



USING THIS GUIDE

This Participant's Guide is intended to assist individual viewers of the video material outside of a facilitated group or classroom setting. The scenarios presented do not necessarily depict a correct/incorrect way to handle a situation. The goal is to prepare participants to later engage in discussion of the scenarios and topic and how it relates to them and to their agency policy and procedures. See the explanation for "Informational/Individual Viewing" on next page.

VIEW THE VIDEO

To access this video online, visit the [POST Learning Portal](#).

ABOUT THIS VIDEO

The goal of this training program is to provide law enforcement with the understanding of de-escalation, both in definition and practice. This training will define de-escalation, describe common ways it is regularly used by law enforcement, aid in the documentation of officers' de-escalation efforts, and reveal how it impacts the profession and influences public perception.

The program is designed to reinforce, strengthen, and demonstrate what officers are very likely already doing, while revealing some new approaches. In addition to building on techniques and strategies that officers already use, this training program will introduce some new skills and demonstrate how de-escalation is effective for routine calls as well as high-intensity situations.

GUIDE CONTENTS

Video Viewing Options and Features

Describes how the training video is formatted and organized on screen and provides navigation instructions for facilitators or individual viewers. The video may be viewed in a single training session or broken up into shorter segments.

Program Overview

Lists the main teaching points and provides general information that is examined in greater detail within each scenario.

Scenarios

Each scenario features a brief overview and *Key Learning Points* to assist with quick review of the material during the presentation.

Participant's Self-Assessment

A self-assessment is provided at the end of this guide and must be reviewed with the designated training manager or supervisor for the participant to receive training credit.



VIDEO VIEWING OPTIONS AND FEATURES

Two different viewing options are offered with this training video: FACILITATED GROUP COURSE or INFORMATIONAL/INDIVIDUAL VIEWING.

FACILITATED GROUP COURSE

The **Facilitated Group Course** option should be selected when the video is being used in a classroom or briefing setting and an instructor or supervisor is present to facilitate the course. The material may be delivered in a single session or broken up over several days, such as delivery during briefing or roll call. The material is divided into tabbed sections that the facilitator may play in whatever order they feel best meets the training need (see Navigating the Video section below). Once the material has been covered in its entirety, the supervisor or training manager (as designated by the department) may submit a completed training roster via POST EDI for CPT credit for participants.

INFORMATIONAL / INDIVIDUAL VIEWING

The **Informational/Individual Viewing** option should be selected when a participant is viewing the video alone or without an instructor or supervisor present to facilitate the delivery of the material. This option should not be used in a group training session. This option is intended for participants who work in a remote location, for a smaller agency that cannot readily access group training, or for an officer who is simply interested in viewing the video for informational purposes. The segment order is preset and the viewer will be guided through the video without live facilitator interaction.

At the discretion of the department-designated training manager or supervisor, participants of the Informational/Individual Viewing mode may receive CPT credit for viewing this video. To receive credit, individual viewers must be provided with a copy of this Participant's Guide. The individual watches the video and reviews and completes the Participant's Guide assessment as they follow along. The training manager or supervisor then facilitates a discussion of the video and assesses the participant's responses using the Participant's Guide Answer Key provided at the end of the Facilitator's Guide. If the facilitator is satisfied that the participant has demonstrated an understanding of the concepts of the video, they may submit a completed POST Course Roster via EDI for CPT credit.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- De-escalation is defined as the process of using strategies and techniques intended to decrease the intensity of the situation.
- De-escalation applies to everyday situations and is regularly practiced by peace officers.
- De-escalation's strategies and techniques may include:
 - Pre-planning
 - Presence
 - Verbal or non-verbal communication, including silence and delayed responses
 - Building rapport
 - Posturing
 - Disengagement
 - Use of time
 - Apologizing
 - Intervention
 - Physical contact
 - Uses of force
- Situations where immediate threats or danger exist may not allow one to employ de-escalation techniques.
- Incidents, including those involving de-escalation, develop the community's perspectives and each:
 - Is not specific to an incident
 - Goes beyond a moment in time
 - Goes beyond generations
 - Applies to future conversations and future generations
 - Positive contact is an investment
- Officers' use of de-escalation may:
 - Aid with officer safety
 - Reduce complaints
 - Enhance community perception
 - Generate voluntary compliance
 - Improve trust and build community relationships
- Properly intended de-escalation efforts should never create additional safety issues.
- Proper documentation of de-escalation incidents is critical; details of what was done, said, and intended by involved parties should be included.
- The effects of de-escalation, or the lack of it, affect many; the officer, agency, community, and others are affected.
- Properly used de-escalation efforts may still result in negative outcomes.
- De-escalation is not just event-specific; its effects continue well beyond a single incident and affect future encounters, actions, and trust.
 - Witnesses and others relate their perceptions of incidents to others
 - Friends and family of those present will, in time, learn of the actions taken

Continued

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW** CONTINUED

- De-escalation affects community and family perspectives of the officers, agencies, and law enforcement.
- Professional conduct requires officers to intervene and de-escalate other officers when appropriate.
- Self-regulation is a key factor in developing effective conflict-resolution strategies and allows officers to see through emotions, recognize root issues, and determine possible remedies.
- Information exchange is critical in the decision-making process.
- Peace officer rank, position, or assignment should not limit any officer's ability or willingness to employ or allow de-escalation strategies, when appropriate.



SCENARIO 1 – Professionalism and Perspectives: De-escalation and Intervention

In part one, officers are dispatched to a shopping mall on a report of a female prostitute. Upon arrival, the first officer contacts a female subject and their conversation quickly escalates while the second officer initially contacts a security guard. In part two, the second officer intervenes and employs techniques to de-escalate the situation. (NOTE: Scenario 1 features this two-part scenario with a separate discussion segment appearing after each scenario).

KEY LEARNING POINTS

De-escalation is defined as the process of using strategies and techniques intended to decrease the intensity of the situation.

De-escalation applies to everyday situations and is regularly practiced by peace officers.

An officer's initial approach to a call can set the tone for the encounter. By providing basic information, when possible, escalation may be prevented or inhibited.

- Identification by officer
- Reason for contact explained
- Background/dispatch information explained

De-escalation's strategies and techniques may include:

- Verbal or non-verbal communication, including silence and delayed responses
- Utilizing emotional intelligence
- Intervention
- Physical contact

The intent of de-escalation includes:

- Increased professionalism
- Positive outcomes, including:
 - Community and officer safety
 - Reduction in complaints
 - Enhanced community perception
 - Improved trust and building of community relationships

Officer safety is usually positively affected by de-escalation.

- Reduction in situational intensity provides for more reasonable thinking and outcomes.
- Another officer's intervention can, in itself, reduce the intensity.

The effects of de-escalation, or the lack of it, affect many relationships.

- The officer, agency, community, and others
- Future contacts and public perception

The effects of de-escalation are beyond the place and time of the incident.

- Witnesses and others relate their perceptions of incidents to others
- Friends and family of those present will, in time, learn of the actions taken

Continued



SCENARIO 1 – Professionalism and Perspectives: De-escalation and Intervention

KEY LEARNING POINTS CONTINUED

Community and family/generational perspectives of the officers, agencies, and law enforcement are affected.

Professional conduct requires officers' intervention to de-escalate other officers when appropriate.

The profession and public rightly demand timely intervention by officers.



SCENARIO 2 – SELF-REGULATION: TIME AND DOCUMENTATION

An arrestee in a temporary holding cell threatens violence and becomes agitated when being prepared for transfer to a long-term facility. Several officers, including a supervisor, hurriedly approach the situation. One officer intervenes, employs de-escalation techniques, and resolves the potentially violent encounter.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

Officers regularly use de-escalation strategies and techniques including:

Intervention

- Officer intervention, even within controlled settings, may yield significant benefits.

Time and slowing things down

- Allows emotions to dissipate.
- Enables better communication.
- Creates optional resolutions not possible previously.
- Provides opportunity to stage potentially needed resources.

Effective communication

- Active listening/hearing the message behind the words.

Situations where immediate threats or danger exist may not allow an officer to employ de-escalation techniques.

Self-regulation is a key factor in developing effective conflict-resolution strategies.

Information exchange is critical in the decision-making process.

Peace officer rank, position, or assignment should not limit any officer's ability or willingness to employ or allow de-escalation strategies when appropriate.

- Officer-to-officer trust is critical during escalating events, irrespective of rank or classification.

Reports involving de-escalation incidents require additional considerations.

Reports should include:

- Background information (prior history, dispatch information, etc.).
- Pertinent actions, including attempted actions, and specific words of involved parties.
- Officers' intent in employing certain techniques or strategies.
- Specific words and terms used by involved parties (commands, warnings, threats, etc.).

Detailed reports:

- Ensure investigations proceed properly.
- Provide accurate portrayal of events.
- Aid in procedural justice principles.
- Aid in liability protection.
- Assist with prosecutorial decisions.

Body cameras and other recording devices provide additional evidentiary confirmation of incident details.



SCENARIO 3 – THE POWER OF WORDS: DISTRAUGHT STUDENT

An officer encounters a very emotional high-school student pounding on a classroom door during class and responds by employing various techniques to gain voluntary compliance and eliminates the need for physical contact or arrest.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

De-escalation occurs during common incidents.

De-escalation's strategies and techniques may include:

- Verbal or non-verbal communication including silence, voice tone, eye contact, and delayed responses.
- Building rapport.
- Posturing/positioning.
- Use of time.
- Empathy and trust.

An officer's initial approach to an incident sets the tone and can provide a foundation from which de-escalation efforts may occur.

Effective de-escalation techniques require:

- Recognition of changing conditions and how others are affected (subject becoming more agitated).
- Patience with those in a heightened state.
- Maintenance of officer safety.
- Setting aside of any personal conflicts
- Effective communication skill.

Officers may have to "escalate in order to de-escalate" some situations.

De-escalation is not just event-specific; its effects continue well beyond a single incident and affect future encounters, actions, and trust.

Emotional intelligence factors into officers' effectiveness, response, and image.

Self-regulation is a key factor in developing effective conflict-resolution strategies.

Recognizing how calls can affect you is critical in reducing their effects and being better prepared for future incidents.



KEY LEARNING POINTS

SCENARIO 4 – OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS: FAMILY DISTURBANCE

Officers are dispatched to a home where a woman is reporting a male, later determined to be her adult son, is refusing to leave. Upon arrival, the officers find no legal reason to remove the male and utilize common techniques to de-escalate the event and provide the woman with resource information.

Preplanning and utilizing call history can be considered de-escalation.

Officer safety:

- Begins before arrival.
- De-escalation does not remove the need to be aware of common inherent risks on scenes.
- Even with historical information known, each contact is a unique incident with its own variables.

Building rapport with involved parties is a de-escalation strategy.

Self-regulation allows officers to see past emotions, recognize root issues, and determine possible remedies.

Using communication techniques can enhance de-escalation and promote positive outcomes; LEAPS and tactical communication.

The officers did not respond in-kind to the individuals' outbursts.

- Loud, disrespectful, and finger-pointing.
- The officers maintaining self-control enables them to maintain situational awareness, communicate effectively, and develop possible remedies.

Incidents, including those involving de-escalation, develop the community's perspectives and each:

- Is not specific to an incident.
- Goes beyond a moment in time.
- Goes beyond generations.
- Applies to future conversations and future generations.
- Positive contact leads to a positive impression in future.
- Contact is an investment.

De-escalation's effects continue beyond a single incident to future encounters, actions, and trust.

Debriefing incidents assists with:

- Tactical considerations and improvements.
- Officer wellness.

The presence of the young child may add special dynamics to this situation:

- Mother's attention diverted to the child; the mother is distracted toward the child's immediate and future needs.
- The child is witnessing how officers interact.
 - This may be the only time this child witnesses family speaking with law enforcement.
 - A single contact, either positive or negative, can fashion someone's future view of law enforcement.



CONCLUSION

After completing this course, participants should:

- **Better understand de-escalation strategies and techniques.**
- **Know the definition of de-escalation.**
- **Recognize how de-escalation impacts the profession and influences public perception.**
- **Be better prepared to document incidents where de-escalation efforts are made.**



NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

As you watch the training video in the Informational/Individual Viewing mode, follow along and answer the questions below. You may pause the video and view a section again if needed. The goal is for you to complete this assessment and then discuss the material with your designated agency training manager or facilitator.

ASSESS WHAT YOU LEARNED

De-escalation is defined as the process of using strategies and techniques intended to: (circle one)

- A. Satisfy the required elements to justify the use of force.
- B. Enhance public trust in, and perception of, law enforcement.
- C. Decrease the intensity of the situation.
- D. Decrease complaints, increase officers' effectiveness, and comply with legal requirements.

Employing de-escalation most often results in all the following except: (circle one)

- A. Improved decision making.
- B. Reduction in situational intensity.
- C. Opportunity for greater voluntary compliance.
- D. Increased risk to officer or public safety.
- E. Greater community trust.

Which of the following does not reflect active-listening skills officers may utilize with verbally assaultive/aggressive persons? (circle one)

- A. Repeating information and clarifying intended messages.
- B. Allowing the venting of frustrations whether warranted or not.
- C. Portraying understanding and empathy.
- D. Reacting due to personal comments.
- E. Validating the speaker's belief in their side of the story.

The profession and public expectations demand that officers intervene whenever: (circle one)

- A. The officer believes another officer may be having personal problems.
- B. Any other officer's actions warrant intervention.
- C. The officer outranks another officer who is using excessive force.
- D. Another officer is raising his/her voice with someone who is not being verbally abusive.
- E. B and D

Continued



ASSESS WHAT YOU LEARNED
CONTINUED

Describe the additional content (beyond that of common written reports) that should be considered for inclusion in reports involving an officer's de-escalation efforts.

Which of the following does not represent active listening skills often used in de-escalation? (circle one)

- A. Listening, repeating.
- B. Taking time to allow venting.
- C. Building rapport.
- D. Using appropriate voice tone.
- E. Agreeing with the person's perspective.

Which of the following is not reflective of public expectations and the professional standards for law enforcement communication? (circle one)

- A. Associated actions and demeanor reflect personal and situational control.
- B. Word choice and voice are effectively used.
- C. Approach reveals cultural understanding and respect.
- D. Profanity used as needed for emphasis or effect.
- E. Shows concern, empathy, or desire to help.

Which of the following assists an officer in self-regulation (managing one's own actions, responses, and approach to incidents)? (circle one)

- A. Purposeful breathing (slowing, deepening).
- B. Slowing things down.
- C. Responding to situations rather than emotions.
- D. All of the above.
- E. A and B only.

In what ways can post-incident reviews of high-intensity calls improve officers' skills? (circle one)

- A. Allow for the pre-planning of future responses.
- B. Identify techniques or personal reactions indicated for improvement or change.
- C. Lessen call-related frustrations and aids in officer resiliency.
- D. All of the above.
- E. B & C only.

Continued



**ASSESS WHAT
YOU LEARNED**
CONTINUED

Explain situations where an officer's actions, demeanor, and voice might affect one person not party to the incident either positively or negatively from just a single encounter.
