

San Diego Police Department

TRAINING BULLETIN

A PUBLICATION OF THE SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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TB 14-03

April 9, 2014

CURB-SITTING AS A CONTROL TECHNIQUE/DEFENSIVE TACTIC

I. PURPOSE

This bulletin addresses the defensive tactic of curb-sitting subjects during officer contacts.

II. BACKGROUND

Defensive tactics is the art of avoiding an attack, fending off an attack, or eliminating the subject's ability to attack. When approaching or interacting with a subject or confronting a potentially dangerous situation, officers must be alert to any potential threats. Officers should create and maintain a reactionary gap between themselves and the subject contacted. This provides the officer additional time to respond to a perceived threat. The reactionary gap is scenario specific and depends on the nature of the contact and circumstances involved.

III. GUIDELINES

A. TACTICAL OPTIONS

Officers should strive to maintain a position of advantage (POA) and place the subject(s) contacted at a disadvantage whenever possible. Three techniques are: placing a subject on the curb, on the patrol vehicle's push bumper, or in the back seat of a patrol vehicle. While officer safety is of primary concern, curb sitting was not designed to be a standard practice in all situations. If a situation justifies having a subject sit on the curb, the subject should be removed from that position once the threat has been mitigated (i.e., additional officers arrive on scene).

B. JUSTIFICATION FOR CURB SITTING

When contacting subjects, officers must be able to articulate the nature of the contact and the circumstances that required them to place a subject on the curb. The phrase, “officer safety” alone, is not sufficient justification.

As in all situations where we contact citizens, officers should be aware of potential negative perception not only of those contacted but from observers. Distrust, anger and fear can be overcome when officers communicate tactfully, with courtesy, and work to establish mutual respect with members of the community.

Department Procedure 4.01 will be updated to include segments of this Training Bulletin.