



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



De-Escalation

Eff. date: 01/15/2020

Purpose

To outline the guidelines for Madison Police Department (MPD) De-escalation. De-Escalation tactics and techniques are actions used by officers, when safe and without compromising law enforcement priorities, that seek to reduce the likelihood of the need to use force during an incident and increase the likelihood of a positive resolution.

Procedure

When safe and feasible under the totality of circumstances, officers should attempt to slow down or stabilize the situation so that more time, options and resources are available for incident resolution. Officers should utilize appropriate tactical and officer safety principles to avoid unreasonably placing themselves at risk.

Examples of De-escalation could include, but are not limited to:

- Placing barriers between an uncooperative subject and an officer
- Containing a threat
- Moving from a position that exposes officers to potential threats to a safer position
- Decreasing the exposure to potential threat by using
 - Back-up
 - Distance/time
 - Cover/concealment
- Communication from a safe position intended to gain the subject's compliance, using dialogue
- Any other tactics and approaches that attempt to achieve law enforcement objectives

An officer's awareness of these possibilities, when time and circumstances reasonably permit, should then be balanced against the facts of the incident facing the officer when deciding which tactical options are the most appropriate to bring the situation to a safe resolution.

Mitigating the immediacy of threat gives officers time to utilize extra resources and increases time available to call more officers or specialty units.

The number of officers on scene may increase the available force options and may improve the ability to reduce the overall force used. When feasible, officers should approach an individual whom they anticipate may be taken into custody (criminal suspects, potential chapter 51 protective custody/emergency detention, etc.) with back-up present or immediately available.

Original SOP: 11/16/2016
(Reviewed Only: 12/26/2017, 01/11/2021, 02/04/2022, 01/31/2023, 02/05/2024, 02/09/2025)
(Revised: 03/01/2019, 01/15/2020)