



KERN COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Policies And Procedures

TITLE: Impact Weapons			Article: 1702
APPROVED: William Dickinson, Chief Probation Officer			
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POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the use and specifications of impact weapons carried by authorized Probation employees of the Kern County Probation Department.

While most arrests do not require the use of force and/or impact weapons, in certain situations impact weapons are a valuable tool for controlling assaultive/high risk and life-threatening individuals. As with any use of force, the officer's actions must be based on legal justification. This does not preclude the officer from striking first, as long as the officer's actions are lawful and within policy. For further information pertaining to the use of force, refer to the "Use of Force" Policy. Probation Officers must realize that injuries may result from the use of impact weapons and injuries may not always be immediately apparent. Anytime an officer uses an impact weapon on a suspect, an officer will notify a supervisor, transport the suspect to a medical center for an evaluation and treatment as soon as practical, and ensure that the Kern County Probation Department's use of force reporting guidelines is met.

REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

After successful completion of the Kern County Probation Department's Impact Weapon Training Class, officers will be issued an impact weapon. Officers are authorized to carry only Departmentally issued impact weapons while on duty, unless there is prior and specifically expressed approval by the Chief Probation Officer or his/her designee. Modifications to the Department issued Impact Weapon must be approved through the Range Master. Under no circumstances is any Probation Officer to bring an impact weapon into the secure perimeter of any Kern County Probation Department institution or any other correctional facility. An exception may be made for training purposes and/or at the direction of the Chief Probation Officer or his/her designee.

TARGET AREAS

The dynamics of a physical confrontation are constantly changing, making it difficult to use an impact weapon in a perfectly precise manner. Probation Officers should make every attempt, however, to strike at target areas that are effective, accessible and unlikely to cause serious injury.

Recommended target areas:

1. Arms
2. Legs
3. Chest and rib cage
4. Mid-section

Non-recommended target areas:

1. Head
2. Neck
3. Throat
4. Spine
5. Groin
6. Kidneys

The impact weapon is not recommended for use in applying control holds, as an officer could apply tremendous leverage and cause unintended injury. In addition, the impact weapon has no sensitivity and the officer is unable to judge correctly how much pressure is being applied. In order for an officer to justify intentional strikes to the head, neck, throat, spine, groin or kidneys with an impact weapon, the officer would have to justify the use of force likely to cause serious injury. Anytime a suspect is known to have been struck with an impact weapon he or she is to be taken to a medical center for evaluation and treatment as soon as possible. As in all matters related to the use of force and physical confrontations, no policy can cover all conceivable situations. This policy is meant to act as a guideline only. Each use of force situation must be judged individually. Based on the facts and circumstances known to the officer at the time of the incident, officers must be prepared to justify their actions whenever force is used against an individual.

STORAGE/MAINTENANCE

When not worn, the impact weapon shall be stored in a locked file cabinet, trunk, or designated safe weapons area and concealed from plain view of others. Cleaning of the impact weapons shall be in accordance with the published factory guidelines for cleaning and maintenance.

The impact weapon will be worn in a Department issued or approved baton holster. Exceptions to this guideline can be granted only by the Chief Probation Officer.