CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SOP # ADM-013: **EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/01/18**

FIREARMS **REVISION DATE: 12/07/23**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is to establish guidelines for the training, qualification, and carrying of service firearms, back up and off-duty/concealed firearms, as well as the proper use, care, and maintenance of the Chatham County Police Department (CCPD) firearms.

POLICY:

Safeguards designed to enhance CCPD officer's performance for the protection of citizens as well as the officer is of primary concern. Such safeguards may serve to reduce the probability of criminal and civil liability that could arise from questions of competency, training, and standards. CCPD officers are required to demonstrate reasonable proficiency in firearms use and perform their duties to protect themselves and the public. CCPD officers will receive periodic retraining in the tactical use of firearms, use of force, firearms safety, and basic marksmanship. CCPD police officers will only use firearms under the guidelines outlined in the CCPD SOP regarding use of force.

PROCEDURE:

I. AUTHORIZATION

A. All sworn employees shall be Georgia Peace Officers and Standards Training Council (GA POSTC) certified before receiving authorization to carry an approved firearm in an official capacity or to exercise the power of arrest.

B. Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) § 16-11-123 and § 16-11-124 authorizes law enforcement officers to carry firearms.

C. All CCPD Officers will carry their issued service firearm at all times while on duty and are authorized to carry the firearms and ammunition listed in Appendix 1 of this SOP.

1. Exceptions to this requirement would be attending court, in the jail, and special assignments or training not requiring the firearm.

D. "Service firearm" is defined as the pistol issued to a police officer by the CCPD.

E. All CCPD officers, while wearing the CCPD uniform and carrying the service firearm, will wear their CCPD badge or likeness thereof (i.e., embroidered badge) in obvious view on the outermost garment.

F. All CCPD Officers will carry at least one fully loaded extra magazine. The service firearm will be fully loaded with ammunition issued by the CCPD and carried according to CCPD policy, as outlined in Section III-C of this Order.

G. No modifications or alterations in factory specifications are permitted to the CCPD service firearm. Any service firearm that appears to be malfunctioning will be returned to the CCPD Armorer or designee for service.

H. Service firearms will be kept in a clean, serviceable manner.

I. CCPD officers are prohibited from carrying a service firearm at any time while under suspension, on restricted duty, or convalescent duty because of an inability to perform the essential job functions of their position.

II. ISSUANCE

A. As part of their basic equipment, each CCPD officer will be issued a CCPD firearm, magazines, and ammunition approved for official use by the CCPD Armorer.

B. The Armorer will maintain a complete record on each department-issued firearm. Department records will also indicate any additional firearm the officer is approved to carry.

C. Prior to issuing or approving the carry of a firearm, the CCPD Armorer or certified weapons inspector shall review and inspect all firearms intended for use by each employee in the performance of their duty.

D. Special firearms will be temporarily issued to Officers, when necessary, for the performance of a special task such as an emergency response incident requiring special firearms and tactics, civil disturbances, etc.

E. Upon termination of employment, all CCPD owned and issued firearms must be returned to the Armorer.

III. HANDGUNS

A. Officers will successfully complete semi-automatic training covering the use, care, and maintenance of the CCPD primary handgun, prior to being issued the handgun. The testing phase of this training will include practical examinations, the use of CCPD primary handgun, and the SOP regarding use of force.

B. The Armorer will issue plainclothes Officers handguns appropriate for the function of their duty assignment who meet the following criteria (if available):

1. The officer works in plainclothes regularly.
2. The officer successfully completes the required training.
3. When concealment of the handgun is a primary concern.
4. The officer receives written permission from their Division Commander.

C. The primary handgun will be carried with a fully loaded magazine and one round in the chamber. Each additional magazine (in the duty-belt magazine pouches) will be fully loaded. Ammunition issued by the Armorer will be the only ammunition used in handguns issued by the CCPD. The firearm will be carried in the holster on the shooting hand side of the belt and must have a retention device. No cross-draw or shoulder holsters will be worn.

1. Department-Issued Flashlights - Officers will be required to complete a department-approved training before attaching the weapon's mounted light to their duty weapon.
    a. The flashlight will only be used when you are authorized to draw or display your firearm.

(1) Officers shall have their handheld department-issued flashlight immediately available for circumstances not requiring the use of your firearm.

2. Department-Issued Optic Sights - Officers electing to have the optic sights attached to their issued handgun will be required to complete department-approved training.

   a. Officers will be required to qualify with the optic sights and the iron sights in accordance with section VII of this policy.

   b. Officers are only authorized to use department issues optic sights on their primary handgun.

D. The proper care and maintenance of CCPD issued handguns is the responsibility of the officer to whom it is issued. First-line Supervisors will inspect handguns and ammunition at least once each month.

1. Handguns and magazines that are inoperative, unsafe, or that require anything other than routine maintenance will be returned to the Armorer or designee. Officers are not authorized to disassemble their handgun any further than taught during department-approved training.

2. Each precinct, Property and Evidence Unit, and other designated areas will be equipped with a "clearing barrel/bullet trap" that will be supplied by the Armorer and situated in an area designated as a safe area by the Armorer.

3. The following procedures will be adhered to when unloading and preparing the handgun for inspection:

   a. Ensure that you are within the designated safe area and that a Supervisor is present.

   b. Prior to drawing your handgun, remove the magazine from your holstered pistol and place the magazine in your offside pocket.

   c. Face the clearing barrel/bullet trap, draw your handgun and point it into the clearing barrel/bullet trap, <u>keep your finger off the trigger.</u>

   d. Pull the slide to the rear several times, ejecting the round in the chamber, do not attempt to catch the ejected round.

   e. Lock the slide to the rear, and then visually and physically inspect the chamber to ensure that the handgun is clear and safe.

   f. Holster the handgun with the slide locked to the rear.

   g. Retrieve the ejected round and place it in your offside pocket along with the magazine.

4. The following procedures will be adhered to when loading or reloading the handgun after an inspection:

   a. Return to the designated safe area; ensure that a Supervisor is present.

   b. Draw your handgun, point it into the clearing barrel/bullet trap and insert the magazine from your offside pocket.

   c. With the handgun still pointed into the clearing barrel/bullet trap, close the slide.

d. Immediately re-holster your handgun, remembering to keep your finger off the trigger, and snap the handgun into the holster.

e. Remove the magazine from the holstered pistol, replace the ejected round (from your offside pocket). Replace the magazine into the handgun. Perform a push, pull, and sweep to ensure that the magazine is locked in.

IV. SHOTGUNS

A. All officers assigned to the Patrol Precincts, who are qualified to carry a shotgun, may have a department-issued shotgun in their vehicle when on duty.

1. Officers qualified to carry a shotgun shall only carry a lethal or less lethal shotgun. They shall not be issued or carry both.

2. Designated less lethal shotguns marked with orange buttstocks and forends will be the sole method of deploying authorized kinetic energy impact projectiles.

3. Lethal rounds will not be fired from a designated less lethal shotgun.

B. Officers will successfully complete training covering the shotgun's use, care, and maintenance prior to being allowed to carry one. Training will include classroom instruction, a written test, and a practical course.

C. When carried in the car, shotgun magazines will be loaded to their capacity with CCPD issued ammunition regardless of whether the firearm is equipped with a standard magazine or an extended magazine.

D. The chamber of the shotgun will be empty, the firearm's safety will be in the OFF position, and the trigger pull.

E. Officers driving police units will secure the shotgun in the shotgun mount (if equipped).

1. If the vehicle is not equipped with a mount capable of securing the shotgun, it will be kept out of sight (in the case) and in the trunk. If the police vehicle is an SUV, the shotgun will be carried in the case and out of sight in the rear cargo area, unless responding to a call in which the shotgun's use is warranted.

a. The shotgun will be resecured and moved out of sight after the call has ended.

F. Officers driving unmarked police units will secure the shotgun in a carrying case either in the trunk (sedan) or out of sight in the rear cargo area (SUV).

G. The shotgun will not be displayed for intimidating purposes. It will be drawn only in extreme situations where the issued sidearm would be or appear to be inadequate for the circumstances.

H. The proper care and maintenance of the shotgun is the responsibility of the officer to whom it is issued.

I. Shotguns requiring maintenance will be removed from service and returned to the Armorer.

J. Annual inspections will be conducted by the Armorer to ensure compliance with this directive.

V. OFF-DUTY AND BACKUP FIREARMS

A. A CCPD Officer may carry, or have in their immediate presence, a handgun and their CCPD identification at any time while off-duty and in accordance with federal law (Title 18, Chapter 44, section 926B).

B. Prior to carrying backup firearms in accordance with Title 18, Chapter 44, Section 926B, the firearm will be inspected and approved by the CCPD Armorer.

C. Should an officer desire to carry a non-approved firearm or a personal firearm while they are on Administrative Leave, they do so as a private citizen and must have a Georgia Firearms License. Officers considering purchasing a firearm are encouraged to coordinate with the Armorer prior to making the purchase.

D. Off-duty Officers, while functioning in a police capacity (working extra-duty jobs), will be armed with the CCPD issued primary handgun.

E. Off-duty Officers operating a CCPD vehicle must be armed with an approved firearm.

F. Off-duty Officers consuming alcoholic beverages while visiting bars, taverns, or nightclubs will not carry a firearm.

G. Officers wishing to carry a second firearm on duty may do so after adhering to the following criteria:

1. The firearm will be of .380 caliber or greater.

2. They must document their request to carry a second firearm on CCPD Form 1197 and meet the requirements on this form. This form will be completed yearly and list the following:

    a. Identify the employee and current assignment.

    b. A complete description of the backup firearm.

    c. The firearm must obtain a satisfactory inspection by the Armorer.

    d. The officer must qualify with a passing score yearly with the firearm listed on this form.

    e. Must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee.

    f. The original copy of this form will be maintained by the armorer, and a copy will be maintained by the officer's unit.

3. The ammunition used in the back-up firearm must be approved by the armorer.

    a. If the back-up firearm is a 9mm, the armorer may issue additional duty ammunition to be used in the back-up firearm.

4. The firearm will remain concealed on the officer's body.

VI. PATROL RIFLES (See CCPD policy ADM-023 Patrol Rifles)

VII. FIREARMS QUALIFICATIONS

A. The Armorer or designee will serve as the CCPD Range Master and will schedule re-qualification and annual training.

B. Proficiency Training

1. CCPD Officers will receive proficiency training and, at a minimum, must qualify before December 31st of each year.

2. Firearms training will be conducted and documented by the Department Firearms Instructor (DFI) or a Certified Firearms Instructor.

3. Officers who are unable to attend normal qualification courses due to physical limitations (i.e., light-duty, extended injury, or extended illness) will not attend.

4. Officers who are unable to attend qualification courses due to excused absences will be rescheduled to attend at a later scheduled qualification.

5. Officers who fail to qualify with the primary duty handgun will attend remedial training.

6. The DFI will notify the Division, Precinct, and Unit Commanders of any officer who fails to qualify as soon as possible.

C. Remedial Training

1. Officers who fail to qualify after two attempts with the primary duty handgun will immediately be placed on:

a. Administrative duties (with restrictions) if a need or administrative assignment is available within the department. Or,

b. If there is no need or administrative assignment available, the officer will be required to take leave (vacation or compensatory time) or leave without pay until they meet the department standards.

2. The following shall occur:

a. The DFI or certified firearms instructor will complete the Firearms Remediation Notice (form # 248) prior to the officer leaving the range. The officer will then bring the form to their Precinct/Unit Commander for the final signature and discuss administrative duty options, if available.

(1) The Division, Precinct, Unit Commander, or their designee will specify their administrative duties or require them to submit Employee Leave Request (form # 209.)

(2) The officer will participate in remedial firearms training scheduled by the DFI as soon as scheduling permits.

(3) The officer will not be authorized to wear or display their handgun on or off duty.

(4) The officer's Personally Assigned Police Vehicle (PAPV) privileges will be suspended, and their (marked or unmarked) police vehicle will be parked at the West Chatham Annex.

(5) The officer's off-duty employment privileges will be suspended.

(6) The (DFI) or a Certified Firearms Instructor will conduct the remedial training course and afford the non-qualifying officer the opportunity to qualify at the end of the remedial training.

(7) Officers who failed to qualify during the annual qualification will attend at least one open range per quarter until he/she qualifies the following calendar year.

3. Officers who qualify through remedial training will be immediately returned to full duty.

4. Officers who fail to qualify, after their sixth attempt, will be referred to the Chief of Police or designee for further action.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ARMORER

A. The Armorer or designee will:

1. Serves as the department range master, supervises, schedules all firearms training, and range qualifications.

2. During training, review, and discuss policies such as use of force, use of deadly force, and all other high-liability policies relating to the use of force.

3. Maintain all pertinent qualification records and information, to include:

a. Officers who qualified.

b. Officers who failed to qualify.

c. Officers who failed to attend qualification, whether excused or unexcused.

4. Conduct remedial training as necessary.

B. Precinct and Unit Commanders will ensure that:

1. All assigned personnel are scheduled for and attend the required annual firearms qualifications, to include those requiring modified, make-up, or remedial qualification courses.

2. Written reports concerning those Officers, under their command, who have not qualified or who have failed to qualify are submitted through the chain-of-command, to the Chief of Police.

3. Police Officers attend and successfully complete range qualification annually, in accordance with this SOP.

IX. FIRING RANGE OPERATIONAL RULES

A. All personnel scheduled will be present at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the hour scheduled, unless otherwise directed. Any latecomers will be rescheduled.

B. Any person who cannot keep their scheduled day and time should contact their scheduling Supervisor for reassignment who will then notify the Armorer about the schedule change.

C. All personnel will UNLOAD their firearms at the firearms clearing barrel/bullet trap at the entrance to the range.

D. All personnel must have CCPD issued gun belt and holster and will wear their gun belt with firearm holstered.

1. The firearm will not be unholstered unless directed by the Range Master.

E. CCPD personnel will wear their issued body armor on the range. The wearing of the body armor is optional for the firing range instructors.

F. There will be no smoking or unnecessary talking while on the firing line.

G. No one will move from one firing station to another until the command has been given.

H. All personnel will wear eye and ear protection while on the firing range.

I. Anyone entering the range with a loaded firearm or not having the proper equipment (gun belt, holster, hearing protection, eye protection, body armor, etc.) will be disqualified by the Range Master and referred back to their Commanding Officer for CCPD disciplinary action and rescheduling.

X. EMERGENCY PROTOCOL

A. Serious injuries or emergencies will be defined as (but not limited to) gunshot wounds, incapacitating illnesses (such as heat stroke, heart attack, stroke), snake bites, shock or any incident of a life-threatening or health-threatening nature, or any incident that a Line Coach, Range Instructor, Range Master, or CCPD Supervisor or Instructor perceives as a serious injury or emergency.

B. The following procedures will be adhered to in the event of a serious injury or emergency.

1. All personnel will immediately cease any firing on the range.

2. The Range Master will immediately check on the condition of the person and designate range personnel to notify the Communications Center (Dial 911) to dispatch Emergency Medical Personnel. The Range Assistant will inform both entities that they are declaring an emergency and describe the type of emergency or injury. The Range Master will remain with the victim until relieved.

3. Range personnel will provide first aid to the victim to the best of their ability and cease all training until EMS personnel arrive and the emergency is resolved.

4. After medical personnel arrive and are treating the victim, the Range Master will notify the Communications Center and request that they: a. Notify the CCPD Watch Commander.

a. Notify the Chief of Police.

b. Notify the victim's Division Commander.

c. Notify the Regional Police Academy Director (if the class is an academy class).

d. Notify the CCPD Training Unit Commander and request a Supervisor at the scene (This Supervisor will remain with the victim until relieved by the victim's Division Commander or his designee).

5. The Range Master will retain control over all personnel who witnessed the incident until the Internal Affairs Unit (or the Chief's designee) takes control of the investigation. Witnesses will complete written statements prior to leaving the range.

6. The Range Master will complete a detailed report of the incident.

XI. ARMORY

A. Access to the armory will be authorized by the Commander of the Office of Professional Standards or designee.

B. The Armorer is subject to immediate recall twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week.

C. In the event that the Armorer is unavailable, the Armorer will ensure that at least one of the alternates is available for an immediate call, and that appropriate personnel is notified of the change of status.

D. Access to the CCPD Armory should be limited to the Armorer and the alternate Armorer unless escorted by the Armorer or the alternate Armorer.

E. The Armorer will be responsible for the issue of all CCPD firearms.

1. The Armorer will maintain records of the assignment of firearms.

2. The records will be maintained electronically and by hard copy.

3. Officers will be required to sign for all issued firearms.

F. The Training Unit / Armorer or designee will store all firearms and related equipment in a secured area and conduct a periodic inventory to assure readiness.

G. When a new Chief of Police is appointed, the Armorer or Training Unit shall conduct a 100% accountability inventory of all agency firearms. This inventory report will be forwarded to the Chief's Office and retained by the Armorer/Training Unit.

XII. SAFETY GUIDELINES

A. Security

1. Each officer is ultimately responsible for their issued firearm(s).

2. Officers will never loan their issued firearm(s) or allow it to be used by any unauthorized person.

B. Home Safety and Storage

1. It is each officer's responsibility to ensure that members of their household are instructed in the safety aspects of the firearm.

2. The CCPD realizes that each officer's household is different and is not dictating procedure to be strictly adhered to, but rather suggesting guidelines to secure the firearm while at home and off duty.

3. Firearms should be stored in a manner so they are inaccessible to, or inoperable by, others who should not have access to them.

4. The following methods have proven effective and are just a few of the many acceptable ways to secure the firearm at home:

a. A high location such as a shelf or a closet.

b. Locked cabinet or drawer.

c. Gun safe or receptacle.

d. Trigger lock or a set of handcuffs placed between the rear of the trigger and the trigger guard is a viable alternative.

C. All weapons and magazines that are inoperative, unsafe, or that require anything other than routine maintenance will be turned in to the Armorer or issuing authority.

XIII. RECORDS

A. The CCPD Armorer shall maintain a record on each firearm approved by the CCPD for official use to include, but not be limited to:

1. Make.
2. Model.
3. Serial Number.
4. To whom issued,
5. Date of Issuance.
6. Date of Return.
7. Any maintenance.

B. The CCPD Armorer will record and maintain all firearms training and qualification records and make them available to the CCPD Training Unit when necessary.

C. The Training Unit Lieutenant will ensure that Division Commanders are notified of performance deficiencies of Officers under their command.

D. No later than December 15th of each year, the Training Unit Lieutenant will submit to the Chief of Police a list of Officers who failed to qualify with their service firearm during the calendar year.

BY ORDER OF:

Electronically Signed in PowerDMS on 12/07/2023

Jeffrey M. Hadley
Chief of Police

Appendix 1

Chatham County Police Department
APPROVED FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

DEPARTMENT ISSUED SERVICE FIREARM:

- Glock 17, 9mm
- Glock 19, 9mm
- Glock 43x, 9mm (Plain Clothes)
- Other Glock model, 9mm (approved by the Chief of Police)

DEPARTMENT ISSUED TACTICAL WEAPONS:

- Windham Weaponry M4, .223 Remington
- Windham Weaponry M4, .300 AAC Blackout
- Mossberg 590, 12 gauge
- Bergara Rifle, 6.5mm Creedmoor

SPECIFICATIONS FOR CURRENT AMMUNITION ISSUED TO CCPD OFFICERS:

- 9mm
- .223 Remington
- .300 AAC Blackout
- 00 Buckshot, 12 gauge, 2 ¾ inch
- 1 oz. Slug, 12 gauge, 2 ¾ inch
- Less Lethal Bean Bag, 12 gauge, 2 ¾ inch
- 6.5mm Creedmoor

DEPARTMENT APPROVED OFF DUTY / BACK UP FIREARMS:

Off-Duty / Back up weapons must be approved by the Armorer / Certified Weapons Instructor and may be manufactured by one of the following manufacturers (other manufacturers may be approved at the Armorer's discretion). It must also be .380 Caliber or larger. Contact the Armorer when considering the purchase of a firearm.

- Kahr
- Spring Field Armory
- Glock
- Sig Sauer
- Taurus
- H & K
- Smith Wesson
- Beretta
- Ruger
- Kimber
- Walther

DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZED FLASHLIGHTS FOR WEAPONS:

- Streamlight TLR-7
- Nightstick TCM-550XL
- Or other department-issued mounted flashlights.