

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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Firearms Regulations		



I. Definitions

A. Primary Service Firearm

The Division-issued Smith and Wesson model M&P .40 caliber auto pistol.

B. Alternate Firearm

A Division-issued or privately-owned firearm authorized for carrying in-lieu of or in addition to the primary service firearm provided applicable Division qualification standards are met. A list of approved firearms is available at the Ordnance Unit.

II. Policy Statements

- A. Sworn personnel shall annually meet Division qualification standards with any firearm they intend to carry while on or off duty. This does not apply to personal rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns used only for recreational purposes.
- B. Sworn personnel shall use Division-approved weapons only when reasonable and within policy.
- C. Sworn personnel shall not use any weapon for a retaliatory or punitive purpose.
- D. Sworn personnel should not fire or deploy a weapon at a dangerous animal unless the animal poses an immediate threat to personnel or others, use of the weapon is reasonable, and the risk to human life is minimized.
- E. Sworn personnel should not fire or deploy a weapon to kill a diseased or injured animal unless its destruction is reasonable and humane.
- F. Sworn personnel shall not carry personally-owned shotguns or rifles on-duty or while working special duty.
- G. Sworn personnel shall not carry a loaded firearm within a court building or courtroom when attending court on any personal/private matter unless prior approval is obtained from the Chief of Police.
- H. Carrying Loaded Firearms

Note: This policy does not apply to personal rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns used only for recreational purposes or for personnel traveling directly to or from duty locations.

1. Within the City of Columbus:
 - a. Full-time sworn personnel and on-duty sworn reserve personnel shall carry a loaded authorized firearm at all times with the following exceptions:
 - (1) When it would be a violation of law
 - (2) When it would be impractical
 - (3) When ordered not to by a competent authority, such as a court, or not permitted to by Division Policy or restrictionsNote: Justification for not carrying a firearm shall be required.
 - b. Off-duty sworn reserve personnel may carry a loaded firearm except as noted in this directive.
2. Outside of the City of Columbus:
 - a. On-duty sworn personnel shall carry a loaded firearm at all times unless:
 - (1) When it would be a violation of law
 - (2) When it would be impractical
 - (3) When ordered not to by a competent authority, such as a court, or not permitted to by Division Policy or restrictionsNote: Justification for not carrying a firearm shall be required.
 - b. Off-duty sworn personnel are not required to carry a firearm.
- I. When required to carry a firearm, sworn personnel shall carry and use only those firearms and ammunitions that have been approved by the Chief of Police, and with which they have satisfied the qualification standards of the Division of Police and the Ohio Peace Officers Training Commission.
- J. Sworn personnel in uniform shall carry only the Division-issued service firearm as the primary firearm unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police.

Exception: Sworn personnel at the rank of lieutenant or above, when wearing the blouse, may carry an approved alternate firearm in a concealed manner.
- K. Sworn personnel shall be given the opportunity to qualify up to three approved alternate firearms. An annual maximum of up to 450 rounds shall be provided by the City for the purposes of qualifying with approved alternate firearms. Once personnel have qualified with an alternate firearm, no more rounds shall be allocated for that firearm.
- L. For a service firearm, sworn personnel shall be allotted a weekly maximum of 50 practice rounds provided by the City. For approved alternate firearms, a semi-annual maximum allotment of 50 practice rounds shall be provided by the City.
- M. Sworn personnel shall carry alternate firearm(s) authorized for carry in-lieu of the primary service firearm in a concealed manner except when in uniform or inside a police facility.

- N. Sworn personnel shall carry alternate firearm(s) authorized for carry in addition to the primary service firearm in a concealed manner.
- O. Carrying or using a firearm while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is a violation of law.
- P. Sworn personnel when off-duty and out of uniform and carrying the primary service firearm or authorized alternate firearm shall have it within their immediate control unless it would be a violation of law or this directive.
- Q. Only Ordnance Unit personnel may repair or alter any issued firearm.
- R. Sworn personnel may use an approved rail-mounted light and holster for the primary service firearm, both on and off-duty, upon training and qualification conducted by Ordnance Unit personnel.
- S. Testing, evaluating, and any required "breaking in" of all firearms, chemical agents, intermediate weapons, and any accessory to these weapon systems are to be conducted under supervision by the appropriate Training Bureau personnel. Requests for any new firearms, chemical agents, intermediate weapons, and accessory to these weapon systems will include the recommendation of Training Bureau personnel prior to being submitted to the Chief of Police for final approval.
- T. Sworn personnel working in plainclothes shall carry the primary service firearm or an approved alternate firearm when on duty or working special duty, unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police.
- U. Sergeants and officers returning to a uniformed assignment shall return any Division-issued alternate firearm to the Ordnance Unit.
- V. Sworn personnel working in units with specialty firearms shall return all issued firearms, other than the primary service firearm, to the Ordnance Unit when the officer to whom the firearm is issued departs the unit, relinquishes the firearm for any reason, or is otherwise ordered. Any supervisor with an issued shotgun shall return the shotgun to the Ordnance Unit upon transfer to a non-uniformed assignment.
- W. Shotgun
 - 1. Only sworn personnel who have qualified with the shotgun shall be permitted to carry one.
 - 2. Sworn personnel shall annually complete a familiarization class.
 - 3. Personnel who have not qualified with a shotgun shall not deploy, carry, or use the shotgun except under the most critical circumstances.
- X. Patrol Rifle
 - 1. Only sworn personnel trained and certified as a Patrol Rifle Officer/Operator (PRO) shall carry the patrol rifle.
 - 2. Sworn personnel shall refer to their appropriate Bureau Standard Operating Procedure Manual for further instructions.
 - 3. PROs who transfer from Patrol to a non-uniform unit may keep their assigned rifle when written permission is given from the involved personnel's deputy chief.

4. Personnel who have not qualified with a patrol rifle shall not deploy, carry, or use the patrol rifle except under critical circumstances.
 - Y. Authorization to carry an alternate firearm may be terminated at any time.
 - Z. Authorized alternate firearms may be carried off-duty in accordance with Division policies.
- AA. Failure to Qualify with a Firearm
1. Failure to qualify with the Primary Service Firearm
 - a. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify **with the primary service weapon** in three attempts during the first qualification session **of each required course/phase** shall receive from Ordnance Unit personnel a written order from the Chief:
 - (1) To surrender their primary service firearm
 - (2) Not to wear their uniform
 - (3) Not to take any police action, on or off-duty
 - (4) Not to work special duty
 - (5) Not to carry any firearm on or off-duty
 - (6) The date of their next qualification session
 - b. Ordnance Unit personnel shall place the original written order in the employee's firearms file, and shall email copies of the order to the involved employee's bureau commander and deputy chief.
 - c. The immediate supervisor of personnel failing to qualify shall be immediately notified. The supervisor of uniformed personnel driving a marked police vehicle shall make arrangements to have the officer and marked police vehicle transported to the duty station.
 - d. Sworn personnel who have been required to surrender their primary service firearm due to the failure to qualify may contact their deputy chief and request that the Chief of Police return the firearm to them.
 - e. Sworn personnel shall be allowed a total of three qualification sessions of three attempts each. Personnel failing to qualify by the completion of these sessions will receive a written order advising them that they have seven days in which to qualify on their own time. Failure to qualify during that time shall be cause for disciplinary action.
 - f. Sworn personnel beginning a qualification session shall not cease their attempt(s) until minimum qualification standards are met. If circumstances dictate sworn personnel need to mark-off during a qualification session, upon reporting for regular duty, sworn personnel shall immediately schedule a time to qualify and will be allotted the remaining number of attempt(s) in the original qualification session.**
 - g. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify in three attempts during the first qualification session shall be provided remedial training prior to any further attempts to qualify. This training can range from verbal instruction

up to and including regimented firing of the qualification course. The contents of the remedial training will be at the discretion of Ordnance Unit personnel based on the needs of each involved person. Sworn personnel that have failed to qualify by the conclusion of the first session will be scheduled to attend firearm technical skills development.

2. Failure to Qualify with an Approved Alternate Firearm

- a. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify in three attempts during the first qualification session for the approved alternate firearm are prohibited from carrying the weapon until qualifications are met.
- b. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify with their approved alternate firearm shall surrender the firearm to Ordnance Unit personnel if the firearm is City owned.
- c. Sworn personnel shall be allowed a total of three qualification attempts per day during normal Ordnance Unit hours until qualifications are met.

3. Failure to Qualify with the Shotgun

- a. Sworn personnel who fail after three attempts during the first qualification sessions are prohibited from carrying a shotgun.
- b. Sworn personnel who do not qualify shall receive from Ordnance Unit personnel a written order from the Chief of Police that prohibits them from carrying the shotgun.
- c. The original order shall be placed in the employee's firearms file and copies shall be forwarded by email to the involved employee's bureau commander and deputy chief.
- d. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify with the shotgun shall surrender the shotgun to their immediate supervisor. The supervisor will reassign the shotgun to an officer who is qualified.
- e. Training shall be provided prior to requalification. Sworn personnel shall be allowed a total of three qualification attempts per day during normal Ordnance Unit hours until qualifications are met.

4. Failure to Qualify with the Assigned Patrol Rifle

- a. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify in three attempts during the first qualification sessions for the assigned patrol rifle are prohibited from carrying the patrol rifle until qualifications are met.
- b. Sworn personnel who fail to qualify with their assigned patrol rifle or fail to meet the required score with their primary service firearm shall surrender the patrol rifle to Ordnance Unit personnel until qualifications are met.
- c. Sworn personnel shall be allowed a total of three qualification attempts per day during normal Ordnance Unit hours until qualifications are met.

BB. Carrying Firearms Aboard Aircraft and into Secured Areas in Airports

1. Sworn personnel shall only be authorized to carry a firearm aboard an aircraft when there is an operational need to immediately be prepared

for duty and have the weapon readily accessible, for example, prisoner transport.

Note: Traveling for a convention, conference, training, or vacation is not considered an operational need.

2. Policies adopted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) impose certain restrictions on sworn personnel traveling with a firearm. These policies are outside the control of the Division of Police and the Columbus Airport Authority Police. In addition to FAA policies, individual airlines may have established restrictions that must be followed.
3. Sworn personnel shall have in their possession:
 - a. The completed Flying Armed Original Letter of Authority form, I-20.132, which contains the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) identifier.
 - b. A copy of the NLETS teletype provided by the Records Section.
 - c. Division-issued badge and identification card.
 - d. Valid State of Ohio Driver License.

Note: Present these items at the airline counter and at any additional verification checkpoints. Sworn personnel will be required to sign a log before entering a secured area of the airport. Screeners are required to verify proof of identification and may deny access to secured areas or aircraft until the Division can be contacted.

4. While performing official police duties, on-duty sworn personnel may carry a firearm into secured areas of airports provided they sign the required log and provide proof of identification to the screeners designated by the airport.
5. To avoid problems or delays, sworn personnel transporting a firearm in checked baggage should contact the airline in advance to determine the proper procedures.
6. Off-duty sworn personnel shall not carry a firearm on their person into secured areas of airports or aboard an aircraft.

III. Procedures

A. Firearms Qualifications

1. Ordnance Unit
 - a. Formulate firearms training and qualification standards.
 - b. Advise bureau commanders of firearms training and qualification schedules.
2. Bureau Commander
 - a. Ensure all sworn personnel under your command are scheduled for each phase of qualification.
 - b. After each phase, review the circumstances of each individual who has failed to successfully complete the particular phase.
 - c. Recommend appropriate remedial training or disciplinary action.

3. Sworn Personnel

a. Attend firearms qualification phases as scheduled.

- (1) If there is a legitimate conflict preventing attendance, advise the bureau commander who approved the schedule.
- (2) If there is no legitimate reason for failing to appear at the scheduled time, reschedule qualification times on your own time within 30 calendar days.
- (3) Failure to qualify when one is physically able may result in discipline and being relieved of **your** firearm at the end of the year.

B. Obtaining Authorization to Carry an Alternate Firearm

1. Sworn Personnel

- a. Complete a Firearms Qualifications form, S-70.102, listing the information specific to the firearm. Forms are available from the Ordnance Unit.
- b. Submit the firearm to Ordnance Unit personnel for inspection.
- c. Upon authorization from the Ordnance Unit for an approved firearm, forward a written request through the chain of command to the Administrative Deputy Chief for final approval.
- d. Upon approval from the Administrative Deputy Chief, qualify with the firearm on the alternate firearm course.

2. Ordnance Unit

Issue authorization for an approved firearm as appropriate.

C. Obtaining Temporary/Replacement Firearms

1. Contact the Ordnance Unit to schedule a time for the issuance of a temporary firearm, or
2. If the Ordnance Unit is closed, obtain a replacement firearm from the Patrol Administration Sergeant. The replacement firearm shall be used only until a temporary firearm can be obtained from the Ordnance Unit.
 - a. Contact the Ordnance Unit the first day it is open to schedule a time to be issued a temporary firearm, and function-fire the weapon to confirm operability and targeting with at least 15 cartridges.
 - b. Immediately upon completing the operability and targeting protocol, return the replacement firearm to the issuing unit.
3. Immediately return the temporary firearm to the Ordnance Unit when your issued firearm is returned.

D. Sworn Personnel Requesting Permission to Fly Armed

1. Involved Personnel

- a. Obtain the training required by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).
- b. Provide the airline with advance notice of one's intent to fly armed.

- c. Complete the Flying Armed Original Letter of Authority and forward to the deputy chief through the involved employee's chain of command. A deputy chief requesting permission to fly armed will forward the Flying Armed Original Letter of Authority to the Chief.
 - d. If the request to fly armed is approved, contact a Records Technician Supervisor at least 48 hours prior to departure, if possible, to obtain a National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System NLETS teletype. The teletype contains a unique alphanumeric identifier for both departing and returning flights, and any applicable layovers.
2. Deputy Chief/Chief
- a. Review the Flying Armed Original Letter of Authority to determine if the request meets the criteria required to fly armed.
 - (1) If the request meets the criteria required to fly armed, sign the form and return to the involved employee through his/her chain of command.
 - (2) If the request does not meet the criteria to fly armed, deny the request and return to the involved employee through his/her chain of command.