



Alexandria Police Department
Directive 7.1



FIREARMS

Effective Date: 04-09-2020		 Cancels: 06-21-2016
Updated Date:	Section(s):	SME Review Date:
Updated Date:	Section(s):	2024
Updated Date:	Section(s):	

CONTENTS

- 7.1.01 POLICY/PURPOSE
- 7.1.02 AUTHORITY/BACKGROUND
- 7.1.03 ISSUED HANDGUN
- 7.1.04 PERSONALLY- OWNED HANDGUNS
- 7.1.05 FIREARMS PROFICIENCY, TRAINING/TESTING
- 7.1.06 USE OF FIREARMS
- 7.1.07 FIREARMS SAFETY
- 7.1.08 RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES
- 7.1.09 RANGE RULES
- 7.1.10 *WEAPON MOUNTED LIGHTS*

7.1.01 POLICY/PURPOSE

It is the policy of this Department to equip officers with firearms that will help protect the community and the officers; to train officers in the appropriate handling and use of firearms; and to protect the safety of officers in the wearing, handling, maintenance and cleaning of firearms.

The purpose of this Directive is to establish procedures and guidelines for the carrying and use of firearms by sworn personnel of this Department while on or off duty, and to provide minimum firearms training standards for those personnel.

7.1.02 AUTHORITY/BACKGROUND

Code of Virginia §18.2-308 regulates the carrying of concealed weapons and exempts duly appointed police officers from the requirement to obtain a permit. As the appointing authority, the City of Alexandria regulates the weapons carried by police officers and appointed law enforcement personnel. Appointed law enforcement

personnel (SPOs and Hack Inspectors) are also regulated by the provisions of §18.2-308, and are further prohibited from carrying Department issued weapons while off duty and are prohibited from carrying non-issued weapons on Police Department property, in Police vehicles, or while conducting Department business at any time. This includes firearms for which employees may have concealed weapon permits from Virginia or any other jurisdiction. The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services provides minimum firearms training standards for law enforcement officers of the Commonwealth.

7.1.03 ISSUED HANDGUN

The authorized and issued handgun for sworn and appointed personnel is the Glock pistol, Model 17, 9mm Luger caliber. [REDACTED]

[4.3.1a]

The authorized ammunition issued for the Glock 17 is [REDACTED]

The Range Manager may authorize additional ammunition as needed. [REDACTED]

[4.3.1b]

7.1.04 PERSONALLY-OWNED HANDGUNS

[4.3.1a]

- A. Back-up handguns - On-duty officers may carry one personally owned, approved back-up handgun (totally concealed) in a holster that has been approved by the Range Manager.
- B. Off-duty handguns – Off-duty officers may carry one personally owned handgun under police credentials, totally concealed and of an action approved by the Range Manager. The off-duty handgun must be carried in a holster approved by the Range Manager.
- C. Carrying of personally owned handguns.
 1. When carrying firearms under police credentials of the City of Alexandria Police Department, while on and off duty, officers will carry only handguns they have qualified with *annually* and have been approved by the Chief of Police and the Range Manager, as specified below:
 - a. Off-Duty Handguns will be limited to the following:

1) .380 Caliber	5) .40 S&W Caliber
2) .357 Caliber	6) .45 Caliber
3) 9 MM	7) .38 spl. Caliber
4) 10 MM	

- b. The Range Manager may approve revolver or semi-automatic handguns produced by the following manufacturers. The Chief of Police may approve handguns produced by a non-listed manufacturer after an evaluation by the Range Manager.

- | | |
|------------|-------------------|
| 1) Beretta | 6) Sig Sauer |
| 2) Colt | 7) Smith & Wesson |
| 3) Glock | 8) Taurus |
| 4) H&K | 9) Walther |
| 5) Ruger | |

- c. Revolvers must be capable of double action with a maximum barrel length of 4 inches and a minimum cylinder capacity of 5 rounds. Semi-automatic pistols will have a trigger mechanism approved and inspected by the range manager with a minimum magazine capacity of 5 rounds. [4.3.1a]
- d. Officers carrying the issued handgun, or other authorized handgun, off duty in civilian clothes will do so as inconspicuously as possible.
- e. Officers will carry their police identification while armed, whether on or off duty. Exception: Officers operating in a status where possession of police identification would endanger the officer, or the operation in which they are participating.
2. Officers carrying a .40 S&W caliber off duty/back up handgun *may* be issued .40 S&W caliber Department ammunition by the Range Manager for qualification; and must use issued ammunition (*if available*) when carrying the firearm.

Officers carrying a 9mm Luger caliber off duty/back up handgun will be issued 9mm Luger caliber Department ammunition by the Range Manager for qualification; and must use the ammunition when carrying the firearm. [4.3.1b]

3. In the event the off duty/backup handgun consists of anything other than *either 9mm Luger or .40 S&W caliber*; the officer may purchase [REDACTED] brand or equivalent type ammunition approved by the Range Manager. [REDACTED] is the brand issued to on duty officers.
- a. Military or other ball type ammunition is prohibited.
- b. All ammunition will be factory manufactured and not reloaded.
- c. All ammunition will be of the hollow point design. [4.3.1b]

7.1.05 FIREARMS PROFICIENCY, TRAINING/AND TESTING

[4.3.3]

- A. Sworn employees, Hack Inspectors and Special Police officers will be scheduled for firearms training *at least* twice each calendar year.

Sworn employees will not carry firearms until they have received copies of, and been instructed in, Department policies governing deadly force; and completed firearms qualification. [4.3.4]

1. Annual Spring Firearm proficiency qualification requirements shall consist of at least two Virginia DCJS qualification courses with the handgun. *Annual Fall Firearms Training will involve a DCJS course; and fundamental and low light shooting. A third annual handgun training session will include fundamental and tactical instruction. In-service training on the Department's use of lethal force/firearms policies will be conducted at least twice annually.*
2. If the employee fails to qualify (70%) on [the most recent handgun qualification course](#) scheduled that day, the Range Manager will notify the Training Supervisor. The Training Supervisor will ensure that the officer's Commander is advised that the officer must remain on administrative duty pending qualification. The officer on administrative duty pending qualification will be provided additional training and the opportunity to qualify with a 70% or better score on the first available training date the officer can be accommodated.
3. Although 70% is a DCJS passing score, officers who fail to obtain a score of at least 75% on the shotgun qualification course and at least 75% on the *most recent* handgun qualification course of fire may be scheduled for remedial training. The Range Manager will determine when the employee has met the Department's qualification requirement and that additional remedial training days are not currently necessary or beneficial. [33.1.5]
4. A written test may be part of any firearms training session.
5. All persons utilizing the range facilities will *always* follow the direction of the Range *Staff*.
6. Employees will report to the Range for training and be responsible for range safety as prescribed by the Range Manager.
7. All *range users*, regardless of rank, will follow the instructions of the Range *Staff*, in order to ensure safety and efficiency. *The orders given by Range personnel carry the full weight of an order while training is in progress.*
8. Employees are responsible for bringing all necessary equipment including assigned long guns, issued ammunition and *issued cleaning gear* with them.
9. Officers intentionally firing extra rounds to ensure a qualifying score on any course of fire will be disqualified on that course of fire.
10. Proficiency tests will include the *officer's* demonstrated ability to accomplish the following: drawing, holstering, clearing stoppages, loading, unloading and handling of firearms in a safe manner.

11. The High Expert designation (96 - 100%) is intended to encourage excellence in the firearms training program. Officers earning High Expert on the most recent qualification course are entitled to wear the Pistol Expert medal on the uniform. The Pistol Expert Medal will be issued only once.
12. Officers *issued* the Patrol Rifle will qualify *at least* once each year on an approved course designed by the Range Manager. The Range Manager will determine the specific dates to qualify.
13. *All sworn officers not issued a Patrol Rifle will qualify at least once each year with the shotgun on an approved course designated by the Range Manager. The Range Manager will determine the specific dates for officers to qualify.*

B. The Range Manager will:

1. Be a DCJS certified weapons instructor; Glock, military specification rifle, and Remington armorer; and will be responsible for monitoring and documenting proficient firearms training. [4.3.5,f.]
2. Carefully inspect each firearm for functionality and safety, insuring it is free of apparent defects, prior to it being issued for use by an officer. [4.3.1,c]
3. Randomly inspect all issued and authorized weapons (including shotguns issued to officers with take-home cars), ammunition and holsters when officer's report to the Range for mandated training. The Range Manager will report any misuse, abuse, *neglect*, or unauthorized equipment to the Chief of Police through channels. [4.3.1, c]
4. Be the only authorized person to dismantle departmental weapons beyond field stripping. This includes any repair, adjustment or any modifications to any Department weapon, holsters or weapon accessories. This includes the addition of any parts or accessories not produced by the manufacturer. (The Range Manager may delegate this task to certified armorers.) *Aside from the issued Department handgun, the Special Operations Team (SOT) will maintain specialty firearms assigned to SOT and will designate armorers authorized to dismantle and repair these firearms. The Range Manager will not be required to maintain SOT specific firearms.* [4.3.1, c]
5. Instruct all persons at the Range in order to ensure maximum safety at all times. This instruction will be in accordance with the approved lesson plan. It will include a review of the Department's Police Directive 10.32 (Use of Force), proper and safe methods for cleaning weapons, home safety, disassembling and reassembling weapons, nomenclature of the weapons and their function during the firing of the weapons. [33.1.4]

6. Maintain records on each weapon approved for use by employees of the Department, either on or off duty. [4.3.1, e]
 7. Make a report through channels to the Chief of Police containing the names of those sworn officers who qualify, and those who had to be retrained. The report will contain qualifying scores for all sworn officers authorized to carry firearms (including SPOs) and will document that Use of Force training was conducted.
- C. **The Training Supervisor will** ensure that records of all firearms training and all firearm qualification scores are kept for five years. [4.3.3, b]

7.1.06 USE OF FIREARMS

- A. **Handgun** – Unless otherwise prohibited, all on duty sworn employees shall be armed with a fully loaded Department issued Glock pistol or other approved *handgun*. *A round will be chambered*. All magazines will be topped off and loaded to capacity.
- B. **Shotguns** - All sworn officers *not assigned a patrol rifle* are required to be trained and certified in the use of the shotgun. *All officers issued a shotgun are required to carry this weapon, properly secured in Department vehicles, while on duty or during approved Secondary LEAA Employment.* Department issued [REDACTED] are to be used in the shotguns. The Remington model 870 *shotgun, equipped in a manner determined by the Range Manager*, is the Department's approved shotgun for patrol duty. [4.3.1a]
- C. **Patrol rifles** - Deliver a high-powered round (capable of penetrating most personal body armor) at long-distance, allowing specially trained officers to provide accurate fire when circumstances justify such a response. Only officers trained and certified in the use of these weapons may use them. *All officers issued a patrol rifle are required to carry this weapon, properly secured in Department vehicles, while on duty or during approved Secondary Employment.* The Bushmaster XM15 M4A3 carbine, Caliber .223, loaded with [REDACTED] is the Department's approved and issued patrol rifle. [4.3.1a]
- D. Shotguns and Patrol rifles may be removed from vehicles under the following circumstances:
1. Holdup alarms, robbery in progress calls, burglaries where the offense has been confirmed and the suspect(s) is believed to be on the premises or in the immediate vicinity;
 2. Felony vehicle stop incidents where a firearm is suspected of being used, is being used or has been used in the commission of a crime;

3. To search for suspects who are allegedly armed with firearms;
4. To be used in specific stakeout and raid details where probable cause exists to believe there is a threat to human life; or
5. Any other circumstances approved by a supervisor.

E. Shotguns and Patrol rifles will not be removed from vehicles under the following circumstances:

1. To control civil disorders, except when officers at the scene have been fired upon;
2. Handling routine calls; and
3. Family disturbance calls, except when the caller indicates weapons are present and being used in the disturbance.

F. **Supervisors** will consider the justification for removal of the shotgun or patrol rifle while on the scene of an incident. If a supervisor observes an officer with a shotgun or patrol rifle out in violation of Department policy, the supervisor will direct the officer to return the weapon to the officer's vehicle as soon as practical. Supervisors will ensure that only the appropriate number of shotguns or patrol rifles are used in any particular incident, and the supervisor may advise an officer at any time to remove the weapon(s) from a scene.

G. All employees are governed by Virginia law and Department Directives with respect to the use of force and discharge of firearms. Any discharge of a Department owned or authorized firearm, other than during firearms qualification or other range practice, must be reported to a supervisor. The supervisor will ensure an investigative report is forwarded to the *Chief of Police*.

H. The unintentional or negligent discharge of an issued firearm or other firearm as authorized under Police Directive 7.1.04 by any employee of the Police Department must be reported to the on-duty watch commander and Internal Investigations. An investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident shall attempt to determine the cause of the firearm's discharge. Carelessness or negligence on the part of any employee will result in disciplinary action.

7.1.07 FIREARMS SAFETY

A. It is imperative that employees use extreme caution when handling firearms. All employees will be alert and report to a supervisor any careless handling of any firearm.

B. In addition to the safety precautions stressed in training, employees will observe the following:

1. The shotgun and patrol rifle will be unloaded (all rounds or magazine removed), *with the action open, the safety on*, and carried in *either* the port arms position, *or properly slung with the muzzle pointed downward (Station Safe Condition)*, while inside any police building.
2. Except when preparing to fire the shotgun or patrol rifle, *if the officer is not utilizing the issued shotgun/rifle sling, the officer should* carry *the gun* with the muzzle pointing upward, *unless it is unsafe to do so. If the officer is utilizing the issued shotgun/rifle sling, the gun should be slung and pointed downward with the officer's fingers outside the trigger guard.*
3. Except when the shotgun is being made ready for use, it will remain locked in the rack provided in the vehicle, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [4.3.1f]
4. Patrol Rifles will remain locked in the rack provided in the vehicle, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [4.3.1f]
5. At the beginning of each tour of duty, officers will inspect the *long guns* assigned to *them* in an open area in a manner that will not endanger anyone.
6. Officers will remove all firearms from vehicles prior to leaving them at the shop and will store the firearms in the arsenal before they end their tour of duty. [4.3.1f]
7. The Range Manager or designee will periodically ensure that all firearms are clean and operational, removing and replacing any found to be unsafe.
8. Officers finding a Shotgun or Patrol Rifle in need of repair will attach a tag to the firearm and notify their immediate supervisor who will notify the Range Manager.

7.1.08 RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Officers are responsible for the security of issued firearms both on and off duty. Officers are issued a security lock with their service handgun and are encouraged to

use the lock and to keep their service handgun, as well as personally owned firearms, locked in a secure place when not in use. Officers are required to secure and lock their service handgun and any Shotgun or Patrol Rifle if minor children are in their home, full or part- time (See also, VA Code 18.2-56.2).

- B. All officers *issued long guns* will be equipped with their assigned patrol rifle or shotgun while on duty, to include secondary LEAA employment. [REDACTED]

- C. *Except as defined below*, all officers with an assigned Patrol Rifle or shotgun, will secure it in the arsenal at the end of each shift.

Exceptions:

1. *SOT members*
2. *With their supervisor's permission, officers may take long guns home for a short-term, agreed upon time frame, for the purpose of practicing at a private range, or for practicing dry firearm manipulations or dry fire practice. Personnel involved in this practice are responsible to ensure they are following the cardinal rules of firearm safety.*
3. *With their commander's written permission, officers assigned a long gun who are also assigned a take home vehicle, may take their long gun home on a regular basis.*

- D. At no time will firearms be left unattended in an *unlocked* vehicle.

1. Handguns left inside locked vehicles must be hidden from view and must be placed in a locked compartment or in the vehicle's trunk.
2. All other firearms left inside locked vehicles must be secured in a locking mount or in the vehicle's trunk.

- E. Firearms will not be stored in vehicles overnight, *to include those long guns meeting the exceptions in 7.1.08C*, except that, firearms may be left in SOT take home cars if all SOT requirements have been met. Refer to Memorandum of Understanding for SOT Take Home Vehicles, form (F-APD 536) and Vehicle Checklist for Take Home Weapons, form (F-APD 536 A). [4.3.1.f]

- F. Sworn employees are not required to carry a firearm while off-duty.

- G. Employees will not carry any *personally owned or Department* issued firearm while *under City of Alexandria Police Department credentials while* consuming alcohol or any intoxicant, *or having recently consumed alcohol or an intoxicant*, except as provided under police directive 2.2 Rules of Conduct.

- H. Employees are prohibited from firing “Warning shots.” [4.1.3]
- I. Except for general maintenance, supervisory inspections, storage, transferring to or from an off-duty holster, or authorized training; employees shall not draw or exhibit firearms without justifiable cause.
- J. Handguns will only be loaded or unloaded *at* Police Headquarters *either* in the arsenal, *or at designated unloading/loading stations*, and only with use of the clearing chamber, unless by direction of a Supervisor or above. Dry firing exercises will not be practiced at any City facility, except the Range, *or a designated dry fire station approved by the Chief of Police*.
- K. Officers will be required to demonstrate their proficiency *at least* yearly with all special weapons they are authorized to use.
- L. The range manager will maintain a record (form F-APD-0013) of each weapon approved by the agency for official use. All agency approved and authorized weapon information (make, caliber, and serial number) will be maintained in the firearm qualification database.
- M. Employees are responsible for keeping *issued* firearms clean, *free of rust*, properly lubricated, and in proper working order at all times.

7.1.09 RANGE RULES

- A. All firearms training must be pre-approved and authorized by the Range Manager.
- B. Lesson plans must be submitted two weeks prior to training and must be approved by the Range Manager before any firearms training begins.
- C. One firearms instructor (Safety Officer) is required for every four students on the line, and one lead instructor is required on the line. The Range Manager has the discretion to make changes to the required number of firearms instructors based on the type of training being conducted.
- D. No unauthorized entry to the Firing Range is permitted. If emergency entry is necessary contact the *Range Manager*.
- E. No unauthorized removal of any range equipment, weapons, ammunition or supplies.

7.1.10 WEAPON MOUNTED LIGHTS**A. Installing and Removing Weapon Mounted Lights:**

1. *Only Department issued gun lights will be attached to Department firearms.*
2. *While on duty, to include Secondary LEAA Employment, issued gun lights must be attached to Department issued firearms.*
3. *Handgun lights may only be installed or removed at the designated unloading/loading stations. The provided clearing chambers must be utilized.*
4. *Handgun lights may only be removed or installed after the handgun is empty of all ammunition and the slide is locked to the rear.*
5. *Maintenance of Department issued gun lights, to include battery replacement, may only be conducted after the gun light has been properly removed from the gun. Batteries may be obtained from either the Property Section or Range Staff.*
6. *Officers discovering damaged or inoperable gun lights must report to the Property Section as soon as practical to obtain a replacement light.*

B. Use of Weapon Mounted Lights:

1. *Only officers trained in the use of weapon mounted lights may affix a light to the handgun.*
2. *Weapon mounted lights shall not be removed from a firearm to be used as a handheld light.*
3. *While on duty, to include Secondary LEAA Employment, officers shall utilize the issued handgun mounted light and the issued holster designed to accommodate both the handgun and the light.*
4. *Weapon mounted lights are not a substitute for handheld flashlights.*
5. *Use of weapon mounted lights is only authorized when circumstances justify the officer deploying his or her firearm.*

By Authority Of:

**Michael L. Brown
Chief of Police**