

GRANTVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT
LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

**CHAPTER: 10 – Firearms and Weapons,
Qualifications**
REVIEWED DATE: 02/03/2020

Assistant Chief: Steve Whitlock
EFFECTIVE: 07/19/2015

- I. PURPOSE**
- II. POLICY**
- III. PROCEDURES/RULES AND REGULATIONS**

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (S.O.P.)

S.O.P. 10-1 DEPARTMENT ARMAMENT CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

S.O.P. 10-2 WEAPONS QUALIFICATION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and rules for the proper use, care check-out, qualifications and display of firearms and weapons.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the GRANTVILLE Police Department that all sworn police officers be armed with a department issued or approved firearm while performing law enforcement functions.

The GRANTVILLE Police Department will ensure that all personnel carrying firearms and other weapons receive adequate training in the safe and proficient use of that weapon.

All officers will be familiar with and be instructed in the Department's Use of Deadly Force and Use of Non-Deadly Force Policies prior to being authorized to carry any weapon.

III. PROCEDURES/RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. General

Officers, while performing law enforcement functions, will carry only the Department authorized firearm(s), ammunition, and weapons. Authorized firearms, ammunition and weapons are those designated by the Assistant Chief.

B. Firearms and Weapons 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 weapons removed from holsters unnecessarily.
3. Loaded shoulder weapons (e.g. shotguns, rifles, gas guns, etc.) should be checked safe, unloaded before being brought inside the law enforcement Department building unless a deadly force emergency is in progress.
4. Particular attention should be given to the removal from and replacement of the handgun to its holster.
5. The safe and secure storage of weapons at home while either on or off-duty shall be given special consideration.

C. Care of Firearms and Weapons

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. Unauthorized alterations shall not be made to Department firearms.

D. Ammunition

All department issued firearms will be loaded with department issued ammunition. All handgun ammunition shall be a factory manufactured bullet. The carrying or discharging of reloaded ammunition is strictly prohibited. The only exception to this is when qualifying or practicing at the range. When purchasing ammunition, the training officer will submit a purchase order to their immediate supervisor describing the type and specification of ammunition that is needed to be purchased. The training officer should insure that the best quality products at reasonable costs are obtained.

E. Weapon Display

1. Law enforcement officers should avoid the unnecessary display of firearms and other weapons 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 law enforcement officer is authorized to carry an issued or authorized firearm while on-duty or off-duty. The decision to carry a personal weapon and ammunition off-duty is an individual decision, not a Department requirement.
3. While on duty, firearms will be carried in the issued holster or in a holster approved by the Assistant Chief. The holster 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, whether on or off-duty unless on an authorized special assignment.

NOTE: Alcohol consumption by Department personnel while on-duty is prohibited, unless consumption is necessary as a part of a special assignment.

E. Discharging Firearms

Whenever an officer discharges their weapon, whether on or off duty, a use of force report shall be made and turned in to their immediate supervisor before their end of duty, unless there is an emergency situation that would otherwise cause more time to be allocated. Training, sporting events, legal hunting will be excluded from use of force reporting. The report shall 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/photo of any property damage resulting from a Use of Force Incident.
5. The officers' evaluation of the situation at the time of the incident.

G. Back-up Weapons

1. Secondary, back-up or personal handguns are permissible; however, the Assistant Chief, or his designee must approve any such handgun and its ammunition. Personal less lethal weapons are not authorized.
2. The weapon must be carried in a concealed manner.
3. All requests for permission to carry back-up handguns must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Chief through the chain of command. The request shall include the make, model and serial number of all handguns that the officer desires to carry.
4. The weapon must be inspected and approved by a qualified weapons instructor prior to qualifying with the weapon.
5. Before an officer is permitted to carry a back-up weapon on-duty, he/she shall be required to qualify with the weapon.

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 Assistant Chief.
2. Only weapons issued or authorized by the Department will be used as a duty weapon. Before issuance for use, all officers must demonstrate proficiency in the use of the weapon and attend any applicable training course.
3. While on-duty, an officer shall be armed unless required otherwise by applicable policy or law (for example, when the officer is in a jail or prison facility, while attending court (if the judge does not permit firearms in court), or traveling on a commercial airliner).

I. Surrendering Weapons

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

J. Off-Duty Weapons

1. All personnel carrying personal (non-Department) weapons while on-duty must qualify with the weapon annually during regular range qualifying. For this qualification, the officer must furnish his/her own ammunition.
2. Officers shall carry appropriate identification when armed on or off-duty.
3. The weapon must be approved by the Assistant Chief, inspected by the Firearms instructor and documented in the training files prior to qualifying and carrying the weapon.

K. Weapon Qualification

1. Annual weapons qualification will be completed by the Grantville police dept in-house instructors.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Reviewed Date: 02/03/2020 **Original Issue:** 08/26/2015 **CHIEF OF POLICE:** Steve Whitlock

S.O.P. 10-2 FIREARMS QUALIFICATION

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and procedures for firearms training and qualifications.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Grantville Police Department to conduct thorough firearms training through classroom and practical exercises and ensure the proper documentation of both. POST certified firearm instructors shall be the only person(s) authorized to conduct said training and shall be responsible for documenting and submitting said training.

It is also the policy of the Department that only Department personnel demonstrating proficiency in the use of Department authorized weapons be approved to carry such weapons.

The Grantville Police Department shall ensure that prior to qualifying with any lethal weapon, officers are familiar with the Department SOP and instructed on its policies and procedures on lethal weapons.

III. PROCEDURES/RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. A POST Certified Firearms Instructor shall be responsible for conducting firearms qualification and re-qualification, classroom instruction and remedial training for all Department personnel, at no time will any Officer participate in offsite firearms qualifications without written expressed permission from the Chief of Police.
2. The Department's Certified Weapons Instructor shall be responsible for ensuring all Department issued firearms are maintained in good working order. Upon notification from any officer that a weapon is malfunctioning, the Weapons Instructor shall repair the weapon if certified to do so or issue another.

B. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. All sworn personnel of the Department shall be GPOSTC certified prior to receiving authorization to carry any 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 officer to qualify will result in **dismissal or reassignment**. Minimum qualification scores shall be as approved by GPOSTC.
4. All officers shall qualify, at a minimum, annually with on-duty, off-duty and backup lethal weapons and demonstrate proficiency with each weapon.
5. **Officers will be given three (3) opportunities to qualify with their weapons during annual qualification. If after three attempts the officer has not achieved a qualifying score, the officer's weapon will immediately be inspected by the Firearms Instructor to determine or rule out if the weapon itself maybe the cause for non-qualification.**

If the weapon is determined to be the cause for the non-qualification, the officer shall be issued a new weapon if the weapon cannot be immediately repaired. The officer shall then be given three (3) opportunities to qualify during the same training session.

If the weapon is not the cause for non-qualification, the officer shall immediately receive remedial training. The remedial training shall consist of an over-view of the basic fundamentals of shooting and practice firing.

After completion of remedial training, the officer shall, during the same training session, attempt to achieve a qualifying score. The officer must achieve two consecutive qualifying scores in three attempts.

6. Should the officer still not qualify, he/she shall relinquish their department firearm to the Firearms Instructor or Training Coordinator and shall be considered on Administrative Leave with pay until the completion of the final stages of qualification. Provided, however, the individual may be assigned to non-law enforcement duty until such training is received.
7. The course of instruction and final qualification must be completed within two weeks after the officer's failure to qualify.
8. Any officer unable to qualify, after the above avenues and remedial training have been exhausted, will be considered incompetent to carry a firearm and will be removed from enforcement duties and subject to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action.

C. FIREARMS TRAINING

Annual firearms training and qualification shall consist of the following:

1. IF necessary, Classroom instruction on the fundamentals of semi-automatic.
2. If necessary, Classroom instruction in firearms safety and preventive maintenance.

3. Classroom instructions in the legal aspects, including legal updates of firearm use and Department policies in reference to the Use of Force and lethal and less-than-lethal weapons.
4. Range practice and qualification with the issued /authorized firearms.
5. Supplemental classroom instruction or practical exercises as may be deemed necessary or useful.

NOTE: All firearms training must be monitored by a POST certified firearms instructor.

D. DOCUMENTATION

It shall be the responsibility of the Training Officer to maintain all records pertaining to firearms training, including but not limited to: agency approved weapons, lesson plans, range scores and remedial training.