



TRUST THROUGH TRANSPARENCY

#8CANTWAIT

SUNNYVALE DPS POLICIES

The men and women of the Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety (DPS) strive to serve and protect our diverse community with respect, empathy, and compassion. We commit to being transparent, listening to your concerns, and examining our policies with the goal of providing our community with exceptional public safety service. [Subscribe to our Sunnyvale Unity mailing list to get involved.](#)

Our Model: Firefighters, EMTs, and Police Officers in One

Our unique public safety model combines fire, police, and emergency medical services (EMS) into one career. Officers are fully trained and serve in all three roles. This model strengthens our culture of serving and protecting the public with the utmost respect for the sanctity of life.

We focus on community policing and problem-solving. Sunnyvale is consistently ranked one of the safest cities in America. We have one of the lowest crime rates of any city our size in the State.

Our Policies: Sunnyvale's Answers to #8CantWait

Our [policies and procedures](#) are consistent with President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing guidelines.

- ***Chokeholds and Strangleholds.*** The use of chokeholds and strangleholds is not a use of force option for DPS.
Effective June 11, 2020, DPS prohibits the use of the Carotid Control Hold by any member of the department.
- ***De-Escalation.*** All officers are trained in de-escalation techniques. This approach is widely used and referenced throughout DPS policies. In addition, our officer training program includes a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training course that focuses on de-escalation strategies. Crisis Intervention Officers are available to assist the community in a broad spectrum of service calls.
- ***Warning Before Shooting.*** DPS policy requires Public Safety Officers to make reasonable efforts to identify themselves as police officers and warn that deadly

force may be used. This is consistent with state law (AB 392). Sunnyvale Policy Manual (300.4)

- ***Exhausting All Alternatives Before Shooting.*** Sunnyvale Public Safety Officers are bound by section 835a of the California Penal Code, which states that peace officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary, given the facts and totality of the circumstances known to or perceived by the officer at the time of the event to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose. Public Safety Officers receive comprehensive and specific guidelines for the application of deadly force (300.3, 300.4).
- ***Shooting at Moving Vehicles.*** Shooting at a moving vehicle is rarely effective. DPS policy requires an officer to move out of the path of an approaching vehicle instead of discharging their firearm at the vehicle or any of its occupants. Shooting at a moving vehicle is uncommon and only allowed when there is an imminent threat to human life and no other reasonable means are available to avert that threat (300.4.1).
- ***Use of Force Continuum.*** This is considered outdated and impractical. Instead, Sunnyvale Public Safety Officers adhere to the US Supreme Court's *Graham v. Connor* reasonable standard to apply force and fall in line with California Penal Code Section 835a. The use of force by law enforcement personnel is a matter of critical concern, both to the public and to the law enforcement community. Officers are involved on a daily basis in numerous and varied interactions and, when warranted, may use reasonable force in carrying out their duties.
- ***Duty to Intervene.*** DPS policy requires that a Public Safety Officer must intercede when another officer uses force that is clearly beyond that which is necessary. An officer must promptly report these observations to a supervisor (300.2.1).
- ***Comprehensive Reporting.*** Any use of force by a member of the department is documented promptly, completely and accurately. A Public Safety Captain and a Deputy Chief review all use of force incidents involving Public Safety personnel (300.5).

Learn more about our approach to public safety by viewing our [Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety Policies and Practices At-A-Glance](#).