

6

Duty to intervene: Officers need to prevent other officers from using excessive force.

Officers should be obligated to intervene when they believe another officer is about to use excessive or unnecessary force, or when they witness colleagues using excessive or unnecessary force, or engaging in other misconduct. Agencies should also train officers to detect warning signs that another officer might be moving toward excessive or unnecessary force and to intervene *before* the situation escalates.

Examples

- **Phoenix Police Department**⁵⁰ — “All sworn employees will intervene, if a reasonable opportunity exists, when they know or should know another employee is using unreasonable force.”

50. https://www.phoenix.gov/policesite/Documents/operations_orders.pdf



- **Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**⁵¹ — “Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, safely intercede to prevent the use of such excessive force. Officers shall promptly report these observations to a supervisor.”

NYPD First Deputy Police Commissioner Benjamin Tucker:

*Duty to Intervene Goes to the Heart
Of Why We Become Police Officers*

We added a “duty to intervene” in our policy. We underscored this because—and you all relate to this in this day and age with respect to videos—everybody is photographing us and the work that we do. One of the things I’m responsible for is the discipline in the department and the processing of our discipline cases. We see examples of this as they come through, as we’re making recommendations to the Police Commissioner. We have instances where multiple officers are at a scene standing around and not taking action, but they witness events that take place by fellow officers.

And so this is a reminder to the officers that this goes to the heart of why you became a police officer. We talk about the foundations of policing, and this notion comes out of the desire to have officers uphold the oath that they took, and to act accordingly. So it’s real simple in that respect.



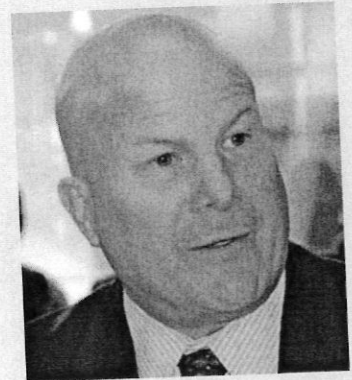
San Francisco Police Chief Greg Suhr:

*When an Officer Intervenes to Stop Misconduct,
That Can Increase Community Trust*

We’ve all been there, where a suspect is really getting to another officer, but they’re not getting to you. And you know your partner, or your brother or sister officer, so you basically tap them on the shoulder and tell them to stand down.

If they’re really amped up, they might not stand down easily. But last year when we had the PERF meeting with community leaders in this same room, and we watched that Texas video at the swimming club,⁵² I remember that a community leader said that obviously what the one officer did was shocking, but it was equally upsetting that the other officers missed the window to intervene. Nobody told the one officer to stand down.

On that video we just saw of the sergeant who intervened when an officer was pointing his firearm at Ferguson protesters,⁵³ did you hear what



51. http://www.lvmpd.com/Portals/0/OIO/LVMPD_Collab_Reform_Final_Report_v6-final.pdf

52. “McKinney, Texas, Cop Placed on Leave After Pulling Gun on Teens at Pool Party.” NBC News, June 8, 2015. <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/mckinney-texas-officer-leave-after-wild-pool-party-video-surfaces-n371281>

53. “Officer points gun at me and other media on W. Florissant.” Caleb-Michael Files. YouTube, August 19, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jx3WLnt6Q8>