Shooting from vehicles has been restricted for many years.
13. Use of Force Policy does not sufficiently address terms of engagement from perceived erratic or mental illness.	All UPD officers have mental health awareness training. Approximately one third of officers are Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trained.
14. The Use of Force Policy should have higher standard for using force on youth.	As previously discussed, the policy is based on federal case law and incorporates the notion of proportionality based on the totality of the circumstances, including the age of the individual involved.
15. Word 'intentionally' should be removed from restricting blood flow to head.	The word 'intentionally' comes verbatim from Illinois state law and is also part of model policies.
16. Removing gun safety should be significant event with highest level review.	If an officer points a weapon at a person, this is reviewed through the Use of Force Review Board.
17. Any use of force should require medical assistance to be rendered immediately.	UPD's Use of Force policy incorporates medical care when appropriate.
18. Urbana should adopt a co-responder model.	We agree. That is why we have been diligently pursuing the One Door program.
19. The Ten Shared Principles, broadly and specifically of trust and dignity (#1 and #2), should be incorporated into policy (such as changing word 'subject' to 'person').	UPD will be incorporating the Ten Shared Principles into policy. As the principles are more universal than use of force, they will be

	incorporated in the larger context in the policies.
20. Positional asphyxia should be mentioned in policy.	The concept of “positional asphyxia” is in the Use of Force policy under the medical considerations section.