



GENERAL ORDER

DURHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT
DURHAM, NC

NUMBER:

3001 R-16

FIREARMS & RANGE PROCEDURES

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INTRODUCTION

The Durham Police Department (DPD) has established strict agency control of the firearms and ammunition officers may carry and use in the performance of their official duties. Officers will only carry firearms, accessories, and ammunition that have been [approved](#) by the Department. In addition, strict guidelines exist to ensure a safe and productive range facility. All other weapons must be approved by the Rangemaster or their designee.

DEFINITIONS

Primary on-duty weapon: a Department-owned and issued semi-automatic pistol.

Backup weapon: a firearm that belongs to an officer that has been approved for on-duty carry.

Off-duty weapon: a personally owned firearm that has been approved for officers to carry in an off-duty capacity.

Specialty weapons: any weapon not issued to all sworn employees and may require specific training, assignment, and qualifications.

Pool weapons: a non-assigned department-owned weapon, secured in a DPD facility and available for approved officers to sign out for a single shift or assignment.

Reflex Optic: a non-magnified reflecting style sight that provides an illuminated red or green dot for the shooter to use as a point of aim. Also commonly called RDS (red dot sight) or MRDS (mini or micro red dot sight).

PRIMARY ON-DUTY WEAPON

Officers in uniform and plainclothes will carry a department-issued semi-automatic pistol as their primary duty weapon. This weapon will be carried in the department-issued or approved holster. No ankle holsters are allowed for this weapon. In addition to the loaded magazine in the weapon, officers in uniform will carry two loaded magazines in a department-issued magazine pouch. Officers in plainclothes will carry one loaded magazine in addition to the one in their weapon. Carrying additional magazines is optional for all officers unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police.

Officers currently in undercover assignments in the Organized Crime Division (OCD) may, with the written approval of their division commander, use a smaller, more concealable weapon as long as they have successfully fired the Department firearms qualification course with that weapon. A list of approved OCD officers shall be maintained and updated annually by the OCD Commander. This weapon must be selected from the off-duty weapons section of the [Approved Weapons & Ammunition List](#).

Tactical officers will carry the Department-issued semi-automatic pistol as their primary duty weapon. This weapon will be carried in a department-issued tactical holster. They will carry a minimum of two additional loaded magazines.

Any use of a pistol-mounted red dot system (RDS) shall conform to the current methods and techniques as approved and taught by the Training Division. Officers may carry a red dot system only after completing the necessary training and demonstrating proficiency in the Durham Police Department's approved qualification course. The only pistol mounted RDS permitted is one that is approved by the Durham Police Department.

PRIMARY WEAPON LIGHT

Officers may be issued an approved primary on-duty weapon light that will be mounted on their primary duty weapon. Officers wishing to purchase or utilize their own weapon light may do so, so long as the issued duty holster accepts the light/weapon combination and the personally owned light is one selected from the [Approved Weapons & Ammunition List](#).

The issued weapon-mounted-light shall not be utilized as a standard flashlight and should only be deployed in situations where it is appropriate for an officer to utilize the primary duty weapon in response to a deadly threat or the possibility of a deadly threat.

It is the responsibility of the individual officers to ensure that the issued weapon light is in proper working order, to include replacement of batteries. Additionally, the light must be kept clean, in a similar fashion to the on-duty firearm.

BACKUP WEAPONS

All officers in an on-duty status are authorized to carry a backup weapon. The only department-approved backup weapons are listed in the [Approved Weapons & Ammunition List](#).

OFF-DUTY WEAPONS

All officers in an off-duty status are authorized, but not required to carry an off-duty weapon. An approved [Off-Duty Weapons List](#) shall be maintained. The Rangemaster is authorized to modify the approved off-duty firearms list and ammunition list with the approval of the Training Division Commander. Inquiries about approved weapons should be directed to the Rangemaster.

SPECIALTY WEAPONS

Shotguns

Officers authorized to use a shotgun shall only carry the department-issued shotgun or an approved personally-owned shotgun of the same type. An officer must successfully fire the department shotgun qualification course with the specific weapon in order to carry it. If the officer successfully qualified with a "Pool Weapon" (a non-assigned Department owned Remington 870 shotgun, such as those located at the DPD Firing Range or at

Police Substations), then the officer may carry and use any Department owned Remington 870 shotgun designated as a Department Pool Weapon. Officers must follow District Command procedures for signing in and out shotguns at each Substation.

Absent a securely mounted shotgun rack locking system located inside an assigned department vehicle, shotguns will be stored and secured inside the trunk in a carry case. The shotgun will be stored and loaded with four shotgun rounds in the magazine tube, with the chamber empty and closed, and the safety on. Under no circumstances will a shotgun be stored unsecured inside a department vehicle behind the headrest of the driver or passenger compartment.

No modifications other than the installation of an approved stock, sling, light, or an external shell carrier shall be allowed unless approved by the Rangemaster.

Use of personally owned shotguns must meet the following conditions:

- The shotgun shall be either pump or semi-automatic.
- The barrel length on all shotguns will not be less than 18 inches or longer than 20 inches.
- The shotgun is listed in the [Approved Weapons & Ammunition List](#)
- The officer shall take full responsibility for the security of the shotgun.
- The officer shall be responsible for all repairs and preventive maintenance that is required for the shotgun.
- The Department shall provide appropriate rounds for use on-duty and for qualification.

Automatic Weapons

All officers authorized to use or carry fully automatic, selective-fire weapons shall only carry those weapons listed in the [Approved Weapons & Ammunition List](#). Officers assigned specific tactical duties, or member of the Selective Enforcement Team are the only officers authorized to use or carry these types of weapons.

Less Lethal Impact Munitions/Chemical Munitions Weapons

Members of the Selective Enforcement Team and Mobile Field Force may be authorized to use or carry the Department issued less-lethal impact munitions or chemical munitions weapon, providing they are certified to use the particular munitions system.

Sniper Rifles

Members of the Selective Enforcement Team authorized to use or carry sniper rifles will carry the Department issued sniper rifle.

Patrol Rifles

All officers authorized to use or carry patrol rifles under the Patrol Sharpshooter program shall only carry the Department-issued rifle.

HOLSTERS AND AMMUNITION SELECTION

Holsters - On-duty

Uniformed officers will wear their department-issued or approved holster, with no exceptions.

Uniformed officers who wish to carry a backup weapon may do so in an ankle holster or an under the shirt style holster such as a vest attachable under the shirt holster, or the commercial T-shirt with a pocket style holster, or in the pocket utilizing a pocket holster manufactured by a reputable holster manufacturer. The holster must be fully concealable.

Non-uniformed officers will wear a department-issued belted/paddle “pancake” style holster or may purchase a department approved holster. **The use of shoulder holsters and/or cross-draw holsters are prohibited. The use of any holster that requires trigger or middle finger manipulation to release the firearm from the holster is prohibited.** Any officer in plainclothes with a visible weapon must also have a badge visible. Composite material or Kydex holsters of proper design for the type of weapon being carried may be allowed after inspection and approval of the Rangemaster or their designee.

Holsters - Off-Duty

All off-duty weapons will always be carried in a concealed manner in an appropriate holster. Concealment is authorized anywhere in North Carolina, pursuant to state law. Also, pursuant to federal law, full time or honorably retired officer may carry a concealed firearm outside of North Carolina. Officers will adhere to state and federal statutes when carrying concealed weapons.

AMMUNITION

Officers will carry only ammunition that is issued or approved by the DPD. Ammunition will be reviewed, evaluated, and tested by the Training Division and/or Rangemaster for [approval](#). Changes in the approved ammunition should occur at the beginning of each fiscal year, depending on operation necessity. Officers shall be responsible for carrying the proper ammunition both on and off-duty.

QUALIFICATION

Initial Qualification

DPD officers shall successfully demonstrate proficiency with each firearm before the Department will authorize them to carry it. Initially, this demonstration of proficiency occurs during basic recruit training and requires a minimum passing score of 80 on the practical test.

Annual Re-Qualification

Annual firearms re-qualification is divided into two phases: classroom and practical. A certified firearms instructor will monitor all re-qualification.

During the classroom phase, officers are provided with a block of instruction on firearms familiarization that incorporates the basic fundamentals of marksmanship. In addition, during the classroom phase, officers shall be provided with a block of documented instruction on General Order [4008 - Use of Force](#).

During the practical phase of annual re-qualification, all officers must successfully complete the Department’s firearms course with a minimum score of 80.

Safety briefings, including a review of all safety rules and regulations, must be conducted prior to any training. All attendees must be present and on time for safety briefings and scheduled training and may not miss any portion of the briefing. Late arrivals will not be accepted.

Training and Proficiency Documentation

The State Firearms Qualification Record (Form F-9A) shall be utilized for the purpose of maintaining an annual record of each certified law enforcement officer in-service firearms training and qualification. As such, the form shall also serve as a record of firearms approved by the agency for official use. In addition, all in-service firearms requirements will meet, at a minimum, the qualification requirements described in applicable NC. Administrative Code. Any future amendments to this code will automatically be incorporated into this and/or other pertinent policies.

On-Duty Handguns

All officers will successfully qualify with their department-issued on-duty weapon on both day and night fire qualification courses at least once a year. Should officers fail to qualify on two successive attempts during their scheduled qualification period, they will be relieved immediately of their current assignment and instructed to report to the Training Division at a time to be determined by the department Rangemaster. Officers who fail to qualify must turn over their weapon to the Rangemaster.

If an officer utilizes a weapon-mounted light, they must qualify using that weapon mounted light on their handguns.

Off-Duty Handguns

All officers will successfully qualify with their department-approved off-duty weapon on both the day and night qualification courses. If the on-duty weapon is also used off-duty, then the on-duty qualification course will count for both. If a different, currently approved weapon is carried, officers must successfully qualify with it during the firearms in-service qualification period. If the weapon is purchased between qualification periods, it shall be the officer's responsibility to coordinate a qualification time with the Training Division and Rangemaster.

Officers must qualify with every weapon they intend to carry off duty. No weapon will be used off-duty until a successful qualification score of 80 is obtained on the practical test. Officers failing to qualify with their off-duty weapon will be prohibited from carrying it. A Concealed Carry Handgun Permit does not exempt an officer from having to qualify with an off-duty weapon.

Shotgun

The qualification will be conducted during the firearms in-service qualification period. Officers are not required to use or carry a shotgun and, therefore, are not required to qualify with this weapon. All officers who wish to carry a shotgun must first qualify with a departmental issued shotgun or a personal weapon authorized by the Department. A passing score of 63 is required.

Specialty Weapons

All officers authorized to use or carry a specialty weapon will be required to successfully complete the Department's course of fire for that weapon.

Courses of Fire

The Training Division will design courses of fire for both day and night qualification. Course design shall comply with all State of North Carolina laws and all appropriate rules and regulations as set forth by the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission.

Failure to Qualify and Remedial Training

Following any two consecutive unsuccessful qualification attempts, with any weapon the officer is authorized to use or carry, the Rangemaster or firearms instructor will immediately comply with the appropriate North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) which states, "No officer will have access to or carry any weapon unless they successfully complete the department-approved course for that weapon." Remedial firearms training shall be considered a priority issue for the Rangemaster and training staff. The officer shall be assigned to the Training Division and will not participate in any on or off duty law enforcement functions. The officer will only carry a weapon during remedial training sessions.

A remedial training session consists of 4 hours of instruction from an North Carolina Department Of Justice (NCDOJ) Certified Specialized Firearms Instructor. Up to but no more than 400 rounds of ammunition may be used. Two (2) qualification attempts are to be made.

Without a medical exception, remedial training will begin as soon as a firearms instructor can be scheduled following a duty handgun qualification failure. Once the officer has completed remedial training, the officer will then attempt to re-qualify. No more than two re-qualification attempts will be administered within 24 hours. If, after remedial training, two re-qualification failures occur, no further testing will be done until a second remedial training is completed.

If, after a second remedial training occurs and the officer continues to be unsuccessful in their attempts to qualify, the Chief of Police shall review the remedial training and performance appraisals with the Rangemaster and training staff.

Following a review, the Chief of Police shall either:

- Order an additional remedial training period of up to, but not more than two (2) remedial training cycles.
- Recommend termination as a sworn officer to the City Manager for reasons of inability to maintain vital job performance standards.

Officers who receive and fail additional remedial training and subsequent re-qualification attempts, will, at the end of the calendar year, be subject to revocation of their State law enforcement certification pursuant to applicable NCAC.

The Training Division may implement specific training programs to address the skills and abilities of an individual officer who repeatedly demonstrate poor performance at qualifications. The Rangemaster has the authority to identify and require employees to take this course, as needed.

BACK TO BASICS CLINIC

Any officer who fails (2) In-Service qualification attempts shall attend Phase I & II of Back to Basics after successfully completing the required remediation.

Additionally, the Rangemaster or designee may require attendance in the Back to Basics program for shooters identified as needing improvement due to unsafe weapon handling skills or a history of low qualification scores, which interfere with firearm proficiency or safety of themselves or others.

Make-Up Qualification Dates

Officers who fail to fire on their scheduled qualification times must notify the training staff and Rangemaster to coordinate a make-up date. It shall be the officer's responsibility to successfully meet department qualification requirements within each calendar year.

FIREARMS REVIEW

The Rangemaster shall conduct a periodic review of all approved firearms on an as-needed basis when existing facts indicate the need to do so. The Chief of Police and Training Division commander will make suggested changes to the firearms lists based on this review and/or Department needs.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE OF FIREARMS

Prior to being approved for official use, all Department-owned weapons shall initially be inspected by a department armorer or Rangemaster. Thereafter, every three (3) years, all Department issued weapons will undergo preventive maintenance (PMA) inspection. The department Armorer will coordinate the pickup of weapons to be serviced, issuance of substitute weapons, re-issuance of serviced weapons, as well as all associated record keeping.

All preventive maintenance will be conducted by a certified department armorer following prescribed guidelines of the manufacturer and recorded on departmentally approved forms. Modifications to any weapon will be made by the designated Department Armorer. Officers requesting a modification, including grip or trigger modification, will submit a written request detailing the type of modification to the Rangemaster. If approved, the officer will schedule an appointment with the department Armorer to turn over their weapon and purchased parts for installation.

On-duty weapons found to be unsafe will either be repaired or replaced immediately by the armorer.

Periodic inspection, repair, and/or parts replacement costs for off-duty weapons, if other than the issued service weapon, will be at the owner's expense. However, ammunition required for test firing of off-duty weapons will be supplied by the Department.

ANY ZERO ADJUSTMENT TO THE OPTIC ON A DEPARTMENT ISSUED HANDGUN ARE TO BE MADE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE RANGEMASTER OR DESIGNEE OR THE DEPARTMENT ARMORER. ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THE OPTIC MOUNTING SCREWS WILL ONLY BE MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT ARMORER OR THE RANGEMASTER OR DESIGNEE . REPLACEMENT BATTERIES WILL BE SUPPLIED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND ARE TO BE INSTALLED BY THE RANGEMASTER OR DESIGNEE OR THE DEPARTMENT ARMORER.

RANGE PROCEDURES

The range will be operated under a schedule developed and supervised by the DPD Rangemaster. This schedule will indicate times that the range will be open for general practice and remedial training. A certified firearms instructor shall always be present when the range is being operated under the previously mentioned conditions. Any shooting without a firearms instructor present is prohibited.

During range operations, all officers, regardless of rank, shall be under the control of the Rangemaster or their designee. Intentional violations of range procedures or [safety guidelines](#) will result in immediate dismissal from the facility. The officer's supervisor will be notified in writing of any action taken, with no exceptions.

Range Use


Use of the DPD range is limited to:

- DPD personnel, their immediate family member or guest;
- Honorably retired DPD officers;
- Staff instructors with related police firearms certifications (N.C. Justice Academy, Smith & Wesson Academy, etc.);
- Private security agencies whose officers must be firearms certified under NCGS [§ 74C](#) and with prior approval of the Rangemaster;
- DPD armorer to test any firearm that requires repair or maintenance;
- Sworn law enforcement officers from municipal, county, state, or federal agencies or campus, or company police agencies, or honorably retired members of these agencies, who are present for firearms training or approved by the Rangemaster
- Citizens who are participating in some type of familiarization or firearms training previously approved by the Rangemaster and/or Training Division Commander.

A signed [Liability Release Form](#) shall be completed and filed with the department Rangemaster, prior to any live fire, by users of the department range. The forms must be signed by non-sworn individuals every time they use the range. The Rangemaster will maintain the signed forms for a period of three years.

SAFE STORAGE & USE OF ALL WEAPONS

All department weapons, when not being carried by the officer, will be safely stored in order to reasonably protect against theft or misuse of the weapon. Weapons will not be stored in any vehicle when officers are off duty unless the vehicle has a department-issued or approved vault/lockbox secured to the vehicle or the vehicle is parked in a secure private residential garage. When an on-duty officer must remove a weapon from their immediate control, i.e., gym, bathroom, they must take reasonable steps to ensure the weapon is secure and away from any danger of theft or misuse.



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