

	<b>SAN MARCOS POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>	
	<b>Policy</b> 6.2 Firearms and Qualifications	
	<b>Effective Date:</b> May 1, 2019	<b>Replaces:</b> GO 201
	<b>Approved:</b> _____ <div style="text-align: center;">   Chief of Police </div>	
	<b>Reference:</b> TBP 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, and 6.04	

**I. POLICY**

The department's policy is to ensure that officers are properly trained not only in the use of appropriate firearms and the circumstances of their use, but also in their safety and maintenance, regarding both on and off-duty weapons. Supervisors and the department rangemaster shall rigorously enforce departmental firearms standards. Officers shall qualify at least annually with their issued firearm and with any other firearm used or carried either on-duty or off-duty.

**II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish policy and procedures governing the care and maintenance of issued weapons and ammunition, the selection and use of holsters, off-duty weapons, firearms training, and qualification.

**III. PROCEDURES**

A. Authority

1. Officers who have the authority to make arrests and maintain the peace, are authorized to carry and use firearms as necessary in the performance of their duty, subject to the restrictions and guidelines of this order, the department's use-of-force policy, and state and federal law.
2. Off-duty officers are encouraged to carry firearms, subject to the guidelines of this order to protect themselves or others from imminent death or serious bodily injury in the event they must intervene in an incident while off-duty before the arrival of on-duty officers.

B. On-Duty Weapons, Issuance and Use (TBP: 6.04)

1. Only weapons issued by the department or approved by the chief of police will be carried or used while on-duty.
2. The rangemaster shall issue departmental weapons to authorized personnel.
3. Department firearms and ammunition are determined by the chief of police based on the needs of the agency.

C. Shotguns

Shotguns may be issued to or used by officers who have received appropriate training and have maintained their required qualifications.

D. Patrol Rifles

Patrol rifles may be issued to or used by officers who have received appropriate training and have maintained their required qualifications.

#### E. Off-Duty and/or Secondary Weapons

1. Off-duty and/or secondary weapons, either revolvers or semi-automatic pistols are purchased at the officer's expense. The rangemaster shall inspect and certify the off-duty and/or secondary weapon before it may be carried.
  - a. Officers using off-duty and/or secondary weapons shall qualify with the off-duty and/or secondary weapons at the annual qualification.
  - b. The rangemaster shall maintain a record of all weapons used by each officer.
2. While off duty, officers may carry either an issued weapon or one purchased at officer expense, subject to the terms of this policy.
3. Officers are prohibited from carrying a firearm while intoxicated.
4. Off-duty weapons shall be carried safely and concealed from public view.
5. Officers shall carry the departmental badge and identification any time that they are carrying an off-duty weapon.

#### F. Firearms Lighting Systems

##### 1. Standard Flashlight

A standard flashlight is a utility device used for performing functions in low light conditions where it is not practical, safe or prudent to use a weapon mounted light. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, searches, issuing traffic citations at night, or reading maps.

##### 2. Weapons Mounted Light (WML)

A WML is a tactical light designed to be attached to a firearm via a rail system or similar mounting method. A WML is not to be used as a standard flashlight. The purpose of having a WML is to provide Officers with rapid target identification and threat assessment under low light conditions. Generally, a WML should not be your primary searching light during building searches.

3. Department issued and personally purchased WML systems from Surefire and Streamlight are authorized. Other brands/models must be approved by the rangemaster prior to use.
4. Handgun WMLs must remain mounted on the handgun and a holster accommodating the handgun with WML must be utilized.

#### G. Departmental Ammunition (TBP: 6.04)

1. Only factory ammunition listed in appendix A will be used in departmental or personal weapons for on-duty or off-duty use. No reloaded ammunition will be used except for practice. The department will select and purchase on-duty ammunition for each qualification and old ammunition will be fired during qualification to ensure fresh ammunition is carried in on-duty firearms.

#### H. Security of weapons

1. Officers are responsible for the care, cleaning, and security of departmental weapons issued to them, whether on-duty or off-duty.

2. Officers shall report any weapon malfunction to the chief of police via the rangemaster.
  3. Officers are responsible for the safe and secure storage of issued weapons when off-duty in a manner that prevents theft or unauthorized access or use.
- I. Department Firearms Proficiency Officer and Rangemaster
1. The chief of police shall appoint at least one sworn member of the department to be the rangemaster. The rangemaster shall be a certified firearms instructor
  2. The rangemaster or their designee duties are as follows:
    - a. Schedule, supervise, and maintain records on all firearms qualifications required by the department.
    - b. Maintain non-issued departmental weapons and associated equipment.
    - c. Inspect all weapons being returned to the armory to ensure they are clean and serviceable.
    - d. Repair or submit to a qualified gunsmith for repair all departmentally owned malfunctioning weapons.
    - e. Maintain records of issuance, care, and maintenance of departmental and personally owned weapons and associated items used on-duty.
    - f. Issue departmental ammunition.
    - g. Annually inspect and certify as serviceable both departmental and personally owned firearms that are authorized for on-duty and off-duty use.
  3. The rangemaster shall maintain a record that includes identification of all firearms that have been certified as safe, and identification of those officers who have qualified with each of the firearms. This record shall include the following:
    - a. Officer's name and identification number.
    - b. Make and model of weapon.
    - c. Serial number of weapon.
- J. Modification of Weapons
- Authorized weapons (department or personal) shall not be modified or altered without the approval of the rangemaster.
- K. Firearms Inspections
1. Annually, either the rangemaster or their designee shall thoroughly inspect each weapon during qualification on the range. Documentation of this inspection will be maintained by the rangemaster. (TBP: 3.03)
  2. Quarterly, supervisors shall inspect subordinate officers' issued firearms to ensure that they are maintained in a clean and serviceable condition.
    - a. Firearms inspections shall include sidearms, shotguns, authorized rifles, ammunition pouches, and holsters.
    - b. Ammunition shall be inspected to ensure that it is of departmental issue, of correct quantity, and in serviceable condition.
  3. Upon completion of quarterly inspections, the supervisor shall document the inspection on the quarterly line inspection report.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES FOR QUALIFICATION**

##### **A. Qualification Rules**

1. Officers must qualify at least annually with any weapon they carry or when they change weapons. (TBP: 3.01)
2. The firearms instructor or rangemaster shall be in charge at all times when officers are on the firing range for qualification.
3. Every officer shall fire the regular handgun course approved by the department that meets or exceeds the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) standards.
4. Officers who fail to qualify on their first attempt shall immediately attempt qualification a second time. Officers who fail to qualify on the second attempt shall be placed in remedial training as soon as practicable, shall be removed from patrol or investigative duties, and may not be armed until the standards expressed herein are met. Officers who cannot qualify may be subject to termination. (TBP: 3.01)
5. The rangemaster will maintain records of each officer's firearms qualifications including:
  - a. The officer's name and identification number.
  - b. The date of qualification.
  - c. The weapons(s) used during qualification.
  - d. A description of the course of fire and pass or fail.

##### **B. Shotgun**

1. Officers must pass the shotgun qualification course before carrying a department-issued shotgun.
2. The qualification course shall meet or exceed the TCOLE standards.
3. Officers issued a shotgun shall qualify with the shotgun annually.

##### **C. Patrol Rifle**

Officers who are trained and authorized to use the patrol rifles must qualify at least annually on a course of fire approved by the Department that meets or exceeds TCOLE standards.

##### **D. Firearms and Use of Force Instruction**

1. Officers whose duties require the carrying of firearms shall receive training in the mechanics of the weapon (stripping, lubricating, nomenclature, troubleshooting, and misfires), and sound safety practices.
2. Use-of-force and use-of-deadly force training will be conducted at least annually. (TBP: 3.02)