

**REED COLLEGE  
COMMUNITY SAFETY  
DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTIVE**

**OLEORESIN CAPSICUM USE**

Source: Departmental Directives issued by the CS Director

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**PREAMBLE**

**PUBLIC HEALTH BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19**

All Community Safety staff are required to follow the most current Reed College guidelines for public health behaviors at all times. Individual responsibilities for these behaviors are listed on the college's [COVID-19 Response Plan](#).

Community Safety guidelines include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- 1) CS staff are required to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as face coverings or N95 respirators, gloves, eye guards, etc. as appropriate to the circumstances
- 2) CS staff are required to maintain an appropriate physical distance from others, except for exigent circumstances and with appropriate PPE
- 3) CS staff are expected to use accepted hygiene and sanitization procedures whenever indicated

The health and safety of CS staff and other persons is the overriding criterion for all CS activity. In the unlikely situation where practicing appropriate public health behaviors is in conflict with carrying out Community Safety duties and responsibilities, the health and safety of CS staff and other persons shall normally take precedence.

Community Safety staff are expected to be familiar with public health guidelines, plan ahead for handling service calls safely, and to make reasonable attempts to BOTH carry out their assigned duties AND adhere to the college's public health guidelines. Most potential health risks may be mitigated by the use of PPE and the use of appropriate safety practices, allowing CS staff to carry out their duties without undue risk. Any circumstance where public health guidelines conflict with the provision of CS services shall be immediately reported to the CS Manager On-call for evaluation and follow up.

No CS staff member is expected to knowingly place themselves or another person at increased risk of personal harm in order to carry out their duties.

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**INTERCULTURAL ANTI-RACISM CONSIDERATIONS**

All people are susceptible to unconscious bias influencing their perceptions and actions, a potential that is amplified for CS staff who are required to respond to calls for service or initiate contact with people based on reported or observed behavior. All CS staff are expected to be alert for this potential and to use objective information when deciding when and how to interact with people to the maximum extent possible.

All people have had past experiences with uniformed officers and “authority figures.” Regardless of a Community Safety Officer’s (CSO) approach and demeanor, a person’s past experiences may inform their perceptions of an encounter. In particular, a person’s race, national origin, ethnicity, disability, gender identification, etc. may influence that person’s perception of an encounter. CSOs are expected to be alert for the potential for their actions to be perceived differently from how they are intended.

Moreover, some identities/ethnicities/races are underrepresented among the Reed College community of students, staff, and faculty. This fact may lead underrepresented people to feel singled out, and it may leave CSOs susceptible to disproportionately identifying individuals from underrepresented groups for scrutiny. CSOs are expected to be alert for the possibility that they, or a reporting party, have identified an individual because of the individual’s perceived identity/ethnicity/race, and to take care to ensure that objective criteria are used to evaluate reports and observations.

**Communication strategies**

When CSOs initiate an engagement with people they are expected to be aware of these intercultural and anti-racism considerations. CSOs should always be alert to the possibility that an individual of any description may feel singled out by the contact, and CSOs should be thoughtful with their choice of words and mindful of the potential impact of the interaction. In many circumstances it may be appropriate to apologize for inconveniencing people and for initiating a potentially awkward interaction. This is not to say that CSOs need to be apologetic for doing their work, rather that they should acknowledge the potential for the impact of the interaction different from the intent.

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***Attempting to treat everyone the same will likely result in treating many or most people inappropriately.*** Since all individuals are unique and bring their own perspective to interacting with a CSO, the CSO should strive to evaluate each interaction individually and treat each situation and individual according to the circumstances.

**DIRECTIVE**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for the use of oleoresin capiscum (OC) spray by Community Safety Officers (CSOs) in accordance with the departmental directive on the Use of Force.

**OVERVIEW**

The only chemical agent authorized for use by Reed College CSOs is OC, otherwise known as Pepper Spray. It shall be used only to the extent necessary to mitigate a threat of serious physical injury or death, within training standards, and only when other methods or uses of force are not available or are impractical.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES ON USE**

OC spray shall not be used as a threat to elicit information, nor will it be used on people who are secured and properly in custody, unless there is an imminent threat of serious physical injury or death.

The use of OC Spray will be avoided, to the maximum extent possible, in any enclosed area that is occupied at the time, including research areas housing animals, plants, or other materials that could be harmed.

OC spray may be used, at the officer's discretion, when an individual displays the intent to use or engage in violent, aggressive actions (not to include passive resistance like yelling, cursing, or refusing to stand up, walk, or sit down). OC spray may also be used on vicious or aggressive animals when the presence of those animals interferes with the safety of a person or officer, or the successful completion of a Community Safety function.

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If used on individuals who are sick or intoxicated to the extent that they are not in possession of their normal protective reflexes, such as being able to turn away from the applied spray, prompt aid must be administered afterward to prevent complications from vomiting, choking, or respiratory seizures.

When an individual who has been sprayed with OC is no longer combative, the CSO shall advise, from a safe distance, the individual to breathe fresh air and use any available clean water source to rinse and remove any residual OC from the individual's face and eyes as soon as possible. First Aid bags in the vehicles also contain Sudecon, a decontamination wipe for OC, and eye flush bottles that can be placed on the ground at a safe distance, the CSO can advise their use from a safe distance, if the situation allows.

The CSO should request Emergency Medical Services (EMS), through 911, if anyone is exposed to OC spray.

**SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

Only water-based OC products may be purchased and issued to CSOs. Oil or alcohol-based products carry the risk of fire if used in certain environments, and have been known to result in injuries to subjects who have been sprayed and subsequently exposed to a source of flames or sparks.

CSOs may carry and use only the OC spray issued by the department. Requests for exceptions must be approved by the CS Director in advance.

**DOCUMENTATION**

In accordance with our Use of Force directive, all uses of OC Spray will be documented with an Incident Report, Use of Force report, and photographs if and when possible, of any injuries resulting from the use of force. If photographs are unable to be taken, please note and explain in the Incident Report.