

Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure			
	<b>APD.SOP.2086 – Firearms Training &amp; Range Rules</b> <b>Effective Date: May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025</b>		
<b>Chief Darin Schierbaum</b>	<b>Signature by: DS</b>	<b>Date Signed: 5/20/2025</b>	<b>Expires:2029</b>

## SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD Staff,

The Policy and Standards Section is dedicated to providing the department, and its employees, with accurate, understandable and transparent policies. In order to publish policies that reflect the most up-to-date standards, the Policy and Standard Section regularly reviews all policies to ensure that they are reflective of the current mission and objectives of the Atlanta Police Department.

No major changes were made during the review and renewal of APD.SOP.2086 – Firearms Training Unit, with the exception of the name change to Firearms Training & Range Rules.

We ask that you please review the below policy to ensure the safety of you, your fellow officers, and the range staff.

Thank you and stay informed!

Policy and Standards Section  
 Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. [PURPOSE](#)..... 3
- 2. [POLICY](#)..... 3
- 3. [RESPONSIBILITIES](#) ..... 3
- 4. [ACTION](#)..... 3
  - 4.1 [FTU – General](#)..... 3
  - 4.2 [FTU – Duties](#)..... 4
  - 4.3 [Range Safety Rules](#) ..... 4
- 5. [DEFINITIONS](#)..... 6
- 6. [CANCELLATIONS](#)..... 6
- 7. [REFERENCES](#)..... 6

## **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and consistent rules regarding the safe operation and use of the Atlanta Police Firearms Range. The firearms range is a controlled environment overseen by the Atlanta Police Firearms Training Unit (FTU) where safety, discipline, and professionalism are paramount. This policy is intended to protect all participants, instructors, dogs, and staff, while ensuring that the firearms training is conducted in accordance with departmental standards, legal guidelines, and P.O.S.T requirements.

## **2. POLICY**

The Atlanta Police Department is committed to maintaining the highest standards of firearms proficiency, operational readiness, and personal responsibility. It is mandatory that all personnel utilizing the Range strictly obey the established safety protocols, instructor commands, and range rules outlined in this policy, at all times. Participation in firearms training is mandatory for all sworn personnel and will be conducted under the supervision of certified firearms instructors and comply with Georgia P.O.S.T requirements.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 The FTU is under the command of the Professional Development Division (PDD) Commander.
- 3.2 The FTU operates under the Training Section within PDD. The Range Master will report directly to the Training Section Commander.
- 3.3 The Range Master is responsible for all training conducted at the Atlanta Police Firearms Range and on behalf of the APD. The Range Master is further responsible for the effective delivery of firearms training, for the operation, organization and staffing of the Firing Range and its facilities.
- 3.4 Department, division, and section commanders will implement this directive within their command and ensure that employees are familiar with it.
- 3.5 All Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) certified Firearms Instructors assigned to the FTU will comply with this directive and will coordinate their job-related teaching activities with the Range Master. This includes all training conducted within the Department and outside the Department.
- 3.6 All range instructors will be P.O.S.T. certified, State of Georgia Firearms Instructors and will also be certified in basic First-Aid. (CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5f.)
- 3.7 Employees are responsible for complying with this directive and are expected to seek out training opportunities. Employees are further expected to participate fully in approved training activities so as to maximize the benefits from them. Employees must follow the procedures established by the Department and the Range Master for training and related activities as well as procedures established by the Range Master for the use of the Department's Firearms training facilities.

## **4. ACTION**

### **4.1 FTU - GENERAL**

(CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5a.)

The FTU provides, and is responsible for, Georgia P.O.S.T. basic firearms training for recruits of the Atlanta Police Department (APD). It is further responsible for specialized, in-service, and any other firearms training for Department employees. The goal of the FTU is to provide the training necessary for employees to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities that will enable the department to provide a safe and secure environment for the citizens of Atlanta.



## 4.2 FTU- DUTIES

4.2.1 The Duties of the Firearms Training Unit will be, but not limited to:

1. Conduct annual qualifications for all APD and Atlanta Fire Rescue Department (AFR) personnel designated as peace Officers on all weapon systems.
2. Annual review of the APD policy on Use of Deadly Force and OCGA 17-4-20.
3. Conduct basic firearms training for APD recruits during P.O.S.T mandate training. The Firearms Training Unit is responsible for the training and testing of APD recruits in compliance with the standards set forth by Georgia P.O.S.T. This training includes a 96-hour mandate and concludes with a one-day night fire and shotgun and rifle familiarization course and advanced firearms techniques.
4. Conduct specialized firearms training as needed. The FTU conducts Basic Patrol Rifle courses to certify officers to carry department approved rifles. Additionally, the FTU offers advanced pistol courses along with Basic Firearms Fundamental courses.
5. Oversee the purchasing and inventory of department firearms. The FTU is the authorized purchasing agent for the City of Atlanta Police Department when it comes to the purchasing of weapons and weapon parts and accessories. The FTU also maintains the complete inventory of all weapons purchased by the department.
6. The storing and maintenance of all weapons and ammunition. The FTU is responsible for the storing of all weapons not assigned to APD personnel. This storage may be on range property or at the Public Safety ANNEX. The storage location is to be locked and alarmed daily. This is to include all caliber of ammunition authorized by the City of Atlanta Police Department. (CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5g.)

4.2.2 The Range Master, or their designee, will be present on the Firing Range all times while in use. (CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5c)

## 4.3 RANGE SAFETY RULES

- 4.3.1 All personnel will report to the firing range with their department issued weapon. Those sworn employees reporting to the firing range directly from on-duty status and those returning to duty status at the conclusion of training will be directed to unload and reload their weapon under the supervision of an FTU instructor. Under no circumstances will anyone attempt to load or unload a weapon in the firing range parking lot or inside any vehicle parked at the firing range. (CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5b)
- 4.3.2 Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the firing range campus.
- 4.3.3 Eye and ear protection will be worn at all times while on the firing range. (CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5e.)
- 4.3.4 Only persons shooting and Firing Range instructors will be allowed on the firing line.
- 4.3.5 Ammunition, targets, and equipment used on the Firing Range must be approved by the Range master, or a designated firearms instructor. (CALEA, 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5d.)

- 4.3.6 Shoulder holsters and Cross-drawn holsters are strictly prohibited during standard training operations. The Range Master may authorize deviations from this subsection as required for training.
- 4.3.7 Metal reactive targets are not to be fired at any closer then:
  - 1. Revolvers and Pistols – 10 yards.
  - 2. Shotguns – 15 yards.
  - 3. Rifles (using only Frangible Ammunition) – 25 yards.
- 4.3.8 Shotgun Slugs and Metal Piercing Rounds are prohibited when using metal targets. Their use will only be permitted with the approval of the Range Master.
- 4.3.9 There will be no Gallery Rifle and Pistol shooting except by approval of the Range Master.
- 4.3.10 “Dry Firing” will only be permitted at the direction and supervision of a Range Instructor.
- 4.3.11 Follow all commands from the Control Tower or Range Instructor as they are given; do not anticipate and commands. If uncertain as to the command, the sworn employee should ask a Range Instructor for clarification.
- 4.3.12 Participants on the firing line are to keep their finger outside the trigger guard of the weapon and off the trigger until the muzzle is pointed downrange and the sworn employee has committed to the shot being fired.
- 4.3.13 Employees on the firing line are prohibited from moving forward of the firing line unless given a command to do so by a Range Instructor. Picking up any items dropped while on the firing line is also prohibited until the line has been declared safe by a Range Instructor.
- 4.3.14 It is strictly prohibited for any sworn employee on the firing line to fire at any object other than the approved targets designated by the Range Master.
- 4.3.15 All sworn employees on the firing line are to keep the muzzle of their weapon pointed in a safe direction (Down-range) at all times. In case of firearm malfunction, the weapon is to stay pointed down-range and cleared of the malfunction. Discontinue firing the weapon if a weak or peculiar report (Squib Load) is heard while discharging the weapon.
- 4.3.16 All sworn employees must take proper care to ensure that the ammunition of the correct caliber is loaded into the pistol or patrol rifle magazines. It will be the responsibility of each sworn employee to inspect each round of ammunition as it is removed from the manufacture packaging and properly inserted into the pistol or patrol rifle magazine.
- 4.2.17 No sworn employee or any other person will be permitted on the range if there is knowledge or reason to believe that the subject is under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescribed medication that could impair the individual from operating a firearm in a safe manner.
- 4.2.18 Sworn employees on the firing line are prohibited from speaking except in asking a question or in direct conversation with a Range Instructor.
- 4.2.19 Only authorized Firearm Instructors are permitted inside the Control Tower.
- 4.2.20 Range equipment may only be operated by personnel authorized by the Range Master.

- 4.2.21 All questions pertaining to Firearms Range safety, operation of equipment and general procedures are to be directed to a member of the FTU.
- 4.2.22 The Range Master will ensure that a safe ratio is maintained during all live fire exercises.
- 4.2.23 All decisions made, and orders given by the Range Master, or their designee, while on the Firing Range are final.
- 4.2.24 The machinery used to turn the Firing Range targets is dangerous; great care should be taken when working in the area of the target equipment.
- 4.2.25 Any violation of any rule within this directive which places the safety of sworn employees or Firing Range staff at risk, or any repeated violation of the same safety rule, may be grounds for removal of the subject from the Firing Range, dismissal from the course, and possible disciplinary action (APD.SOP.2020 Disciplinary Procedures).

## 5. DEFINITIONS

Control Tower: An elevated structure allows Firing Range personnel to control the safety and operation of all activities on the range. The Control Tower equipped with communications equipment so the personnel in the tower can communicate with Range Instructors and sworn personnel on the firing line.

Down-range: Downrange is the horizontal distance traveled by a projectile from the muzzle` of the firearm to the intended target.

Dry Firing: Dry firing is the practice of "firing" a firearm without live ammunition or practicing with an inert training platform.

Gallery Rifle and Pistol Shooting: Gallery Rifle and Pistol (GR&P) or just Gallery Rifle (GR) disciplines cover events shot at short and medium distances by various rifles and pistols using pistol caliber cartridges. (National Rifle Association – [nra.org.uk](http://nra.org.uk))

LEOSA: Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act or House Bill 218. The FTU offers the opportunity for retired Atlanta Police Officers to complete and be in compliance with this Act on a yearly basis. The course is usually offered in the spring. The FTU will print and sign the required documents for qualified personnel to submit to GA. POST for compliance.

Squib Load: A firearm malfunction in which a fired projectile does not have enough force behind it to exit the barrel, and thus becomes stuck.

Shotgun Slug: A modern shotgun slug is a heavy projectile made of lead, copper, or other material and fired from a shotgun.

## 6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP.2086 – Firearms Training Unit effective February 2020.

## 7. REFERENCES

Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), 6th ed. Standard; 4.3.5, "Firearms Range."