MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
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MUNICIPAL POLICE TRAINING COMMITTEE (MPTC) USE OF FORCE MODEL, TOTALITY TRIANGLE & DEFENSIVE TACTICS
Standard Operating Procedure To
103 CMR 505, Use of Force

Effective Date: October 28, 2025
Review Date: August 20, 2026

Table of Contents

I. Purpose 1
II. Cancellation 1
III. Severability Clause 2
IV. Applicability 2
V. MPTC Totality Triangle & Use of Force Model © 2
VI. Types of Trained Defensive Tactics* 6
VII. Responsible Staff 7
VIII. Access to Policy 7
IX. Information Sources 8

I. Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) establishes internal guidelines consistent with 103 CMR 505, Use of Force, for training and uses of reasonable force by Department of Correction (Department) staff members. The purpose of the MPTC Use of Force Model © is to provide staff members with the necessary knowledge to address most situations they may face while working on duty. It is impossible to plan for every incident that may occur within a correctional environment, but a standardized response to a categorized threat helps staff members do their jobs in a professional and safe manner.

II. Cancellation

103 CMR 505 cancels all previous Department policy statements, bulletins, directives, orders, notices, rules, or regulations regarding Internal Regulations/Policies which are inconsistent with this document.

III. Severability Clause

If any part of 103 CMR 505 is, for any reason, held to be in excess of the authority of the Commissioner, such decision shall not affect any other part of this policy.

IV. Applicability

Pursuant to 103 CMR 505 *Use of Force*, an "Inmate" is defined as an individual confined at or committed to a correctional institution, excluding patients admitted to the Bridgewater State Hospital and the Massachusetts Alcohol and Substance Abuse Center at Plymouth.

V. MPTC Totality Triangle & Use of Force Model ©

The purpose of utilizing the MPTC Use of Force Model © is to provide the information necessary for staff members to do their jobs when they are confronted with a problem involving a subject. It is recognized that most encounters that occur within a correctional environment between staff members and inmates are positive, and inmates, for the most part, are cooperative. It is also recognized that prisons can be confrontational environments, and as such, staff members need to be constantly alert and prepared to address any situation that may arise.

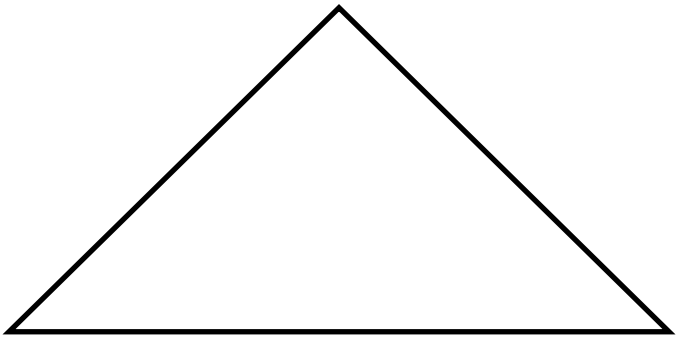
The assessment of risk that is made each day by correctional staff members is critically important to their safety and security and to all those who work and live within the institution. It is also the first factor in determining the reasonable amount of force utilized when a situation does present itself. Understanding this assessment of risk allows the staff member to determine the most "balanced" response to respond appropriately to events that occur.

REMEMBER: It is the balanced combination of perceived subject levels of resistance, perceived threat categories, and reasonable officer response levels that make up the reasonable use of force. Only when there is a reasonably balanced threat/risk perception and perceived subject threat level, may an officer apply a balanced level response.

TOTALITY TRIANGLE ©

The following represents the MPTC Use of Force Model © that should be used when dealing with a subject:

Perceived Circumstance



Perceived Subject Action(s)Reasonable Officer(s) Response

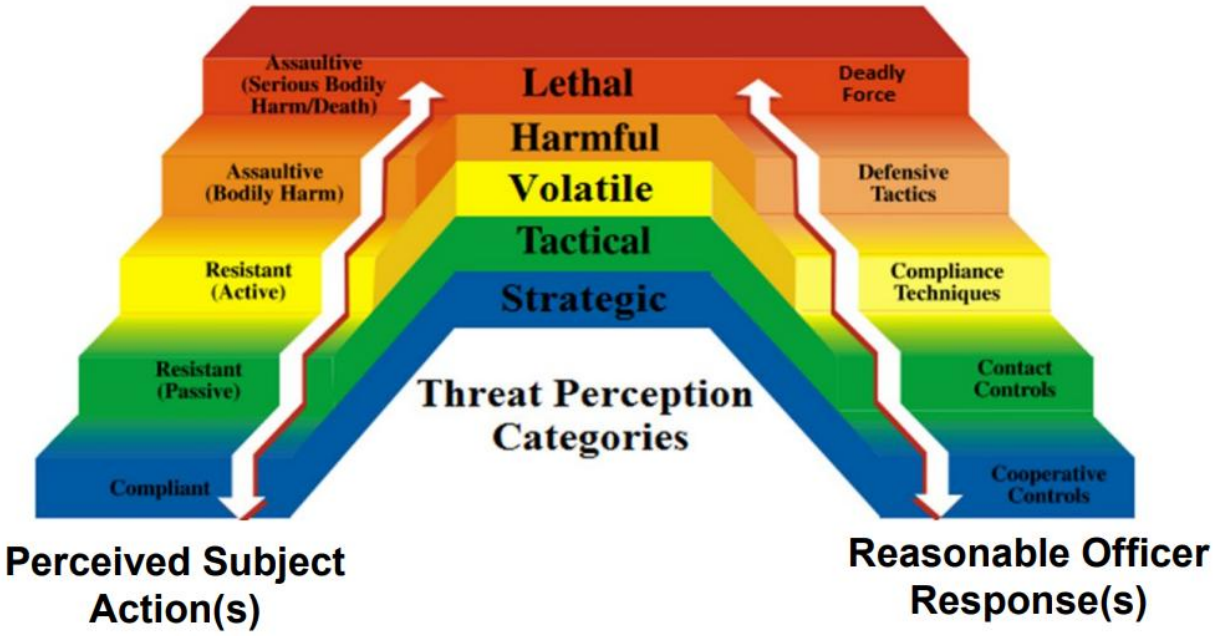
Definitions:

Perceived Circumstances: The reasonable officer's perspective of the situation in reference to the severity of any offense, the existence of an immediate safety threat to the officer or others, and the degree of compliance/non-compliance from the subject. These factors culminate in the identification of Threat Perception on the MPTC Use of Force Model ©.

Perceived Subject Action(s): The subject's action(s) as perceived by the reasonable officer that designate the subject in one or more of the MPTC Use of Force Model's © compliant/non-compliant categories.

Reasonable Officer Response(s): The balanced response appropriate for the reasonable officer's selection identified within the MPTC Use of Force Model's © response categories, to maintain or gain subject compliance and control.

MPTC USE OF FORCE MODEL ©



MPTC USE OF FORCE MODEL (LEVEL 1)

Threat Perception Category (STRATEGIC): The officer's baseline perception and occupationally accepted risks. The officer is aware of surroundings and employs basic safety strategies (e.g., distance, positioning).

Perceived Subject Action(s) (COMPLIANT): The subject is fully cooperative and offers no resistance. The majority of officer and subject encounters are compliant.

Reasonable Officer Response(s) (COOPERATIVE CONTROLS): Most officer encounters are positive and cooperative. Officers maintain or gain compliance using command presence, mutual respect, and effective communication skills.

MPTC USE OF FORCE MODEL (LEVEL 2)*

Threat Perception Category (TACTICAL): There is perceptual increase in risk assessment with safety strategies deployed. Underlying circumstances and other factors indicate forthcoming interaction or enforcement action.

Perceived Subject Action(s) (RESISTANT, PASSIVE): A subject who is noncompliant with officer commands that is non-violent and does not pose an immediate threat to the officer or others. The subject is uncooperative but does not make any overt physical action or body movement while resisting.

Reasonable Officer Response(s) (CONTACT CONTROLS): Used by officer to stop subject resistance (passive). An officer shall only use the amount of force necessary against a subject who is engaged in passive resistance to achieve voluntary compliance of said subject and shall use de-escalation tactics where feasible. The officer must deploy tactical strategies to gain control through "hands on" techniques designed primarily to guide or direct the subject. The primary force components include leverage, strategic stabilization & direction, etc. that are not designed to produce pain compliance. Examples include guiding, directing, assisting, etc.

***The Superintendent/Division Head or designee may authorize the use of OC during a Cell/Area Extraction based upon the totality of the circumstances. The Team Leader is still responsible for documenting their decision to use/not use OC if authorized, and the decision must be a balanced level response to the Team Leader's reasonably balanced threat/risk perception and perceived subject threat level.**

MPTC USE OF FORCE MODEL (LEVEL 3)

Threat Perception Category (VOLATILE): Threat potential is recognized by the officer. The level of danger and potential for bodily harm is increasing. Action by the officer is ongoing or certain.

Perceived Subject Action(s) (RESISTANT, ACTIVE): The subject's resistance becomes more active in scope and intensity. Subject intentionally uses overt physical action, physical strength, or body movement to resist.

Reasonable Officer Response(s) (COMPLIANCE TECHNIQUES): Used by officer to stop subject resistance (active). Officer may use non-weapon grabs, holds, pressure points, joint locks, non-deadly force options (e.g., OC), or any combination as needed to stop subject resistance as quickly as possible.

MPTC USE OF FORCE MODEL (LEVEL 4)

Threat Perception Category (HARMFUL): Accelerated assessment of danger. Bodily harm to officers or others is ongoing or imminent.

Perceived Subject Action(s) (ASSAULTIVE, BODILY HARM): Officer attempts to gain lawful control are countered by active assault by subject. The scope and severity of subject's assault would not reasonably result in death or serious bodily harm to the officer or other person.

Reasonable Officer Response(s) (DEFENSIVE TACTICS): Used by officer to stop assaultive (bodily harm) subject resistance. Officer may use non-deadly force options and weaponless tactics, or any combination as needed to stop subject resistance as quickly as possible.

MPTC USE OF FORCE MODEL (LEVEL 5)

Threat Perception Category (LETHAL): Perceived threat of imminent risk of death or Serious Bodily Injury to any person, based upon the totality of the circumstances.

Perceived Subject Action(s) (ASSAULTIVE, SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH): The subject's actions pose an imminent risk of death or Serious Bodily Injury to any person, based upon the totality of the circumstances.

Reasonable Officer Response(s) (LETHAL FORCE): Used by officer to stop imminent death or Serious Bodily Injury. Officer may use lethal force to stop subject resistance as quickly as possible. An officer shall not use lethal force upon a subject unless de-escalation tactics have been attempted and failed or are not feasible based on the totality of the

circumstances and such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or Serious Bodily Injury to any person and the amount of force used is proportionate to the threat of imminent harm based upon the totality of the circumstances.

VI. Types of Trained Defensive Tactics*

A. BALANCED STANCES:

1. Basic Stance
2. Defensive Stance

B. PATTERNS OF MOVEMENT:

1. Forward Shuffle
2. Rear Shuffle
3. Strong Side-Step
4. Support Side-Step
5. Forward Pivot
6. Rear Pivot

C. CONTROL AND RESTRAIN TECHNIQUES:

1. Escort Position
2. Front Wrist Lock
3. Rear Wrist Lock
4. Bent Wrist Lock
5. Armbar Takedown

D. BLOCKING TECHNIQUES:

1. High Block
2. Low Block
3. Strong Side Block
4. Support Side Block
5. Middle Block

E. STRIKES:

1. Straight Punch
2. Palm Heel Strike
3. Elbow Strikes
4. Edged Fist Strike
5. Knee Strike
6. Kicks

F. GROUND DEFENSE TECHNIQUES:

1. Falling Techniques
2. Standing Up

3. Coiled Snake
4. Turtle on Back

G. PERSONAL/CHOKE DEFENSE:

1. Ground Choke Defense
2. Front Choke
3. Rear Choke
4. Headlock

H. EDGED WEAPON DEFENSE:

1. Evade, Grab, Disarm, Neutralize
2. Jam, Control, Counter

I. DISTRACTIONARY TECHNIQUES:

1. Mandibular Angle
2. Tricep Pinch
3. Radial Nerve
4. Median Nerve
5. Hip Push
6. Side of Thigh
7. Shin
8. Top of Foot

*These are techniques, trained by the Department, in accordance with the MPTC Defensive Tactics training curriculum; however, staff are not limited to these tactics. A staff member's use of force shall be governed by the totality of the circumstances to determine if their use of force was objectively reasonable, in accordance with 103 CMR 505, *Use of Force*.

VII. Responsible Staff

Reviewing Authority: Deputy Commissioner, Prison Division

Responsible Staff:

- Assistant Deputy Commissioners, Northern and Southern Sectors
- Director, Operational Services Division
- Superintendents

VIII. Access to Policy

Department Central Policy File
Superintendent/Division Head Policy Files
Institution Library

IX. Information Sources

Legal Authority:

Other Related Policies:
103 CMR 505, Use of Force

Applicability: All Staff

Attachments: None