**Purpose**

To maintain a safe environment while treating patients, visitors and staff with dignity and respect. Safety and Security officers are employed to help safeguard people and property. The use of force is a serious responsibility and this procedure provides safety and security officers with guidelines on the reasonable use of force and their authority to act given certain circumstances. This procedure addresses use of force and the guidelines under which this use will be applied by all Safety and Security Officers.

**Procedure**

**DEFINITIONS**

“*Person*” means any person on the clinic site properties which includes, but is not limited to, patients, visitors and staff.

“*Safety and Security Officer*” means an employed safety and security officer, trained and authorized to carry and use chemical defensive spray .

“*Use of Force*” means the application of physical techniques or tactics and chemical defensive spray aimed at stopping an actual physically violent situation where staff, patients, visitors or security officers are at risk or in harm’s way.

“*Necessary*” means that no reasonably effective alternative to the use of force exists and that the amount of force to be used is reasonable to accomplish the lawful purpose intended.

“*Aggression*” means a threat or overt act of an assault (through physical means), coupled with the present ability to carry out the threat or assault, which reasonably indicates that an assault or injury to any person is imminent.

“*Aggressor*” means a person who shows signs of aggression as defined in this policy.

“*Force Continuum*” means security officers respond with a level of force appropriate to the situation and provides guidelines and a series of actions a security officer may take to resolve a situation and how much force may be used against an aggressor in a given situation.

“*Chemical Defensive Spray*” means a nonlethal aerosol spray made with the pepper derivative oleoresin capsicum, which is used to incapacitate an aggressor.

“*Resistance*” means physically evasive movements to defeat a security officer’s attempt at de-escalation of a physical attack, including bracing, tensing, pushing, or verbally signaling an intention to avoid or prevent being detained.

“*De-escalation*” means the use of strategies to defuse an aggressor who is threatening or assaulting another, including the security officer.

**FORCE CONTINUUM**

Safety and security officers will only use the degree of force necessary in defense of another including the security officer and the aggressor, from a physically violent situation and to effectively bring the situation under control pending a response from local police agencies. The preferred means of using force are set forth below in ascending order from least to most severe application of force, though the use becomes a judgement call by the security officer depending on the situation. Any Safety and Security Officer who does not follow the force continuum appropriately as defined here, may be terminated.

The established **Use of Force Continuum** for the Safety and Security Department includes and must be adhered to, in this order:

* Security officer presence
* Verbal/nonverbal communication and attempts at de-escalation/defuse situation
* Escorting interventions
* Hand-to-hand techniques to prevent or redirect a physical attack to the security officer and/or others
* Chemical defensive sprays

Once the threat has diminished or is terminated, the physical force used by the security officer(s) must de-escalate accordingly. This does not preclude the security officer(s) from being prepared and taking actions in anticipation of the situation intensifying again.

Force shall not be continued if a determination is made by the security officer(s) administering the force that the person is no longer at risk of causing imminent bodily injury to himself/herself or others while awaiting arrival of local policy agency.

Force shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during the use of force the person demonstrates significant physical distress, the force shall be reduced immediately and, if necessary, security officers will take immediate steps to seek medical assistance.

**APPROPRIATE USE OF FORCE**

To successfully deal with situations requiring use of force and minimize the risk to the public and the security officer(s) involved, chemical defensive spray is authorized for use. No other weapons are authorized.

The application of chemical defensive spray shall be solely designed to stop a potential or actual violent or aggressive person in an attack against another including the security officer. The amount and degree of force which may be employed will be determined by the following circumstances including, but not limited to:

* The nature of the offense.
* The behavior of the person on who force is to be used.
* Actions of third parties who may be present.
* Physical odds against the security officer.
* The feasibility or availability of alternative actions.
* Whether or not the person is armed.
* The presence of other security officers to assist.
* Any variables listed above in the “Use of Force Continuum.”

A security officer acting alone may be required to resort to a greater degree of force than would be necessary if another security officer were present; therefore, when possible, a security officer should call for and await assistance.

Chemical Defensive Spray. Trained security officers and temporary hourly security officers may be issued chemical defensive spray for the performance of their duties.

Any person sprayed with chemical defensive spray should be informed not to rub the eyes, as this can heighten the effect.

Avoidance of Use

If the discharge may ignite flammable liquids/fumes which could result in secondary injuries/burns;

On a person who is in, or on, an elevated position or under circumstances where a fall resulting from the deployment may reasonably and be foreseeable cause substantial injury;

* On a person operating moving vehicle or machinery or running;
* Against a person armed with a firearm;
* Pregnant females;
* An animal, unless it is threatening to or attacking a person including security officers;
* Person who no longer poses a threat, and
* Any child or elderly person

Rendering Aid after Use of Force. When a security officer uses force, which results in injury, or complaint of injury, the security officer is required to request emergency medical aid for the injured person.

**INAPPROPRIATE USE OF FORCE**

Physical force or chemical defensive spray will not be used as a form of discipline or punishment, horseplay or in an unprofessional manner, to experiment on a person or allow a person to experience being sprayed by chemical defensive spray.

Physical force or chemical defensive spray will not be used as an initial response to destruction of property, refusal of the person to comply with a security directive; or a verbal threat that does not constitute a threat of imminent bodily injury.

Physical force or chemical defensive spray should not be used as an intervention, if the security officer knows that the person has a health condition or physical problem, and the condition or problem would be exacerbated by the use of force.

Any Safety and Security Officer who if found to have used inappropriate use of force will be terminated.

**REPORTING AND RECORDS**

Reporting. Whenever a member of the safety and security department uses any physical force on another person, a safety and security officer’s written report is required. This written report will detail the full circumstances of the incident in. The written report will be sent to the Safety and Security Lead, Risk Manager, Compliance Officer, Chief Operations Officer Chief Executive Officer.

**This incident must also be entered into the incident reporting system RL Solutions.**

Police Report**:** A police report will be completed following any chemical defensive spray deployment, excluding accident/non-injury discharge.

Annual Review of Use of Force**:** The Risk Manager will conduct an annual review of the any and all physical force incident reports to reveal patterns or trends that could indicate training needs and/or policy modification. A written report on the review will be provided to the Convening Risk and Compliance Board.

**TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS**

All NOHN employees in the Safety and Security department who carry and/or use chemical defensive spray must first successfully complete a department approved and mandated training. Re-training or refresher training in chemical defensive spray will be done annually. Certification of successful training completions will be kept in the employee’s file.