

Policy Manual Standard Operating Procedure	
SOP Number: 11-01j	Subject: Firearms
Authorized by: Chief Robert Connolly	
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Signed: The original signed copy of this directive is on file in the Office of Professional Standards.	
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1. PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure establishes guidelines for the proper use, care, and display of firearms; training and qualification for carrying and using firearms; and specifications for firearms.

2. POLICY

2.1 Only Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD) employees who are certified police officers and who meet the qualifications in this directive are authorized to

carry and use firearms in the performance of their duties. (Georgia Code section 17-4-20 paragraph b).

- 2.2 Sworn officers will carry and use only the Department-issued or –approved firearms in the performance of their official duties.
- 2.3 The Department provides sworn officers with firearms and intermediate (less lethal) weapons, along with appropriate training in their use, to provide a range of options for officers when dealing with uncooperative or combative subjects. Officers will adhere to the prescribed procedures for carrying and using such weapons in performance of their official duties and will maintain proficiency with them.
- 2.4 The Department will conduct refresher training for all sworn employees annually on firearms and the use of force.
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.3.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Chief will designate a sworn supervisor as the Department’s Principal Firearms Instructor, with input from the Training Division commander.
- 3.2 The Principal Firearms Instructor (PFI) will monitor and supervise all training, qualification, inspection, and inventorying regarding firearms to be used by Department employees.
- 3.3 The Training Division commander will coordinate all firearms training in accordance with this standard operating procedure and will ensure thorough documentation of training and proficiency is provided in each sworn employee’s training record.
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.3 b
- 3.4 Each employee of the Department, acting in his or her capacity as a law enforcement officer, must comply with this directive, whether on duty or off duty.
- 3.5 Supervisors will monitor officers’ compliance with this directive.

4. ACTION

- 4.1 Carrying and Displaying Firearms
 - 4.1.1 All officers issued firearms must demonstrate proficiency with those firearms before carrying or using them on or off duty, in accordance with section 5 below.
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.2

- 4.1.2 All qualified officers will carry an authorized handgun while on duty. Officers will carry a fully loaded firearm (bullet in the chamber) and fully loaded magazine(s), depending on duty assignment, while on duty. An officer may be temporarily unarmed when required by applicable policy or law (e.g. attending court, entering a jail) or when working in a Departmental administrative office that is not open to public access.
- 4.1.3 Officers will visibly carry only Department-issued firearms when wearing a Georgia Tech Police uniform, will carry only Department-issued or approved firearms while on duty, and will carry only the approved ammunition for those firearms, unless specifically authorized to do otherwise by the Chief or Principal Firearms Instructor.
- 4.1.4 Officers must carry firearms in a holster approved by the Principal Firearms Instructor.
- 4.1.5 Officers should avoid the unnecessary display of firearms and should not remove firearms from their holsters or storage areas except when there is justification for their use to accomplish a proper law enforcement purpose. Examples of appropriate justification include, but are not limited to:
1. When an officer has reason to believe his or her life or the life of another person is in danger,
 2. On the firing range or for Department-authorized pistol competitions, and
 3. During weapon maintenance or inspection (by the officer or a supervisor).
- 4.1.6 Unacceptable displays of a firearm include, but are not limited to:
1. Pointing or aiming a firearm at a citizen who clearly does not pose an immediate danger to the officer or others.
 2. A firearm used to strike, threaten, or merely intimidate a person.
 3. Horseplay or carelessness with firearms.
- 4.1.7 Officers will carry authorized back-up handguns in a secure holster and concealed at all times, unless justification exists to draw the handgun as outlined in section 4.1.5 above. While on duty or in Georgia Tech Police uniform, an officer will carry only one back-up handgun, in addition to the Department-issued duty handgun.

4.1.8 No firearm will be left unattended in the view of or accessible to the general public. Each officer will be held strictly accountable for the security of his or her weapon(s) at all times.

CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.1 f

4.1.9 Officers engaged in secondary employment will not carry Department-issued firearms, other than in employment specific to the Georgia Tech campus that is authorized by the Special Events Division commander.

4.2 Carrying Firearms Off-Duty

4.2.1 Officers carrying firearms off-duty are governed by the same state and federal laws and Department rules and regulations in regards to use of deadly force and displaying/discharging firearms. When not in uniform, officers carrying firearms off-duty will keep them concealed at all times, unless justification exists to draw the handgun as outlined in section 4.1.5 above. Officers carrying firearms off-duty are required to carry their police identification and badge.

4.2.2 Officers may not carry Department-issued firearms while off-duty, except while traveling directly between home and the Department.

4.2.3 Carrying a firearm while impaired by alcohol or drugs, prescription or otherwise, is strictly prohibited.

4.3 Firearms Safety

CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.1 f

4.3.1 It is imperative that each individual exercise extreme caution in the handling of all firearms, emphasizing safety at all times, whether on or off duty. Firearms may be stored in lockers assigned to the officers at the Department or at the officer's residence.

4.3.2 The safe and secure storage of firearms at home should be given special attention as well. Firearms at home will be stored so that they are not accessible to others in the residence, especially children.

4.3.3 Officers should not routinely store Department-issued firearms in personally owned vehicles as a method of safeguarding them and may do so only when no other alternative exists. If it becomes necessary to store a firearm in a vehicle temporarily, it should be stored in the trunk or other locked compartment if available.

4.4 Care of Firearms

4.4.1 Officers' firearms are subject to inspection at any time by supervisors.

- 4.4.2 Officers are responsible for keeping their firearms clean and in good operating condition at all times. Damage to or malfunction of a Department weapon should be reported to a supervisor immediately.
- 4.4.3 No modifications will be made to any duty weapon without approval from the Principal Firearms Instructor.
- 4.4.4 Cleaning and repair of firearms will not be conducted in the police station without the approval of the officer's immediate supervisor or the Principal Firearms Instructor. Repairs to Department-issued firearms must be made by a certified armorer specified by the PFI.
- 4.4.5 All clearing and loading of firearms within the Department must be done in the presence of a supervisor or the Principal Firearms Instructor. The muzzle of the weapon must be pointed in the GTPD armor piercing containment system when loading or unloading.

5. Training and Qualification

CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.3

5.1 Training on the Use of Firearms

- 5.1.1 All employees authorized to carry firearms will receive in-service training annually on the use of force policies and demonstrate proficiency with all approved firearms and electronic controlled weapons that the employee is authorized to use.
- 5.1.2 Sworn officers will carry and use only those firearms in which they have received training and demonstrated a requisite level of proficiency. All such training will be conducted (or monitored) and documented by a Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)-certified firearms instructor.
- 5.1.3 All employees who will be authorized to carry firearms will be issued copies of, and be instructed in, SOP's 11-01 and 12-01 before being authorized to carry a weapon. The Training Division commander will document that issuance and instruction.
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.4
- 5.1.4 All firearms training and qualification will be conducted and documented by POST-certified firearms instructors.
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.3 a
- 5.1.5 The Training Division commander will document all training on firearms and use of force and proficiency.
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.3 b

5.2 Initial Authorization

5.2.1 Familiarization

1. Initial familiarization occurs both at the Department and as part of the firearms module of Basic Peace Officer Training (Mandate).
2. The PFI will issue a recruit a firearm prior to the academy, for use during firearms training only. (Issuing a firearm is not authorization to carry or use it.) The Principal Firearms Instructor (PFI) will review the Department's Firearms and Use of Force directives with the recruit. The PFI will then review gun safety and the basic mechanics of the weapon with the recruit. The firearms module of Basic Peace Officer Training may satisfy the classroom portion of this requirement
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.4

- 5.2.2 Once a recruit has demonstrated a thorough understanding of the Department's Use of Force and Firearms policies and successfully completes Basic Mandate training, then the officer may be POST-certified, sworn in, and authorized by the Department to carry a firearm.

5.3 Back-up Handguns

- 5.3.1 Authorized back-up weapons must be in a compact or sub-compact design, chambered for .380, 9mm, .40, or .45 for semi-automatics or .32, .38, or .357 for revolvers.
- 5.3.2 Officers will submit all back-up handguns, ammunition, and back-up holster to the PFI for inspection and approval prior to qualification and training each year. Back-up ammunition must be produced by the same manufacturer and the same model as duty ammunition issued by the Department or approved by the PFI.
- 5.3.3 The officer must complete a Secondary Handgun Request form and submit the form and the firearm, ammunition, and holster to the Principal Firearms Instructor. The PFI will inspect the firearm for cleanliness, reliability, and suitability as a back-up weapon.
- 5.3.4 After the firearm passes inspection, the officer will be required to qualify with it on a course approved by the PFI. The officer may be required to supply the ammunition for qualification with his or her back-up handgun if it is not a caliber in use by the department. This inspection and qualification process will be conducted annually, usually at the same time as the annual re-qualification with the duty handgun. Officers may request and be granted authorization to carry up to two different handguns as back-up weapons, though only one will be carried

at a time when on duty. The officer must qualify with each one.

- 5.3.5 At the conclusion of annual qualifying, the PFI will submit to the Chief a list of all officers for whom he or she approved backup handguns, ammunition, and holsters, with the model and serial number. The PFI will post a copy of the list at Headquarters each year.

5.4 Annual Firearms Qualification

- 5.4.1 Authorization to carry a firearm must be renewed each year through annual qualification. Firearms training will be held annually.
- 5.4.2 Officers must maintain their proficiency through participation in the Department's Firearms Training Program. The program consists, at a minimum, of annual range re-qualifications. Additional firearms training may be provided and/or required based on officer's levels of expertise and the needs of the Department.
- 5.4.3 Officers will be required to qualify annually with the Department-issued firearm on the Department's Standard Qualification Course. This course will be the Georgia Semi-Auto Pistol Qualification Course (GSAC), or a course approved by the Principal Firearms Instructor that meets or exceeds the minimum standards of the GSAC, in accordance with Georgia POST rules. Officers must attain a minimum score of 240 out of 300 or 80% on at least one of three opportunities during qualification. All scores will be documented and certified by the PFI, or his or her designee.

5.5 Failure to Qualify

CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.3 c

5.5.1 Police recruits

1. Recruits must successfully complete the state mandated firearms module of their Basic Peace Officer Training. If a recruit fails to complete this portion of the state mandated training, she or he will report that failure to the Department's Principal Firearms Instructor. The PFI will evaluate the recruit's marksmanship abilities and make a recommendation to the Chief whether to give the recruit a second opportunity to complete the Basic Peace Officer Training.
2. If afforded a second opportunity, the recruit will be responsible for payment of all fees required by the respective Regional Police Academy to repeat the firearms module.
3. If the recruit fails the firearms module of Basic Peace Officer Training a second time, she or he may be terminated at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

5.5.2 Police Officers

1. Officers must successfully re-qualify annually on the Department's Standard Qualification Course (S.Q.C.). If an officer fails to qualify during the scheduled session, the officer's authority to carry a weapon will be suspended with a memo to the Chief, and the officer will be placed on administrative duty. The officer will then be required to attend four hours of remedial firearms training conducted by a Department firearms instructor and attend the next scheduled qualification session. At the discretion of the firearms instructor, and based on availability, the training may be conducted at the next scheduled qualification session.
2. If the officer fails to attain a qualifying score during the second qualification session, the officer's authority to carry a weapon will be suspended with a memo to the Chief, and the officer will be placed on administrative duty. The officer will then be required to attend four additional hours of remedial firearms training conducted by a Department firearms instructor and will attend the next scheduled qualification session. At the discretion of the firearms instructor, and based on availability, the training may be conducted at the next scheduled qualification session.
3. If the officer does not attain a score of 240 out of 300 or 80% during the third qualification session, the PFI will provide a formal recommendation to the Chief for termination of the officer's employment.

5.5.3 If at any time during the qualification process, subsequent qualification sessions, or remedial training, the PFI feels that an officer's weapon handling skill is a liability to the Department, the PFI will recommend in writing to the Chief to suspend or terminate that officer's authority to carry a weapon.

5.5.4 Back-up handguns

1. Officers who fail to qualify with their approved back-up handgun will have their authorization to carry that weapon suspended. The officer will be given a second opportunity to qualify at the next available range date.
2. If the officer fails to qualify the second time, the authorization to carry that handgun will be terminated. The officer may reapply with that handgun at the following year's annual qualification.

5.5.5 Other Circumstances

1. Officers failing to demonstrate required competencies, either in a training environment or on the job, will be required to satisfactorily complete training and appropriate remedial training to correct these.
2. An officer who has taken extended leave or suffered an illness or injury that could affect his or her ability to use a firearm will be required to re-qualify before returning to line-duty status.
3. If she or he fails to qualify, she or he will be afforded the opportunity of a second attempt and remedial training, as outlined in section 5.5.2 above.

6. Weapon Specifications

CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.1 a, b

6.1 Standard-Issue Handguns

- 6.1.1 The Department's standard issue handgun is the Glock Model 17, 9mm. The issued ammunition for duty use is 9mm jacketed hollow point ammunition. Officers may be assigned different models of Glock 9mm handguns based upon duty assignment.
- 6.1.2 Practice ammunition will have ballistic characteristics similar to the standard-issue duty ammunition.

6.2 Patrol Rifle

- 6.2.1 The Department's standard issue patrol rifle is the Daniel Defense M4V4s or M4V7s rifle with a 11.5 inch barrel, or the M4 Colt Law Enforcement Carbine, .223 caliber, semi-auto rifle, with an 11.5 or 14.5 inch barrel. Department-issued duty ammunition for the patrol rifle is .223 caliber/5.56mm, ballistic tip ammunition, or similar, suitable for urban environments.
- 6.2.2 Practice ammunition will have ballistic characteristics similar to the standard-issue duty ammunition.
- 6.2.3 The SOP on Patrol Rifle covers the responsibilities of the members in regards to these firearms.

7. Firearms Inspections and Records

7.1 Firearms Inspections

CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.1 c, d

- 7.1.1 A certified firearms instructor or armorer will thoroughly inspect all firearms for function, cleanliness, and safety prior to initial use by employees and at least annually thereafter, usually during range re-qualification. He or she will document these inspections. Malfunctioning or unsafe firearms will either be repaired on the spot or removed from service until the problem(s) can be corrected.
 - 7.1.2 Employees will report suspected material or functional defects of firearms and/or ammunition to a Departmental firearms instructor or armorer without delay.
 - 7.1.3 The team watch commander, or corresponding supervisor in other assignments, will inspect firearms at least monthly.
- 7.2 Record Keeping
CALEA 6th edition standard 4.3.1 e
- 7.2.1 The PFI will maintain a complete record of all firearms issued to and/or approved for use by employees. The PFI will maintain a complete listing of all firearms and the name of the officer to whom the weapon is issued. The record will include, at a minimum, the date of issue, manufacturer/model, serial number and the names of both the assignee and issuing person. The PFI will also record when firearms are turned in.
 - 7.2.2 The PFI will maintain a record of all authorized back-up handguns. The record will include at a minimum the manufacturer, model, serial number, round capacity, and qualifying scores shot by the officer on the qualification course. The PFI will also maintain copies of the Secondary Handgun Requests filed by the individual officers.

5. DEFINITIONS

Official duties: For the purpose of this directive, the term means actions performed by an employee in his or her capacity as a law enforcement officer.

“Soft” uniform: According to GTPD Chapter 7 “Uniform and Dress Code,” the soft uniform is an embroidered golf shirt with khaki trousers.

Weapon: Includes, but is not limited to: firearms (e.g. handguns, rifles, etc.) and less lethal weapons (e.g., impact weapons, stunning devices, and sprays.)

6. CANCELLATION

This directive cancels:
Chapter 11-01i “Firearms”

7. REFERENCE

Georgia Code section 16-11-130 paragraph (c)(4)

CALEA 6th edition standards 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4

SOP 12-02 “Use of Force”; SOP 11-04 “Patrol Rifle”