


Rockville City Police Department

GENERAL ORDER



Subject DEPARTMENT FIREARMS		Procedure G.O. 4 - 2	
Authorizing Signature 	Effective 02-26-10	Revised 08-30-19	Total Pages 12

I. PURPOSE

To establish policy, procedures and guidelines relating to the use of Department issued and personally owned weapons approved by the Department.

II. POLICY

The Department recognizes that the use of firearms is an extreme measure in any situation. The potential for injury and death from firearms is always a paramount consideration, which dictates the need for a clear understanding by all sworn personnel of the effects of using firearms, as well as a concise set of guidelines regulating their use. For that reason, this Department has developed these policies to ensure that the highest possible level of firearms training is provided to its police officers, and that the strictest of discipline is applied regarding the use of Department firearms.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Department Authorized Firearms – Those firearms authorized by the Department to be carried by police officers, including firearms personally owned or issued by the agency.
- B. Firearms Program Coordinator – A person designated by the Chief of Police.
- C. Armorer – Personnel employed by the Rockville City Police Department who are trained specifically in the maintenance, repair and service of designated Department owned or otherwise authorized firearms and designated by the Chief of Police as a Department Armorer.
- D. MPCTC – Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission.

IV. EQUIPMENT

- A. The Department will maintain its own arsenal of issued firearms, ammunition, and accessories to ensure equipment quality, quantity, and upkeep.
- B. Only Department authorized weapons, ammunition, and accessories shall be carried by Rockville City sworn police personnel either on duty or off duty. No substitute or additional firearm, ammunition, or accessories may be carried or used unless specifically authorized in writing by the Chief of Police.

V. STORAGE AND SAFETY

- A. Sworn police personnel to whom a Department firearm has been assigned or who otherwise has custody of a Department firearm will ensure that the weapon is stored and maintained in a safe manner and in a secure location at all times. At no time will unauthorized persons be allowed access to Department firearms. Officers will ensure that any authorized for duty use firearms are securely stored and protected from unauthorized access when not being carried, in accordance with Maryland Criminal Code CR 4-104, Weapons – Access by Minors.
- B. The Department will issue to all officers a gun safety lock or cable lock at the time of initial issuance of their duty weapon. Officers are encouraged to use this lock in accordance with established training procedures (and the owner's manual for the weapon) when storing their weapon.
- C. Officers may use their uniform allowance to purchase an approved trigger lock, gun lock box or security cabinet to secure an agency owned Department authorized firearm(s).
- D. All Department authorized firearms held or maintained at the station or at home will be stored in an approved security space and will be inaccessible to the general public.

VI. FIREARMS IN VEHICLES

- A. Department issued long guns must be locked in a gun rack or gun vault when vehicles are so equipped. If a gun rack or gun vault is not available, Department issued long guns will be stored in a case in the vehicle's trunk while the officer is on-duty.
- B. Department issued handgun and long guns may not be stored in police and or personal vehicles for extended periods of time and never overnight when an officer is off-duty. Department issued handguns and long guns may be stored temporarily for short durations only if the police vehicle is equipped with a lock box or gun vault in which the weapon(s) would be temporarily secured.
- C. Unless exigent circumstances exist, Department vehicles must always be locked.

VII. FIREARMS CARE AND MAINTENANCE

- A. Preventive firearms maintenance is the systematic procedure of inspecting, cleaning and lubricating of weapons. The purpose of a preventive maintenance program is to keep firearms in serviceable condition, prevent breakdowns, and assure maximum operational readiness.
- B. The Department will provide adequate equipment and supplies needed for police officers to perform routine weapon maintenance.
- C. Firearm clearing barrels have been mounted throughout the Police Department. All personnel are required to use a clearing barrel any time a firearm is subject to inspection, cleaning, loading, performing a function check, or the mechanical function of the firearm is being physically manipulated.

- D. Weapons shall be safely inspected and cleaned after each time the weapon is fired. Any weapon in need of repair should be forwarded, without undue delay, to a Firearms Armorer. The weapon shall be accompanied with a written memorandum describing the problem and if known the cause.
- E. The Department will be responsible for providing all required armorer maintenance and the replacement of defective or malfunctioning Department owned firearms and accessories. Only a Department approved police armorer will perform alterations, repairs, or refinishing of any Department weapon. All alterations, repairs, and refinishing will be appropriately recorded and filed for future reference.

VIII. AUTHORIZED DUTY WEAPONS

- A. Department issued handgun:
 - 1. The handguns carried by sworn police personnel are the Glock Model 17, 19, and 26, 9mm pistol and carried fully loaded at all times with ammunition issued by the Police Department.
 - 2. The only acceptable grips are the original manufacture's stock grip or other grips approved by the Chief of Police.
 - 3. With the exception of the Administrative Staff, Department issued weapon mounted lights are mandatory for all sworn personnel carrying a Department issued firearm, on-duty or off-duty.
- B. Only the Department issued shotgun and rifle will be carried by sworn members.
- C. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, officers may be issued other types of approved weapons.
- D. All sworn police members are responsible for the condition of their duty ammunition and shall carry the minimum number of rounds.

IX. CARRYING FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

- A. Sworn police personnel are prohibited from carrying firearms if they engage in the consumption of alcoholic beverages or have consumed alcoholic beverages within the previous six (6) hours, unless specifically authorized by the Chief of Police for specific law enforcement purposes.
- B. Sworn police personnel are prohibited from carrying firearms anytime that they are using a prescribed medication which precludes them from operating a motor vehicle.
- C. Sworn police personnel are authorized to carry a firearm off-duty or as a back-up weapon, as long as the carrying of the firearm does not conflict with any other directive or violate any law, statute, or ordinance.

D. Carrying / wearing weapons off-duty:

1. The carrying / wearing of weapons while off-duty is NOT MANDATORY (unless operating a City of Rockville police vehicle).
2. Sworn police personnel carrying any firearm off-duty must carry and have at immediate access their Department issued police identification card, and their MPTC certification card.
3. Weapons must be concealed when being carried off-duty.
4. A Department Firearms Instructor and the Chief of Police must approve any weapon and ammunition that is carried while off-duty or as a backup. The following criteria must be met for a personally owned handgun to be approved for carry as either an off-duty or as a backup. Personnel carrying a personally owned weapon must qualify annually by achieving at least a score of 80% on either the RCPD OFF DUTY COURSE OF FIRE or the RCPD PRIMARY HANDGUN COURSE OF FIRE in both daylight and lowlight. Approval of carrying a personally owned handgun for off-duty must be documented on RCPD Form 145 **annually**. Any personally owned weapon that has been altered in anyway after it has been authorized by the Chief of Police and recorded on an RCPD Form 145 has nullified its approval until the weapon has been re-inspected by an RCPD firearms instructor.

Caliber: Only .9mm Luger, .38 Special, .40 S&W, will be authorized. All ammunition used for on-duty and off-duty use, to include approved personal firearms, will be issued by the Department. No personally purchased or acquired ammunition will be authorized.

Make: Must be a reputable weapon manufacturer. The inspecting firearms instructor, and/or the Chief of Police has the discretion of refusing the approval of a handgun manufacture.

Trigger Pull: Must be either a double action or double action only (DAO) or a striker fire pistol. NO single action handguns. A double action pistol will have a decock lever or manual safety that lowers the hammer without the trigger being pulled.

E. Carrying weapons as a backup.

1. The carrying / wearing of a back-up weapon is NOT MANDATORY.
2. Weapons must be concealed when being carried as a backup. Personnel carrying a backup weapon must qualify annually by achieving at least a score of 80% on the RCPD OFF DUTY COURSE OF FIRE or the RCPD PRIMARY HANDGUN COURSE OF FIRE in both daylight and lowlight. Approval of carrying a backup handgun for on duty must be documented on RCPD Form 145 **annually**.
3. Police Personnel can be approved for a maximum total of two off duty carry/back up handguns.

F. Holsters

All firearms must be carried in an approved holster. The holster must have a retention device to prevent the officer from being easily disarmed and to keep the firearm from falling out of the holster during strenuous activity. The approval of the holster will be documented on RCPD Form 145.

1. Officers are prohibited from carrying any firearm, either on or off-duty, in their waistband or in a pocket without a holster.
2. Officers must supply their own holsters for personally owned and approved handguns for off-duty use and back-up weapons.

X. DEPARTMENTAL FIREARMS PROGRAM

A. The Department shall maintain its own firearms program to minimally include:

1. One State certified Firearms Instructor.
2. One MPCTC approved service weapon entrance level training course.
3. One MPCTC approved yearly qualification course.
4. Transitional training course(s).
5. One MPCTC approved yearly back up/off duty qualification course.
6. Shotgun and patrol rifle certification and qualification courses.
7. Records of all Department training courses, to include:
 - a) Inventories
 - b) Inspections
 - c) Qualifications

B. It shall be the responsibility of the Firearms Program Coordinator to:

1. Schedule and obtain Department approval for all firearms training programs.
 2. Coordinate the activities of all Firearms Instructors and armorers.
 3. Manage the firearms budget and inventory of Department arsenal.
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- C. It shall be the responsibility of the Firearm(s) Instructors to:
1. Conduct training and qualification courses as needed.
 2. Maintain the Department's arsenal and weapons cleaning location.
 3. File copies of all Department firearm courses of instruction.
 4. File original copies of all firearms training and qualification records.
 - a) Any other related activity as directed by the Firearms Program Coordinator or the Chief of Police.
- D. It shall be the responsibility of the armorer to:
1. Inspect all duty weapons for cleanliness, damage and proper function prior to assigning the weapon to an officer and again each time the weapon is returned from assignment.
 2. Conduct annual firearms inspections.
 3. Perform preventive maintenance and repair to Department issued weapons and maintain records of the same.
 4. Any other related activity as directed by the Firearms Program Coordinator or the Chief of Police.
 5. No police personnel are authorized to perform any work on a Department owned firearm beyond a field strip. The field strip is only for cleaning and preventative maintenance. No personnel will authorize anyone from outside the Rockville City Police Department agency to perform any cleaning, alteration or service to a Department owned weapon, without prior authorization from a member of the Police Command Staff, the Department firearms coordinator, or an RCPD armorer.

XI. FIREARMS TRAINING

- A. All firearms training courses taught by this Department shall be reviewed by the Firearms Program Coordinator, and then forwarded to the Department's Training Coordinator before being sent to MCTC for approval prior to their implementation.
- B. All newly hired police officers will attend a MPTC certified entrance level firearms training course.
- C. Officers that attend a comparative compliance class will receive a three-day in-house training course.

- D. Officers that have MPCTC certification (lateral hires), will receive in-house training encompassing:
1. Review of General Orders that relate to Firearms and Use of Force.
 2. Weapon assembly/disassembly and maintenance.
 3. Safe handling and safe storage of weapons.
 4. Training and qualification with Department service weapon (minimum 200 rounds) and shotgun, based upon an MPCTC approved qualification course.
- E. Officers that are transitioning from one handgun type to another handgun type (i.e., revolver to pistol) or transitioning from one handgun to another handgun within the same handgun type (i.e., pistol to pistol with significant differences) will receive MPCTC approved in-house training encompassing section “D” above and:
1. Nomenclature
 2. Mechanical operation
 3. Weapon safety
 4. Malfunction causes and clearing
- F. The Department shall conduct yearly firearms training programs to ensure compliance with COMAR 12.04.02.10 which includes at least two hours of training in the following areas:
1. Purpose of firearms instruction.
 2. Legal aspects in the use of firearms.
 3. Weapon assembly/disassembly and care, cleaning and maintenance.
 4. Fundamental shooting techniques and marksmanship principles.
 5. Safe handling and safe storage of weapons.
 6. Response to Resistance and Aggression.
- G. At a minimum each sworn officer shall complete the annual in-service firearms course as approved by MPCTC. In addition, the Department will provide additional firearms training as time and scheduling permits.
- H. In recognition of the sport of pistol marksmanship and the healthy nature of team competition, this agency supports any desires of its individual police officers to participate in local and national Pistol Team Competitions. This agency will sponsor a voluntary Department pistol team and assist

in its pursuits. However, the Department shall hold that the officer's official duties shall have priority over participation in such activities and attendance will be contingent on the staffing requirements of the agency and any prior official obligations of the officer. The Department shall not pay personnel for their participation in these types of events.

XII. QUALIFICATIONS

- A. All sworn personnel shall be instructed in the Department's policies and procedures regarding "Response to Resistance and Aggression", to include lethal force, before they are authorized to carry a firearm and on an annual basis.
- B. All sworn police personnel shall be given a copy of the Department's policies and procedures regarding the use of force and the use of deadly force, as well as the use of force against a fleeing felon before they are authorized to carry a firearm.
- C. All sworn police personnel who are issued a service pistol are required to achieve a score of at least 80% of the Department qualification courses, prior to carrying of such weapon. All police personnel who are authorized to carry an approved shotgun are required to achieve a qualification score of at least 90%, prior to carrying such weapon. All police personnel who are authorized to carry an approved patrol rifle are required to achieve a qualification score of at least 90%, prior to carrying such weapon. The qualification score will be achieved on a course of fire (COF) and a target provided by the Department and previously approved by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission (MPCTC). If a minimum passing score on any particular weapon is not achieved, the on-duty Firearms Instructor(s) shall provide remedial training and re-testing on the same day. Up to three opportunities for re-testing shall be provided. If an officer does not achieve a minimum passing score following immediate remediation and re-testing, then the Department Firearms Coordinator will make written notification to the Chief of Police or his/her designee as soon as practical and:
 1. For failed qualification of a Department issued pistol:
 - a. The Officer will receive immediate remediation by the lead firearms instructor and have an opportunity to requalify. If the Officer fails to qualify, a second firearms instructor will provide remedial training and the Officer will have two more opportunities to qualify, for a total of three (3) attempts.
 - b. If the Officer fails to qualify after three (3) attempts The Firearms Program Coordinator will make notification to the Chief of Police, or the on-duty Watch Commander.
 - c. The lead firearms instructor will take possession of the Officers duty pistol and police credentials. The Officer will be given a ride home from the training and the Officers PPV, if driven to training, will be driven back to the station by a firearms instructor.
 - d. The Officer will report to the Chief of police, or the on-duty Watch Commander who will place the Officer on administrative duty. The Officers police powers and approval to carry an off-duty or back-up firearm will be suspended. The Officer will be directed to report to

the range at a predetermined date and time for remedial training. The remedial training will be one (1) day of training with qualifications at the end of the day.

- e. Once the Officer passes the one (1) day of remedial firearms training their police powers will be reinstated.
 - f. An Officer who fails to qualify with the Departments duty pistol after the one (1) day remedial training will be subject to a performance evaluation and will be sent for a fitness for duty test.
2. For Failed Qualification of Either Shotgun or Patrol Rifle:
 - a. If the Officer failed to achieve a minimum passing score with either their shotgun or patrol rifle, then their authorization to carry such long gun will be immediately suspended.
 - b. The Officer will be rescheduled for remedial training and re-qualification as soon as practical. The Officer will not be authorized to carry such long gun until a passing score is achieved.

D. Firearms Instructor Qualifications:

1. Firearms Instructors must maintain, as a minimum, a score of 90% or higher for each class of weapon on which they are certified to teach. A firearms instructor may initially shoot up to three courses of fire to attain a 90% or better. If the instructor does not qualify during the three courses of fire:
2. The instructor must stop attempting to qualify after three attempts.
3. The instructor will return at least one day after, but within 30 days of the initially attempted qualification date to again qualify with a 90% or better. The instructor may shoot up to two courses of fire to attain a 90% or better.
4. If the instructor fails to attain a 90% or better during the two courses of fire then the Chief of Police will be notified in writing. The instructor will be suspended as a firearms instructor restricting him/her to a line safety officer during the Department's firearms training. The suspension will last no less than three (3) months from the date of his/her last attempt to qualify with a 90% or better.
5. After three (3) months the instructor may attempt to score a 90% or better in no more than two courses of fire. If the instructor fails to attain a 90% or better during the two attempts, then the Chief of Police will be notified in writing as soon as practical. The instructor will be removed from the Department Firearms Unit.

XIII. SHOTGUNS

- A. The Remington 870 with a six round magazine is the issued shotgun of the Rockville City Police Department.
 - B. Shotguns will be outfitted with factory fixed sights, sling and a flashlight that is designed to securely attach onto the weapon. Shotguns are only approved for duty use after inspection by an armorer. Any shotgun that has been altered in anyway after it has been authorized by an armorer will thereby nullify the inspection and will no longer be authorized for duty use, and the Officer will be removed from the shotgun program.
 - C. Agency shotguns are issued weapons. Due to the limited number of shotguns available, the Firearms Program Coordinator will have sole discretion as to which officers will be issued shotguns under this provision.
 - D. Only trained and qualified officers who have demonstrated proficiency are authorized to carry and use Department shotguns.
 - E. While on duty, shotguns will be carried in the vehicle cabin only when there is an installed shotgun rack. Otherwise, shotguns will be carried in the trunk of the cruiser secured in a shotgun case. In either case, the weapon will have:
 - 1. Safety on,
 - 2. Chamber empty
 - 3. Action closed, and magazine loaded.
 - F. A qualified officer may store their assigned shotgun in the shotgun locker. At no time will personnel return a loaded shotgun to the shotgun locker.
 - H. Only Department issued/authorized ammunition may be used in the shotgun. The Department authorizes both buckshot and slugs. Both types of ammunition perform much differently than pistol or rifle ammunition. Officer should consider backdrop, target, and the presence of bystanders and officers when deploying the shotgun.
 - I. The shotgun may also be used when appropriate to destroy injured or dangerous animals.
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XIV. AUTHORIZED POLICE PATROL RIFLE

- A. The Department issued rifle is the FNH AR-15, .223, semi-automatic, gas operated, magazine fed, shoulder fired rifle.

The Departments AR-15 platform will have the following minimum criteria:

1. Magazine fed
 2. Shoulder fired
 3. Semi-automatic with manual safety
 4. Iron sights (flip up or fixed), adjustable for windage and elevation
 5. Department approved optic sight.
 6. Air cooled (natural ventilation)
 7. Detachable ammunition source (magazine)
 8. 5.56/.223 caliber
- B. Rifles will be outfitted with a Department approved optic sight. The optic sight must be attached to the rifle in such a manner so that the metal sights can be used as designed at any time. Rifles will be equipped with a tactical sling and a flashlight that is designed to securely attach onto the weapon.
- C. Rifles are only approved for duty use after inspection by an armorer. Any rifle that has been altered in anyway after it has been authorized by an armorer will thereby nullify the inspection and will no longer be authorized for duty use, and the Officer will be removed from the rifle program.
- D. Only trained and qualified Officers who have demonstrated proficiency are authorized to carry and use Department owned and issued patrol rifles.
- E. While on duty, patrol rifles will be carried in the vehicle cabin only when there is an installed rifle rack. Otherwise, rifles will be carried in the trunk of the cruiser secured in a rifle case. In either case, the weapon will have:
1. Safety on,
 2. Chamber empty,
 3. Action closed, and
 4. Magazine loaded.

- F. A qualified officer will be issued a patrol rifle at training. The officer may store that rifle in the rifle locker at the station. At no time will personnel return a loaded rifle to the rifle locker.
- H. Only Department issued/authorized ammunition may be used.

XV. CERMONIAL WEAPONS

- A. Certain ceremonial weapons shall be assigned to and used by members of the Department Honor Guard.
 - B. These weapons shall only be used for ceremonial purposes.
 - C. When not in use, ceremonial weapons shall be stored in the rifle locker at the station.
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