

	RUTGERS UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT WRITTEN DIRECTIVE SYSTEM		12:2
	NON-TRADITIONAL WEAPONS		
	Effective Date: 11-06-2009	Supersedes: 65 (06-01-2005)	

12:2-1 **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to establish a policy regulating the use of non-traditional weapons.

12:2-2 **POLICY**

It is the policy of this agency to permit the use of non-traditional weapons only in situations when officers confront dangers likely to cause themselves or others death or serious bodily injury absent defensive action and traditional weapons are immediately unavailable, ineffective, or useless. When applicable, non-traditional weapons shall be used and reported consistent with Directive 1:8, Use of Force.

12:2-3 **GENERAL**

- a. It is recognized that police officers may be faced with situations requiring them to use equipment or objects that are not designed or typically used as weapons to defend themselves or others in confrontations likely to result in death or serious bodily injury and traditional weapons such as firearms, batons, Oleoresin Capsicum, etc., are immediately unavailable, ineffective or useless.
- b. Non-traditional weapons can best be described as equipment or objects that have legitimate purposes; but, are not intended to be used as striking or defensive weapons. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Portable radios
 - Flashlights
 - Pens/pencils
 - Clipboards
 - Telephones
 - Keys
 - Knives
 - Vehicles

Non-traditional weapons do not include hands, feet, or other natural body parts.

- c. Non-traditional weapons must be used consistent with the training provided by a police academy or the department for striking or defensive type traditional weapons. Officers should avoid striking persons in the head or other potentially lethal areas unless deadly force is authorized.
- d. Bayonets, daggers, dirks, stilettos, switchblade knives; sap gloves or similar type gloves with sand, metal filings, or stud knuckles; slappers, blackjacks and other similar ancillary weapons are strictly prohibited.

12:2-4 POLICE UTILITY KNIVES

- a. Knives should not be used as a weapon unless deadly force is justified and traditional weapons are unavailable, ineffective, or useless.
- b. Police utility knives have legitimate use in the law enforcement setting. Uses include, but are not limited to:
 - Cutting seatbelts;
 - Cutting other ligatures
 - Structure entry (when constitutionally permitted)
- c. When worn on the duty belt, folding knives should be secured in a case or sheath that attaches to the duty belt and is made of the same material as the duty belt. (Examples: a nylon case/sheath must be worn with a nylon belt; a black leather case/sheath must be worn with a black leather belt, etc.)
- d. The police folding knives carried by police officers of this agency must meet the following specifications:
 - The knife's blade must be single edged and either fully serrated or partially serrated.
 - The knife must have a locking mechanism that secures the blade in place once the blade has been manually extended.
 - The knife's handle must be designed in such a manner as to facilitate a secure grip, guard against slipping, and prevent accidental release of the blade's locking mechanism.
 - The blade of the knife cannot exceed four and one half (4.5) inches in length.
 - The color of the knife must be either black or steel gray.
 - Police officers are not permitted to carry automatic opening knives, gravity knives, or fixed blade knives. (*See NJSA Title 2C:39-1 for relevant definitions*)
- e. Any police officer choosing to carry a police folding utility knife must submit a written request to their immediate supervisor. The officer shall also submit the police utility folding knife he/she intends to carry while on duty to his/her immediate supervisor for inspection.
 - The supervisor shall ensure the police folding utility knife meets departmental specifications.
 - The supervisor shall date and initial the officer's request.
 - The supervisor, upon approval of the request shall forward this request to the division commander and to the officer's personnel file for filing.

12:2-5 REPORTING

- a. Any use of force involving a non-traditional weapon by any member of the department shall be documented in any report made necessary by the nature of the underlying incident and a Use of Force Report consistent with Directive 1:8.
- b. Any accidental injury to either a police officer or anyone else by the general use of a non-traditional weapon shall be documented in any report made necessary by the nature of the incident and an Accidental Injury Report.