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LEADING LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONS RELEASE UPDATE TO NATIONAL CONSENSUS POLICY AND DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE USE OF FORCE

In 2016, leading law enforcement management and labor organizations joined together to explore and develop a consensus framework for addressing use of force, nationally. The extensive, collaborative work of the participating organizations resulted in the development of a [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on the Use of Force](#) in 2017. The Consensus Policy makes clear that it is the policy of law enforcement agencies to value and preserve human life. The consensus policy sets forth guidelines to govern the police use of force, the responsibilities of officers when using force, de-escalation techniques, the use of less than lethal force, the duty to render aid/provide medical treatment once it is safe to do so, and that all officers have a duty to intervene to prevent or stop the use of excessive force by another officer.

One use of force technique defined in the consensus policy is the use of chokeholds. The Consensus Policy specifically states that chokeholds, defined as a “maneuver that restricts an individual’s ability to breath”, are extremely dangerous maneuvers that could easily result in death. As a result, the Consensus Policy authorized the use of chokeholds only when officers were in situations where they would otherwise be authorized to use deadly force.

However, the use of vascular neck restraints, a technique that can be used to incapacitate individuals by restricting the flow of blood to their brain, was not directly addressed in the Consensus Policy. After review and discussion, our organizations agree, given the inherently dangerous nature of vascular neck restraints, that the [Consensus Policy](#) should be updated and state that vascular neck restraints, like chokeholds, should only be used in situations where deadly force is authorized.