

FLORENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Subject: <p style="text-align: center;">FIREARMS</p>	Procedure: <p style="text-align: center;">General Order 1.3.9 CALEA 4.3.1</p>	Total Pages: <p style="text-align: center;">9</p>
Authorizing Signature: <p style="text-align: center;">Original with Authorizing Signature on File</p>	Effective: 2/1/19 <input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amended <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds	

I. POLICY

It is the policy of this Department that all sworn officers will be properly trained and will demonstrate competent proficiency in the use of firearms. Only Department authorized firearms and ammunition shall be utilized in a law enforcement capacity on and off duty.

II. PURPOSE

This written order establishes guidelines for the authorization, qualification, maintenance, and carrying of firearms by sworn departmental personnel.

III. SCOPE

This written order is applicable to all sworn personnel.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the responsibility of all sworn employees to comply with this written directive.

V. LEGAL DISCLAIMER

The policies, procedures, and regulations are for internal Police Department administrative purposes and are not intended to create any higher legal standard of care or liability in an evidentiary sense than is created by law. Violations of internal Police Department policies, procedures, regulations, or rules form the basis for disciplinary action by the Police Department. Violations of law form the basis for civil and/or criminal sanctions to be determined in a proper judicial setting, not through the administrative procedures of the Police Department.

NOTE: This directive strictly applies to officers who exert their law enforcement authority. It does not apply to off-duty recreational or self-defense situations. This policy only applies to firearms that officers purposely carry in anticipation of possibly having to exert lethal force while performing a “law enforcement related action.”

VII. DEFINITIONS

A. **AUTHORIZED FIREARM** – A firearm authorized for use by this or other established departmental policy and procedure.

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- B. **BACK-UP FIREARM** – A sidearm, authorized by the Chief of Police for on-duty use that is carried in a concealed manner as a backup firearm to be utilized in deadly force situations when the primary firearm is unavailable. Prior to any sworn officer carrying a back-up sidearm the officer must demonstrate proficiency with the weapon in accordance with department standards.
- C. **FIREARM** – Any weapon from which a projectile may be propelled by means of gunpowder or explosive force.
- D. **NON-UNIFORMED OFFICER** – Any officer who is on-duty wearing non-uniform apparel.
- E. **OFF-DUTY FIREARM** – A firearm authorized for off-duty, law enforcement related use. Prior to any sworn officer carrying an off-duty firearm, the officer must demonstrate proficiency to a firearms instructor.
- F. **PATROL RIFLE** – A shoulder fired weapon with a rifled bore designed to fire a single projectile with each pull of the trigger.
- G. **SEMI-AUTOMATIC** – A handgun, utilizing a magazine of cartridges that, once fired, automatically reloads and prepares itself to fire again.
- H. **SHOTGUN** – A weapon usually designed to fire a form of shot, pellets, or slug. A shotgun may be smooth bored or have a rifle bore. It may be pump or semi-auto.
- I. **UNIFORMED PATROL** – Any officer who is wearing the prescribed uniform of the department.
- J. **SUPPRESSOR/SILENCER-** The term “Firearm Silencer” or “Firearm Muffler” means any device for silencing, muffling, or diminishing the report of a portable firearm in accordance with ATF regulations for personal purchase and departmental use.
- K. **HOLSTER RETENTION LEVELS** – based on the steps to remove the weapon from the holster.
 - a. Level I – one step to remove from holster (i.e. drawing the weapon).
 - b. Level II – two steps to remove weapon from holster (i.e. drawing weapon and a retention device such as a thumb snap or mechanical retention).
 - c. Level III – Three steps to remove weapon from holster (i.e. drawing weapon and two retention devices).
 - d. Level IV – Four steps to remove weapon from holster (i.e. drawing weapon and three retention devices).

VI. PROCEDURES

Only weapons and ammunition authorized by the Florence Police Department will be used by sworn personnel in performance of their law enforcement responsibilities. The department issued Glock Model 17/19 9mm caliber handguns are the only approved handguns. This primary handgun is authorized for all commissioned officers, both on and off duty, and plain clothes assignments.

A. AUTHORIZED DUTY HANDGUNS

1. Approved Calibers:
 - a. 9mm.
2. Approved semi-automatic manufacturers are limited to Glock.
 - a. The department issued Glock Model 17.
 - b. The department issued Glock Model 19.
 - c. The Glock Model 43 9mm caliber handgun will be issued to officers as their off-duty or backup-carry weapon. If the officer chooses to carry a back-up weapon on-duty it will be limited to a department issued Glock 43.
 - d. The Glock Model 43 9mm caliber handgun may be carried by on-duty personnel wearing plain clothes or the Class B (dress down) uniform if **all** of the following criteria are met:
 - i. The officer **must** qualify with a minimum score of 70 using the standard APOSTC qualification course;
 - ii. The officer **must** have a minimum of one (1) additional Glock 43 magazine on his/her person;
 - iii. The officer **must** carry the Glock 43 in a Level 2 holster as outlined in Section J. 2. of this General Order;
 - iv. The officer **must** have the Department issued Glock 17/19 readily accessible when carrying the Glock 43. For example, “readily accessible” would be defined as having the Department issued Glock 17/19 locked within a nearby vehicle or locked in a nearby office.
3. All authorized, department issued weapons will be inspected by the department authorized armorer prior to issuance. Any weapon that fails to meet the armorer’s specifications for qualification will be deemed as an unsafe weapon. If needed, the departmental armorer can make the necessary repairs to constitute the weapon as safe, or return the weapon to the factory for repair or replacement.

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4. Department issued firearms are not authorized to be carried for any unapproved or unauthorized law enforcement activity.
5. All department issued firearms are the property of the Florence Police Department and will not be loaned, given or reassigned to another person without permission of the Chief of Police, the Firearms Committee, the Commander of the Training Division, or his designee.
6. The only magazines to be used in these handguns will be department approved magazines. When carried, these magazines will be kept fully loaded with approved service ammunition, to the maximum capacity as specified by the manufacturer.
7. The mechanical function of the handgun shall not be altered and no modifications will be made. No officer, with the exception of department armorers, will exchange or cause to be exchanged any part(s) of the weapon or magazines. No modifications or adjustments will be made to the sights of the weapon by a person other than by authorized department armorers. No permanent changes will be made to the frame, slide, or other factory component without direct permission from the Firearms Committee.
8. Lasers **ARE NOT** authorized in any capacity for officers other than SWAT members as determined by the SWAT Commander.
9. All firearms carried for law enforcement purposes on-duty and as back-up weapons, must be approved, inspected, and registered with the firearms/training committee by make, model, and serial number. This is completed at qualification or during the proficiency course. This is not intended to apply to firearms owned for other than law enforcement purposes.

B. AUTHORIZED BACK-UP AND OFF-DUTY WEAPONS

1. Back-up weapons are limited to Glock. Glock model 43 is reasonably concealed in a "level 1" holster on their person as an on duty back-up weapon
2. Officers are mandated to have a firearm reasonably accessible to them while off-duty.
3. Each officer is required to qualify annually with any authorized weapon that is carried as an on-duty weapon.

C. AUTHORIZED SHOTGUNS & PATROL RIFLES

1. Only shotgun manufacturers approved by the Firearms Committee and by the Chief of Police will be authorized for duty. The

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Firearms/Training committee maintains a current list in 12-gauge only.

2. Approved Patrol Rifles types include:
 - a. Box, magazine-fed, semi-automatic AR-15-style rifle or carbine chambered in .223/5.56 caliber and other .223/5.56 semi-automatic type weapons.
 - b. All patrol rifles must be approved by the Firearms Committee and by the Chief of Police.
 - c. All patrol rifle optics must be approved by the Firearms/Training Committee prior to use. Variable optics starting at 1x power and holographic/red dot type sights are approved. Any modification to sighting systems will be accompanied by a confirmation of existing zero.
 - d. Suppressors/silencers are allowed and must be individually approved by the Firearms Committee. Suppressor use by SWAT is covered under their approved list.
 - e. Patrol rifles must be capable of successfully passing the department qualifications.
 - f. SWAT Sniper rifles are covered in policies directly related to SWAT.

D. AUTHORIZED SPECIAL PURPOSE WEAPONS

1. The Chief of Police has approved special purpose weapons to be used solely by the SWAT Team, including the following:
 - a. Precision Marksman rifles;
 - b. A list of the types and specifications of approved special purpose weapons is on file.

E. AUTHORIZED AMMUNITION

The following ammunition is approved by the Florence Police Department:

1. Duty weapon, back-up/off-duty weapon:
 - a. Only factory-loaded ammunition, approved by the Chief of Police and the Firearms Committee, will be authorized for use on-duty, in a back-up weapon, or for off-duty law enforcement purposes.
2. Patrol Rifle ammunition
 - a. Only factory loaded ammunition, approved by the Chief of Police and the Firearms Committee, will be authorized for use in patrol rifles.
3. Shotgun ammunition

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- a. Only factory loaded buckshot and slugs, approved by the Chief of Police and the Firearms Committee, will be authorized for use in shotguns.

F. AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

1. Only authorized personnel who have qualified or demonstrated proficiency according to APOSTC Standards set forth by the Training Division are authorized to carry firearms.

G. FIREARMS QUALIFICATION PROCEDURES

1. Annually, all sworn personnel are required to qualify or show proficiency with their primary weapon, back-up, patrol rifle and shotgun. More frequent firearms training should occur whenever possible.
2. The Florence Police Department will qualify with firearms based on the standards established by APOSTC and the Firearms Committee.
3. Sworn personnel must demonstrate proficiency with off-duty and back-up weapons, patrol rifles, and patrol shotguns in a manner that satisfies standards established by APOSTC.
4. Sworn personnel will be given ammunition for qualification with their primary-duty weapon.
5. Sworn personnel will be given ammunition for qualification with their back-up weapon.
6. Sworn personnel will be given ammunition for qualification with their patrol rifle.
7. Sworn personnel will be given ammunition for qualification with their shotgun.
8. Certified firearms instructors must be present during APOSTC qualifications and proficiency testing. Both APOSTC qualifications and alternate firearms training will be documented by a firearms instructor.

H. FAILURE TO QUALIFY – REMEDIAL TRAINING:

1. Failure to qualify with a primary-duty weapon, patrol rifle, back-up weapon, and shotgun will void the officer's authorization to carry the firearm in an official capacity, on or off-duty.
2. Officers will be allowed one, scheduled qualification session. A qualification session consists of two qualification attempts.
3. If the officer fails to qualify with their weapon during the scheduled qualification session, the officer's immediate supervisor will be notified as well as the Captain of the officer's respective Bureau.

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The officer will be placed on administrative duty by the regular Chain of Command and scheduled to attend remedial firearms training. A second qualification will be given upon completion of the remedial firearms training.

4. If the officer qualifies during the second session, they will be returned to full-duty. The officer will then be mandated to attend additional practice as arranged by their supervisors until the next qualification session.
5. If the officer fails to qualify with their weapon during the second qualification session, the officer's immediate supervisor will be notified as well as the Captain that oversees the officer's respective Bureau. The officer will be instructed at the time, that they are not authorized to carry a firearm in an official capacity until approved to do so by the Chief of Police. The officer will be placed on administrative leave, with pay, by the regular Chain of Command, pending a due process hearing.
10. The officer will **not** return to full-duty until regaining authorization to do so.

I. GUIDELINES FOR SAFE AND PROPER STORAGE OF FIREARMS:

1. When not in use, all agency authorized firearms will be stored in a safe and proper manner. The safe and proper storage of weapons includes storing weapons:
 - a. In a manner that diminishes opportunity for unauthorized access.
 - b. In a manner that would deter theft.
 - c. In a manner that stores them safely away from children.
 - d. In a manner that would deter accidental or negligent discharge.

J. AUTHORIZED HOLSTERS

1. Uniformed Patrol Officers are required to use Level 3 security holsters for their primary-duty weapon. Holsters will be selected by the Firearms committee and Training Division
 - a. Shoulder holsters are **not** allowed while on duty or while carrying a department issued weapon. This does not preclude the use of a vest mounted holster to carry the department issued back-up weapon.
2. All non-uniformed, sworn personnel or alternate-duty, sworn personnel are required to use a Level 2 security retention holster.

K. WEAPONS QUALIFICATION INVENTORY

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1. Upon completion of a qualification, proficiency, or familiarization firearms course, the officer will complete the respective firearms training documentation form (ex: qualification form, patrol rifle form, or shotgun familiarization training form).
2. Once the training documentation form is completed, a copy of the form will be sent to the Training Lieutenant.
3. The Training Lieutenant will enter the weapon by the officer's name, make, caliber, Serial Number, qualification date, and score into the "Weapons Qualification Inventory" log.
4. The Weapons Qualification Inventory log will maintain a record of all weapons that each officer has qualified or demonstrated proficiency or familiarization with.
5. The log will be maintained in alphabetical order using the officer's last name first.

L. REMOVING UNSAFE DUTY WEAPONS:

Handguns

1. Any officer that identifies an unsafe condition of an agency authorized weapon will request an inspection by a firearms instructor and Glock armorer prior to putting the weapon back in service.
2. Any firearms instructor or Glock armorer that identifies an unsafe condition with an agency authorized weapon will require the weapon be removed from service until repairs are completed.
3. Repairs must be completed, the weapon must pass a subsequent inspection by a department Glock armorer, and the officer must re-qualify with the weapon prior to the weapon being allowed back in service.
4. Unsafe weapon conditions requiring inspection and/or repair include:
 - a. Damaged sights;
 - b. Excessive worn parts, non-spec, parts
 - c. Excessive jamming; and/or
 - d. Excessive grime, dirt, or rust.
 - e. Any other deficiency that makes the affected weapon unsafe.

M. REVIEW, INSPECTION AND APPROVAL OF ALL WEAPONS

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1. Prior to being allowed into service, all weapons will be reviewed, inspected, and approved by a Glock armorer and Firearms instructor, notation will be weapon specific.
2. Firearms and weapons instructors will use approved procedures for the review, inspection, and approval of all weapons.
3. All such inspections will be documented on the weapons service/inspection form.