



St. Thomas Police Service

BOARD POLICY

Subject:	Use of Force
Policy Number:	AI-012
Effective Date:	April 1, 2024
Reviewed:	April 22, 2026
Authorized:	Police Services Board

Authority / Legislative References

- *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 1, Sched. 1*
- *Ontario Regulation 391/23 – Use of Force and Weapons*

Policy Statement

The St. Thomas Police Service Board (the “Board”) acknowledges that both statutory and common law grant police officers the authority to use force, including lethal force, in the course of their duties. This authority must be exercised with the highest degree of respect, accountability, and professionalism to maintain the community’s trust and confidence.

The use of force shall be necessary, reasonable, and proportionate in the circumstances, recognizing the importance of protecting life and ensuring the safety of both St. Thomas Police Service (the “Service”) members and the public.

The Board is committed to upholding and promoting the highest standards of training, performance, transparency, and accountability in relation to the use of force, in compliance with the Community Safety and Policing Act and Ontario Regulation 391/23. The Board further emphasizes the importance of de-escalation techniques and communication strategies in training and education to effectively manage situations that have the potential for violence.

Policy Application

The Chief of Police (the “Chief”) shall ensure that:

1. Every member of the Service who may be required to use force on another person is in compliance with prescribed use of force training requirements;
2. Before a firearm is issued to a member of the Service, the member is in compliance with the applicable training requirements prescribed by the Service and the Minister and is competent in the use of the firearm;

3. Every member of the Service who is authorized to carry or use a firearm is in compliance with prescribed firearms training requirements;
4. Every member of the Service who is authorized to carry or use a weapon that is not a firearm is in compliance with prescribed training requirements on the use of that weapon;
5. Records are maintained of the training taken by members on the use of force, the use of firearms, and the use of weapons that are not firearms, including the dates training was completed;
6. All weapons authorized and distributed for use within the Service meet the technical specifications set out in Ontario Regulation 391/23;
7. An investigation is initiated immediately, and a report is filed with the Board whenever a member of the Service discharges a firearm in the performance of their duties and causes injury or death to another person;
8. The Board is promptly informed when the Chief discharges a firearm in the performance of their duties, and the Board shall cause an investigation to be made into the circumstances should such an incident occur; and
9. Ongoing review and evaluation of the Service's use of force procedures, training, and reporting practices occurs.

Reporting

10. The Chief shall provide the Board with an annual Use of Force Report that includes:
 - i. the number of use of force incidents and reports;
 - ii. a description of the types of force used;
 - iii. the time of day of the use of force incidents;
 - iv. the number of armed and unarmed subjects;
 - v. the number of years of service the member had at the time of the incident;
 - vi. the perceived race of the subject of the use of force;
 - vii. details of de-escalation training provided and the number of members who received such training; and
 - viii. any other relevant information that may assist the Board in understanding trends and the application of use of force.
11. Where available, data shall be provided for the previous five years to support comparison and trend analysis.

12. The Board shall make the annual report available to the public