

**CITY OF LYONS POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**POLICE OPERATIONS MANUAL**

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**CHAPTER: 10 - Firearms**

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## **I. PURPOSE**

- A. To establish guidelines and rules for the proper use, care and display of firearms.
- B. To establish a standard operating procedure for check-out of departmental weapons.
- C. To establish a standard operating procedure for weapons qualification.

## **II. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **A. General**

- 1. Officers, while on duty, will carry only the following authorized firearms:
  - a. Department issued Glock 22, 23, or handgun approved by the Chief of Police. Department issued ammunition shall be used.
  - 1. Department issued or approved 12-gauge shotgun, with factory manufactured 00 buckshot.
  - 2. AUTHORIZED back-up weapon (see section G)
  - 3. SPECIAL DEPARTMENTALLY OWNED WEAPONS
  - 4. Department issued or approved Patrol Rifle, with department issued ammunition.
- 2. A written record of all Department approved weapons will be maintained by the Department's Uniform Patrol Division Commander.
- 3. All firearms must be inspected and fired prior to issue or authorization to carry. Any servicing required beyond routine cleaning will be conducted only by a department selected gunsmith. Any weapons found to be unsafe will be immediately removed from service and turned over to the Uniform Patrol Division Commander for repair.

### **B. Firearms Safety**

- 1. It is imperative that each individual exercise extreme care in the handling of all weapons, always emphasizing safety, whether on or off duty.
- 2. Holsters shall not be unsnapped or sidearms removed from holsters unnecessarily. At any such time as it becomes necessary to remove weapons from holsters due to any reason other than an authorized use of force situation, it is mandatory that personnel unload the weapon in a safe manner.
- 3. Loaded shoulder weapons (e.g. shotguns, rifles, gas guns, etc.) shall not be brought inside the police department building unless a deadly force emergency is in progress. It is mandatory that personnel unload the weapon in a safe manner.

4. Shoulder weapons shall be carried perpendicular (muzzle up) to the floor by the grip (no fingers within the trigger guard). They will be carried with the slide back, safety on, and the chamber empty.
5. Only in deadly force situations shall a round be chambered in a shoulder weapon. Once the situation is stabilized, the round is to be un-chambered. This should not be done at the scene in front of the public.
6. Confiscated and found weapons shall not be placed into evidence loaded. Bullet clearing traps shall be used to clear all firearms in a safe manner prior to their admittance into evidence.
7. Particular attention should be given to the removal from and replacement of the handgun to its holster.
8. The safe and secure storage of weapons at home while either on or off-duty shall be given special consideration (e.g., the unloaded weapon should be stored in a locked or secured area).

C. Care of Firearms

All officers shall keep their firearms clean and in good operating condition. Officers' weapons are subject to inspection at any time by a superior officer. No unauthorized alterations shall be made to departmental firearms.

D. Ammunition

All weapons will be loaded with departmental issued ammunition. All ammunition shall be factory manufactured. The carrying or discharging of reloaded ammunition is strictly prohibited. The only exception to this is when practicing at the range.

E. Weapon Display

1. A police officer should avoid the unnecessary display of firearms and not remove the weapon from the holster except when there is justification for its use to accomplish a proper police purpose. In responding to any potentially dangerous situation, such as a robbery or burglary in progress, an officer may draw and carry his/her weapon in a position for speedy and effective use, if necessary.
2. Under Georgia law, a police officer is authorized to carry an issued or authorized firearm while on-duty. The decision to carry a weapon and ammunition off-duty is an individual decision, not a departmental requirement.

3. Firearms will be carried in the issued holsters or in a holster approved by the Chief of Police. These holsters will properly retain and secure the particular weapon being carried.
4. Officers are prohibited from carrying firearms while consuming alcohol or while still under its influence on duty unless on an authorized special assignment.
5. Investigative and other plainclothes personnel shall carry their weapons in a non-conspicuous manner in public, unless warranted otherwise.

F. Discharging Firearms

Whenever any member of the Department discharges a firearm for any purpose other than one sporting in nature (e.g., hunting) or for target practice, he/she shall submit a complete report to the Chief of Police as soon as possible. The report will include:

1. The number of shots fired and the reason and circumstances that required the use of firearms.
2. The names and addresses of any injured persons and witnesses.
3. The extent and treatment of any injuries, the hospital where treated and if known, the doctor providing such treatment.
4. A description of the property damage resulting from the discharge of a firearm and the estimate of repair costs.
5. The officers' evaluation of the situation at the time of the incident.

G. Back-up Weapons

Secondary or back-up handguns are permissible; however, any such handgun must be approved by the Chief of Police. The weapon must be carried concealed on the person or in the officer's briefcase. All requests for permission to carry back-up handguns must be submitted in writing to the Chief of Police. The request shall include the make, model and serial number of all handguns which the officer desires to carry. In addition, before an officer is permitted to carry a back-up weapon on-duty, he/she shall be required to qualify with the weapon annually.

H. Special Weapons and High Risk Situations

1. In hazardous situations, special weapons may be used only by members of the Department that have been trained in their use and authorized by the Chief of Police.

2. Only shotguns and Patrol Rifles issued or approved by the department will be used as a duty weapon. Prior to issuance or use, all officers must demonstrate proficiency in the use thereof.
3. While on-duty, an officer may be temporarily unarmed only when required by applicable policy or law. For example, when the officer is in a jail or prison facility or traveling on a commercial airliner.

I. Surrendering Weapons

No officer shall ever give up any of his/her weapons unless it is absolutely necessary to protect the life of a citizen or himself. Even then, he/she should carefully consider the consequences of his/her action. Surrender of a weapon rarely de-escalates a serious situation and can, in fact, put an officer and innocent persons in jeopardy.

J. Off-Duty Weapons

1. When off-duty, an officer may carry a weapon of his/her choosing in a non-conspicuous manner
2. When officers have City permission to work an off-duty job in uniform, City issued firearms and leather goods shall be worn.
3. If the officer has City approval to work an off-duty non-law enforcement job out of uniform, he/she must have Department approval to carry a firearm. The serial number, brand and type of firearm carried must be noted and approved by the Chief of Police.
4. All personnel using non-city issued weapons while working non-law enforcement off-duty jobs must qualify with the weapon annually during the regular range qualifying. For this qualification, the officer must furnish his/her own ammunition.
5. Officers shall carry appropriate identification when armed on or off-duty.

K. PATROL RIFLES

- a. Only rifles issued by the Division or personally owned rifles approved by the Division are permitted to be carried by members. Personally owned rifles must meet the following criteria:
  - (1) No more than one personally owned rifle may be approved for use by a single member in any 12-month period. Members opting to carry a personally owned rifle shall not be issued a Division rifle.
  - (2) Rifles must be AR-15 style, .223 or 5.56x45 caliber, semi-automatic rifles. The Chief of Police or designee reserves the right to deny the authority to carry any rifle that is not reliable or otherwise suitable for use as a patrol rifle.
  - (3) Rifles shall not be capable of being fired fully automatic or multi-round burst fire.

(4) Rifles shall have a minimum barrel length of 11.5 inches and maximum barrel length of 21 inches. The length of the barrel shall not include a flash suppressor, if so equipped.

(5) Once qualified, all weapons shall remain in the same condition without modifications. No departure from original condition, except changes in sights or stocks is allowed. Any changes in sights and stocks must be inspected by a firearms instructor. If any authorized modifications or repairs are made to the weapon, the member must qualify with that weapon prior to carrying the weapon.

(6) High quality, low power scopes or sights may be used as long as they maintain their zero for combat use. The rifle should be maintained in a protective case.

(7) Magazines should be of good quality and hold a minimum of 20 rounds and a maximum of 30 rounds. A minimum of three magazines is recommended.

(8) Rifles must be equipped with a sling.

(9) Lights mounted on the rifle are allowed only if it is a light manufactured specifically for mounting on a rifle and the rifle is equipped with a compatible mounting bracket.

(10) Members desiring to carry a personally owned rifle shall: (a) Request authorization to carry the rifle. The Chief of Police or designee has the authority to grant such requests.

b. When authorized to carry a rifle, members shall adhere to the following procedures:

(1) Before a member may carry a rifle, the member will be required to qualify with the rifle over a course of fire specified by the Lyons Police Department. Each member must then qualify annually.

(2) Only ammunitions approved by the Division may be used. Ammunition shall not be modified in any manner.

(3) The rifle shall be secured in the trunk or in the member's home while off-duty. Members issued rifle racks are authorized to carry the rifle secured in the rack during patrol duties. During emergency operations, members may carry the weapon in the passenger compartment of their vehicle; however, if the vehicle is left unattended the rifle must be secured in the trunk.

(4) The member must secure the rifle any time the vehicle is being serviced and not being continuously monitored by the member.

(5) No rounds shall be carried in the chamber of the rifle. The rifle shall be carried with the bolt forward, the dust cover closed, and the safety on. The member may carry the rifle with a magazine in the magazine well.

(6) A round may be chambered in the rifle only when it is deployed for tactical use or for training/qualifications.

(7) Except as permitted in this policy, NO modifications to the rifle or the magazines may be made by the member.

(8) Because each weapon must be zeroed by its shooter, members may only use the weapon they have qualified with unless exigent circumstances exist.

(9) Rifles are to be inspected regularly. Rifles should be cleaned as needed.





## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

EFFECTIVE February 1, 2012

### S.O.P. 10-1 DEPARTMENTAL ARMAMENT CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

#### I INTRODUCTION

Items of weaponry and personal protective equipment fall into the general classification of armament. Police Departments must pay specific attention to the requirements of their individual community in determining the type of armament best suited for their operation. The equipment needed to make up the basic armament requirements of a police agency can be divided into two distinct areas, individual armament and department armament. This S.O.P. addresses the latter.

The items required to supplement individual equipment for use in special operations, the heavier weapons, specialized riot equipment, and individualized pieces of protective equipment make up the departmental armory.

##### A. Under Normal Circumstances

1. All weapons and equipment approval/check-out will be handled by the shift supervisor with the officer as follows:
  - a. Check-Out-The weapon, type, rack number and serial number will be noted on the sign-out ledger. No weapon will be removed from the vault, for any reason, without being signed out. Non-serialized equipment will be noted by type (e.g., riot helmet) and individual identifying number.
  - b. The supervisor and officer will both sign the ledger, noting the date and time out.
  - c. Any ammunition removed will also be noted on a separate line in the ledger.
  - d. All weapon or equipment shall be returned to the Department arms vault using the following procedure:

Weapons will be checked in immediately after the officer completes his/her tour of duty.

Weapons will be cleaned and wiped free of dirt, moisture and harmful residue before being replaced in the vault. The bore will also be cleaned, if the weapon has been fouled or exposed to the elements.

The weapon and/or ammunition will be placed in the proper storage area and the date and time noted in the ledger.

Equipment will be returned in the same condition as issued.

Used cleaning materials (patches, etc.) will be removed from the vault and placed in a proper trash receptacle. (Gun wipe cloths may be retained and stored with the gun-cleaning components in the vault.)

- f. Any weapon that has been fired, damaged or any other damaged equipment will be reported to the shift supervisor by a detailed memorandum with copies to: the Chief of Police; the officer's Division Captain; and the Firearms Training Officer (weapon only). The supervisor receiving the weapon will inspect it for cleanliness and functioning before checking it in. Problems with any weapon not passing inspection will be corrected by the officer, if possible, and re-inspected by the same supervisor.
- g. The Uniform Patrol Division Captain will make regular inspections of the arms vault and its contents to ensure that these procedures are being followed as outlined. Any incident of a weapon requiring maintenance after being checked out will be reported to the armorer. The weapon will be tagged for repair and returned to the vault. Repair tags must remain in place and the weapon not used until the repair has been made. Repair tags will be kept in the vault for this purpose.

B. Emergency Conditions

Under emergency conditions, the shift supervisor or any other available superior officer shall secure the armament needed on scene. Once the incident has been resolved, the issuing officer shall have the responsibility for the return of the armament as discussed in section A above. Any missing or unaccounted for equipment shall immediately be reported to the Uniform Patrol Division Captain, ensuring an investigation to determine the cause and any necessary action.

## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**EFFECTIVE February 1, 2012**

### **S.O.P. 10-2 WEAPONS QUALIFICATION**

#### **I INTRODUCTION**

One of the more important training functions of a Police Department is to ensure that personnel who are authorized to carry firearms are proficient in their use and have an understanding of the rules and laws governing the use of deadly force. Firearms equipped personnel must be well versed in each individual weapon that is authorized for use by the department and must have a sense of judgment when to employ their weapons. To this end a stringent weapons qualification process for all personnel authorized to carry and employ firearms is mandatory.

##### **A. ADMINISTRATION**

1. The Department Training Officer shall be responsible for implementing firearms qualification programs, classroom instruction and remedial training for departmental personnel.
2. The range officer shall be responsible for ensuring all departmental issued firearms are maintained in good working order. Upon notification from any officer that a weapon is malfunctioning, the range officer shall repair the weapon or issue another.
3. A record of firearms qualifications shall be maintained by the Training Officer. The record will indicate the type, make, model, and serial number of the weapons with which each officer has qualified. The notation of qualification will be: Qualified or Not Qualified and the Date.

##### **B. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

1. All sworn officers shall be GPOSTC certified prior to receiving authorization to carry a weapon in an official capacity or to exercise the power of arrest.
2. Firearms training shall consist of both classroom and practical exercises as determined by the training officer.
3. Failure of any recruit to qualify will result in dismissal or reassignment. Minimum qualification scores shall be as approved by GPOSTC.

4. All officers shall qualify, at the firing range in live fire exercises a minimum of annually with on-duty firearms. At least one live fire exercise per year shall be conducted in low light. Officers may be required to shoot a judgmental shooting course annually.
5. Any officer authorized to carry a firearm who fails to attain a qualifying score following five (5) successive attempts, shall attend, on-duty, a block of remedial instruction and shall attempt to qualify after that instruction. Such officers will be assigned administrative duties and will not be allowed to carry a firearm until re-qualified.
6. After remedial training, an officer will be given five (5) opportunities to achieve one qualifying score.
7. Should the officer still not qualify, he/she will be afforded an opportunity on a voluntary basis, to receive additional instruction and qualify with the weapon on his/her off-duty time within two weeks, as time permits.
8. The course of instruction and final qualification must be completed within two weeks after the officer's failure to qualify.
9. Any officer unable to qualify, after the above avenues or retraining have been exhausted, will be considered incompetent to carry a firearm and will be removed from enforcement duties and subject to appropriate administrative action.

C. FIREARMS TRAINING - Firearms training and qualification will be given and monitored by a certified firearms instructor and shall consist of the following:

1. Classroom instruction on the fundamentals of handgun and shotgun firing.
2. Classroom instruction in firearms safety and preventive maintenance.
3. Classroom instruction in the legal aspects of firearms use.
4. Range practice and qualification with the issued weapon.
5. Range practice and qualification with the shoulder weapon.
6. Range practice and qualification with the off duty weapon if applicable.
7. Instruction and qualification with a firearm training simulator system, where available.
8. Supplemental classroom instruction or practical exercises as may be deemed necessary or useful.

D. RANGE AND FIREARMS SAFETY RULES - One of the objectives of the Lyons Police Department is to develop Law Enforcement Officers into safe and competent Firearm Handlers. It is your responsibility to conduct yourself in a mature manner and use good common sense in safe handling procedures with Firearms. The following Range Rules and Safety Standards will be adhered to by everyone engaged in Firearms Training, and any item not clearly understood should be brought to the attention of the instructor for further explanation. Infractions of or disregard for Firearms Safety will be dealt with promptly and firmly by Firearms Staff Personnel.

1. No alcohol or drugs allowed on range or consumed 8 hours prior to coming to the range.
2. Unload Firearms upon arrival at the range and keep the weapon in a holster.
3. Load Firearms ONLY on command.
4. When not on the firing line, the firearm will be carried in a holster (safety straps attached), non-holstered Firearms will be carried with the action open and safeties on, i.e. shotguns & rifles etc.
5. No HORSEPLAY. No emotional outbursts.
6. NO SMOKING OR CHEWING TOBACCO ON THE FIRING LINE.
7. No dry firing allowed, unless supervised by a Firearms Instructor.
8. Never move from the firing line unless commanded by the Range Master.
9. Hearing and Eye protection WILL be worn at all times, while on the firing line.
10. Keep finger off the trigger except when ready to fire.
11. Shoot only at the target.
12. Report all miss-fires, malfunctions, or dropped weapons to the Range Master immediately and discontinue firing.
13. Keep weapon muzzle pointed down-range.
14. Report any unsafe act observed during a Firing Sequence immediately by shouting cease fire and stop firing.
15. Report any injury received, regardless of how minor, during Firing or while on the Range immediately to the Range Master.

16. Obey all commands of the Range Master IMMEDIATELY.
17. Any infraction of safety rules will result in a score of "0" during that course of qualification.

E. ADDITIONAL RANGE RULES FOR NIGHT FIRE

1. Do not move from your position until line is cleared or otherwise instructed by the Range Master.
2. Do not attempt to practice dry firing or either remove weapon from holster until directed to do so by the Range Master.
3. All firearms will be kept in holster and empty until command is given to load or unless otherwise directed by Range Master.
4. If a weapon, ammunition, or flashlight is dropped, no attempt will be made to locate or recover it until directed to do so by the Firearms Instructor.
5. Movement by shooters on the line must be kept to a minimum.
6. No horseplay will be permitted on the firing range.
7. Shooters waiting a turn will remain in an area designated by the Range Master and remain as quiet as possible.
8. All shooters are required to attend any mandatory night fire course with all authorized duty gear to include flashlight and flashlight holder.
9. THESE RULES ARE DESIGNATED FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE ON THE RANGE AND MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO AT ALL TIMES. IF THERE IS A BREAKDOWN IN ANY ONE OF THESE RULES, THE RESULT COULD BE FATAL. BY CONSCIOUSLY THINKING ABOUT THESE RULES AND PRACTICING THESE RULES BOTH ON AND OFF THE RANGE YOU WILL DEVELOP GOOD SAFETY HABITS.