



Task Force on In-Custody Restraint-Related Death Investigations Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Members in Attendance: Steven Trostle, John Monarek (for Lt. Col. Kenny Brown), Natasha M. Dartigue, Dorothy Lennig, Tiffany Dayemo, Dr. Stephanie Dean, Vijay Ramasamy, Donald Bauer, Jessica Williams, Julie Shapiro, Brian DeLeonardo, Sheriff Joseph Gamble, Michael Dunty

Staff in Attendance: Jeff Zuback, Elisa Nicoletti, Allison Badger, Deena Hausner, Christa Blick, Ainsley Moench

Other Guests in Attendance: Eric Jaeger, J.D., N.R.P.

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dorothy Lennig called the meeting to order at 11:00 am. She went over the past meetings of the Task Force. Dr. Jeff Kukucka, Dr. Stephanie Dean, Wayne Silver, and Tony Schartner had given presentations. The Task Force must submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by December, so the end of the meeting would discuss what next steps need to be taken to write the report.

II. Review of February Meeting Minutes

The February meeting minutes were approved. Dorothy Lennig announced that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday, June 10th, from 10am-12pm at the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy Crownsville office.

III. Presentation from Eric Jaeger, Emergency Medical Educator, Paramedic, Attorney

Dorothy Lennig introduced Eric Jaeger, an emergency medical educator, paramedic, and attorney, who focuses his work on reducing the risk of death associated with the restraint of

aggravated individuals. Eric Jaeger gave a presentation on best practices for police and EMT use of restraints.

IV. Discussion on Presentation

Steve Trostle shared that over the eight years of working in the police integrity division, he has observed two clear shifts in officer behavior during restraint. The first was a "tap out" about five years ago, indicating officers easing up on force once a subject was restrained, and the second, newer "tap out," which began about two years ago, is the immediate action to roll them over. He believes the second shift comes from the messaging officers accepted following the conviction of those involved in the death of George Floyd. However, the current training is not sophisticated enough and should be as detailed as the training provided to EMTs. He emphasized that simply getting a person onto their side is insufficient; officers should also be trained to conduct a pre-assessment of the individual's overall health.

Dorothy Lennig asked how often EMTs are at a scene with police officers. Sheriff Joe Gamble replied that in rural departments, deputies often operate alone for an extended period, sometimes six to ten minutes, before EMS arrives due to longer response times compared to urban environments. Police academies are now instructing officers to get subjects on their rears, rather than their sides. Eric Jaeger added he makes his training available, and emphasized the importance of EMS and police training together.

Tiffany Dayemo asked Eric Jaeger a clarifying question about something he touched on in his presentation: the location of certain medical equipment. Eric Jaeger noted that EMS has the necessary medical equipment, but sometimes that equipment is not immediately brought to the patient's side during sedation. Sedative medication should not be administered until all necessary equipment, including a cardiac monitor for vital signs and intubation gear, is immediately next to the patient. If an agitated patient cannot be monitored with gear, a partner should be assigned to focus solely on the patient's airway and breathing.

Donald Bauer inquired if there was any data on the inability to get a medic in urban areas due to the high number of calls and traffic. Eric Jaeger responded that there is currently no data on the percentage of calls where a paramedic responds or the time frames for certified medics to reach the scene. The biggest data gap is the lack of tracking for how frequently people are restrained, how often people are restrained while prone, and how often positive outcomes appear. Tracking is currently limited to in-custody deaths, meaning people who suffer negative but non-fatal consequences are not being tracked.

Jessica Williams asked if there were any jurisdictions that have implemented successful use of force tracking. Eric Jaeger responded that he had recently trained Montgomery County, and improvements are happening.

Julie Shapiro mentioned that the Independent Investigations Division (IID) at the Office of the Attorney General is tracking data on use of force, but they could track more data specific to restraint-related in-custody deaths, such as pre-existing medical conditions or substance use. Eric Jaeger encouraged this effort, and suggested also looking at the role EMS plays in these deaths. Julie Shapiro cautioned that IID is focused on criminal prosecution and liability.

V. Discussion on Report

Dorothy Lennig thanked Eric Jaeger for his presentation, and opened up discussion on what may still be needed to write the Task Force's final report.

Steve Trostle suggested conducting a deep dive or comparative study on each police department's current policies and procedures regarding use of force, deescalation, and first responder responsibilities once a threat is removed. John Monarek commented that the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) would be the first step. Steve Trostle responded that even in two neighboring jurisdictions, Baltimore City and Baltimore County, the General Orders differ widely and are imprecise. The Task Force should consider expanding Public Safety Article § 3524. Sheriff Joe Gamble countered that statewide standards may not work due to the varying environments and resources of rural versus urban departments. He gave an example on body worn cameras, wherein MPTSC created statewide guidelines, not policies, on the cameras, and sent out a model policy. Police departments then created their own policies based on the guidelines. He suggested asking MPTSC to investigate each department's standards. Steve Trostle disagreed, preferring to go through the legislative route. Allison Badger agreed that a universal, minimum policy would be helpful, as it would leave room for police departments to adapt it to their own agencies. Sheriff Joe Gamble clarified that MPTSC sets minimum standards, and many police departments can go beyond.

Allison Badger recommended looking at a small subset of police department standards and the implementation of those standards.

Sheriff Joe Gamble suggested that law enforcement units should be required to partner with EMS for de-escalation training.

Julie Shapiro offered that the Task Force should look at data regarding pre-existing health conditions and substance use in these deaths. Dr. Stephanie Dean agreed, and added it would be helpful to have timeline markers and observable behavioral markers. Jeff Zuback added that GOCPP collects data on both federal and state deaths-in-custody, including toxicology reports.

The dashboard notes which deaths were restraint-related. Because the data is in PowerBI, it is able to be linked and combined with multiple other datasets.

Elisa Nicoletti inquired how timeline data would be established. Dr. Stephanie Dean responded they would rely on body-worn camera footage, and Julie Shapiro added that 911 calls would also be informative.

Donald Bauer noted the importance of post-incident reviews to review the situation in totality with all stakeholders. Dorothy Lennig noted that the Domestic Violence Fatality Review team would be brought in after an incident to review what lessons could be learned to improve processes and coordination. Tiffany Dayemo added that there may be more than one police agency involved in a case.

Brian DeLeonardo commented that there is a fear among EMS to be on-scene until a subject is fully restrained. Additionally, it would be helpful to know how many uses of force go right, rather than only focusing on the incidents where it goes wrong. Sheriff Joe Gamble commented that use of force reports are given to the State.

Allison Badger suggested adding a use of force in practice analysis to the analysis of use of force policies. John Monarek countered that uses of force may not always be correlated to the policies of a police department, and instead may be correlated with the crime in the jurisdiction.

Dorothy Lennig asked if handcuffing someone counted as a use of force. Sheriff Joe Gamble answered that restraining anyone in any way other than handcuffs counts as use of force, and the method would be indicated on the use of force form.

Dorothy Lennig asked if there was a central repository for use of force forms. Sheriff Joe Gamble commented that, while use of force forms are submitted to the State, there is no standard review process. Jeff Zuback noted that all data submitted to GOCPP is made publicly available through data dashboards.

Vijay Ramasamy inquired if evaluating standards and the role of other providers, such as EMS, falls within the scope of the Task Force. Allison Badger responded that it was not beyond the scope, as the Task Force was considering all recommendations. Brian DeLeonardo expressed support for evaluating other providers, as law enforcement officers depend on their partners. Jessica Williams added that it would be helpful to hear from mental health crisis teams.

VI. Adjournment

Dorothy Lennig announced that the next meeting would be held in June.

The meeting adjourned at 12:56pm.