

Use of Force Policy

Overview

In situations where Security Team Members are justified in using force, the utmost restraint should be exercised. The use of force should never be considered routine. In determining to use force, the Security Team Member shall be guided by the principle that the degree of force employed in any situation should be only that reasonably necessary. Security Team Members should exhaust all other reasonable means before resorting to the use of force. It is the policy of “XYZ Church” that Security Team Members will use only that force which is objectively reasonable and necessary.

Security Team Members are obligated to report all situations in which force is used illegally by anyone. This policy sends a clear message to Security Team Members that they share an obligation beyond the requirements of the law. Security Team Members are encouraged to do whatever they can to interrupt the flow of events before a fellow Security Team Member does something illegal and before any official action is necessary. Security Team Members can serve each other and the public by simply saying or doing the right thing to prevent a fellow member from resorting to force illegally or inappropriately.

Deciding whether to utilize force when authorized in the conduct of official responsibilities is among the most critical decisions made by Security Team Members. It is a decision that can be irrevocable. It is a decision that must be made quickly and under difficult, often unpredictable and unique circumstances. Sound judgment and the appropriate exercise of discretion will always be the foundation of Security Team Members decision making in the broad range of possible use of force situations. It is not possible to entirely replace judgment and discretion with detailed policy provisions. Nonetheless, this policy is intended to provide the best guidance and direction possible to Security Team Members when called upon to confront and address the most difficult of situations. Security Team Members whose actions are consistent with the law and the provisions of this policy will be strongly supported by “XYZ Church” in any subsequent review of their conduct regarding the use of force.

Use of Force – Physical Contact

- The Security Team should defuse any situation whenever possible to eliminate or reduce the needs to use physical force to subdue any unruly person.
- Force will only be used to prevent injury to a Security Team Member, Church Member or Visitor. This force is limited to the minimum amount of force needed to stop the threat of physical danger to any person in or on the church property or facility
- The Security Team Members should never initiate physical contact with an unruly person. If the unruly person initiates contact with another person in the church, the Security Team Members should take appropriate action to prevent further harm to the church member.
- This action is limited to subduing the person until he no longer poses a threat any staff member, church member or visitor to the church. Once the threat has been eliminated the person must not be restrained if they attempt to leave the facility. The police should be called and an official report generated with all of the details.
- The Security Team Members should not take physical action against an unruly person for damaging church property.

Use of Force – Impact or Chemical Defensive Weapons

- The Security Team Members will not carry any chemical or impact weapon unless the Security Team Chief or the Senior Pastoral Staff has given approval. If permission is given by the Pastoral Staff, the Security Team Chief must be notified before any defensive weapon is carried on church property or in the church facility.
- The Security Team Chief or the Senior Pastoral Staff will determine and issue a list of approved defensive weapons and the requirements for certification in their use.
- The carrying of any unapproved defensive weapon is grounds for removal from the team.
- The use of impact or chemical defense weapons will only be used to prevent injury to a Security Team Member, Church Member or Visitor. This force is limited to the minimum amount of force needed to stop the threat of physical danger to any person in or on the church property or facility
- Members should not take physical action against an unruly person for damaging church property.

Use of Force - Deadly Force Weapons/Firearms

- The Security Team Members will not carry Deadly Force Weapons/Firearms unless the Security Team Chief and/or the Senior Pastoral Staff have given approval.
- The Security Team Chief and/or the Senior Pastoral Staff will determine and issue a list of approved defensive weapons, ammunition and the requirements for certification in their use.
- Security Team Officers who are required to be armed must follow the use of force policy issued by “XYZ Church”.
 - Firearms must be carried in a concealed manor to prohibit display or printing of the firearm.
 - The firearm must not be drawn unless there is a significant perceived danger to life.
 - The firearms will only be deployed to stop the loss of life of a Security Team Member, Church Member or Visitor. However, an officer shall not resort to the use of deadly force if the officer reasonably believes that an alternative to the use of deadly force will avert or eliminate an imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm, and achieve the purpose at no increased risk to the officer or another person.
 - In the event that deadly force must be used, the Security Team Member must be aware of the area behind the suspect assure that the round will not endanger another person in the event of over-penetration or a missed round.
 - If necessary, the Security Team Member should consider kneeling to make a shot if this will clear the background.
 - Firearms will **not** be used to stop the theft of property or funds.
- The carrying of any unapproved weapon is grounds for removal from the team.
- The deadly force will only be used to prevent severe injury to a Security Team Member, Church Member or Visitor. This force is limited to the minimum amount of force needed to stop the threat of physical danger to any person in or on the church property or facility
- The Security Team Members should immediately notify the Security Team Leader and /or Senior Pastoral Members when deadly force has been utilized.

Use of Restraints

Security Team Members will not use any type of restraint on any person involved in an altercation in the church unless it is determined that the use of a restraint is required to prevent serious injury to himself, a Security Team Member, a church member or a visitor. Once a person is placed in restraints, it is deemed that a citizen's arrest has taken place. Example of where a restraint is permitted would be as follows:

A violent person has assaulted a church member with a knife and has been stopped by the security team. The person still wishes to continue the fight and cause additional injury to the church member. If released the aggressor would immediately attempt to re-engage the fight. This person could be restrained until the police arrive to take them into custody.

Note: Once you have restrained a person, you are legally responsible for their welfare and this must not be taken lightly.