

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: JUNE 25, 2020

NUMBER: 1.56 - ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: INTERVENTION DUTIES

RELATED POLICY: [1.04](#), [1.55](#), [9.33](#)

ORIGINATING DIVISION: INTERNAL AFFAIRS

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

SUPERSEDES: **NEW DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE**

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for members who observe or become aware of another member's use of unreasonable force.

This procedure should be read and applied in context with Department Procedures 1.04 and 1.55. Nothing in this procedure is meant to modify Procedure 1.04 Use of Force.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. BACKGROUND

San Diego Police Department officers are entrusted with extraordinary authority over their fellow citizens in order to enable them to effectively enforce the law. Officers must exercise this authority in a fair, impartial and respectful manner. The community and the Department expect that officers will not use force which is unreasonable under the totality of the circumstances known to the officer, and that officers will intervene to stop the use of excessive force by another officer. Failure to intervene can harm partnerships with the community, erode trust, and diminish police legitimacy.

The Department recognizes the importance of the conduct of its officers and understands acts of misconduct, including unreasonable force, can result in loss of public support with the Department and the law enforcement profession as a whole.

The Department has an established Department Policy to address appropriate and inappropriate conduct in the Department Policy Manual, Section 9.00 Personal Conduct Policies. The Department has also defined what it recognizes as reasonable force in Department Procedure 1.04 Use of Force.

Department Policy 9.33 Duty to Report Misconduct and the Department Procedure 1.55 De-Escalation also contain directives to officers regarding their duty to intervene when they observe or are made aware of misconduct, including unreasonable force.

IV. DEFINITION

- A. Intervention - the act of attempting to prevent or attempting to stop the unreasonable use of force by another member. Intervene means to come between so as to prevent or alter a result or outcome.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Any officer who is present and observes another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is necessary, as determined by an objectively reasonable officer under the circumstances, taking into account the possibility that the other officers may have additional information regarding the threat posed by the subject, shall, when in a position to do so, intervene to prevent the use of unreasonable force.
- B. An officer shall intervene by taking one or more of the following actions:
 - 1. Verbally advising another officer.
 - 2. Touching another officer to make their presence known.
 - 3. Physical restraint of another officer to prevent and or stop an escalation of force.
- C. When safe to do so, the officer shall report the intervention to a supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the officer's shift.
- D. When an officer reports an intervention involving force to a supervisor, the supervisor shall immediately notify their chain of command and/or the watch commander's office and the appropriate unit shall immediately begin an investigation.
- E. Appropriate disciplinary action consistent with Department Policy and applicable law will be taken against an officer who failed to intervene when required.