



**West Hartford Police
Department**
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**PROTOCOL & PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATION OF THE USE OF
DEADLY PHYSICAL FORCE**

Chapter:

7

Chapter Title:

USE OF FORCE

Authorization:

Vernon Riddick Jr., CHIEF OF POLICE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the protocol and procedure for the investigation of the use of deadly physical force by a peace officer pursuant to General Statutes 51- 277 a.

II. PROCEDURE

- A. The following protocols have been adopted by the State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice. They apply whenever a peace officer in the performance of his/her duties uses deadly physical force upon another person and such person dies as a result. Such protocols shall be utilized whenever death is likely, but has not occurred immediately:
1. The law enforcement agency having primary jurisdiction of the geographic area where the use of force occurred shall have immediate responsibility over controlling and securing the scene.
 2. The scene shall be preserved without the removal or relocation of evidentiary material including motor vehicles unless such would detract from the evidentiary value of the material. Medical needs of the victim, if alive, shall be accommodated.
 3. The appropriate State's Attorney's Office (Hartford Judicial District shall be immediately notified and a member of such office shall promptly respond to the scene and/or police department.
 4. Search and seizures issues shall be immediately addressed by involved agencies.
 5. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner shall be notified when death has occurred.
 6. Other police agencies having a direct interest in the law enforcement officer involved in the use of force shall be notified.
 7. The departments having jurisdiction of the geographic area shall contemporaneously secure the scene, freeze the scene and take names of potential witnesses, not vehicle registration numbers, where appropriate and conduct interviews and perform other appropriate investigative activities to the extent that the passage of time would inhibit their function. Such investigative activities shall be under the direction of the State's Attorney's Office. Also, the officer's weapon use in the shooting, ammunition and clothing shall be secured without altering the condition of such weapon unless such is required for the safety of the seizing officer.
 8. The State's Attorney or his designee shall after discussing the situation with the involved agency or agencies determine which agency or agencies shall be responsible for processing the scene, analyzing evidence and if necessary, reconstructing the event and scene.

9. A ranking officer shall notify the next of kin of the death and the availability of resources and services for a decedent's family.
 10. The involved officer should be interviewed separately. The State's Attorney's representative shall be in charge of the interview process. The police department Peer Support Unit should be notified per departmental procedures.
 11. The office of the Chief State's Attorney shall be notified of the death as soon as reasonably possible (Pursuant to Public Act No. 15-177 the Chief State's Attorney will appoint a prosecutor from a Judicial District other than that in which the incident occurred to conduct the investigation into the use of force incident).
 12. The State's Attorney's Office shall pursuant to statute direct the investigation and request appropriate law enforcement agencies to provide such assistance as necessary to determine the circumstances of the incident.
 13. In cases where concurrent investigations are conducted by more than one law enforcement agency investigative activities shall be coordinated under the direction of the State's Attorney.
 14. New releases by the agency having primary investigatory jurisdiction shall be authorized by the State's Attorney.
 15. The Chief of Police will assure that the agency collects, maintains and reports to appropriate Federal agencies data on all officer-involved shootings, whether fatal or non-fatal, as well as any in-custody deaths.
- B. The State's Attorney is required pursuant to General Statute 51-277a to file a report with the Chief State's Attorney which shall submit a copy to the head of the police agency and the chief executive officer of the locality where the death occurred and thereafter to the Police Office Standard and Training Council. Every effort shall be made to prepare and submit the report as quickly as possible.
- C. I do recognize that a police agency may wish to conduct an internal non- disciplinary investigation with respect to circumstances surrounding the use of deadly physical force. Every effort shall be made by the State's Attorney to accommodate the needs of the involved department however the primary objective is the statutory duty of the State's Attorney pursuant to General Statutes 51-277a.

Public Act No. 20-600 has established that the primary criminal investigation will be conducted by the State of Connecticut, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of the Inspector General.