



GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Operations

Section: 404.1

Subject: Firearms

Topic: Firearms Qualification

Enacted: 7/30/2015

Last Review: 05/14/2024

Review: 01/01/2026

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to define the procedures governing firearms qualification for all sworn personnel of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office that sworn personnel maintain proficiency with all issued firearms. Firearms qualification testing will be conducted to ensure that firearms proficiency is maintained. Remedial training will be required in cases where minimum proficiency is not achieved. Firearms qualifications will be conducted in accordance with the established LCSO training protocols. Firearms qualifications will also be offered for retired law enforcement officers who are eligible to carry a concealed firearm as provided in 18 U.S. Code § 926C, the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act ("LEOSA").

III. PROCEDURE

A. Every deputy sheriff who is issued a service firearm is required to achieve qualification with the firearm on the established firearms training course prior to carrying the firearm either on-duty or off-duty. Issued firearms are subject to a weapon inspection by a qualified range instructor at any time.

1. At a minimum, personnel authorized to carry a firearm shall qualify with that firearm annually.
 - a. If a deputy has been working in a Temporary Restricted Duty ("TRD") assignment or has taken extended leave, e.g. Workers Compensation, injury leave, etc., and therefore he/she was unable to attend the most recent firearms qualification course, that deputy shall arrange with the Training Section to qualify with his/her weapon(s) prior to resuming full duty. Deputies who have suffered a musculoskeletal injury shall qualify before returning to full duty.
2. Permission to carry a firearm off-duty or on-duty as a back-up, in addition to the service firearm, shall not be granted until the Firearms Training Unit supervisor notifies the deputy that his/her request has been approved by the Training Section

2nd Lieutenant. A copy of LCSO Form 1.13, containing a complete description of the weapon, date of qualification, and qualifying score, shall be inserted in the affected deputy's training file.

3. Should a sworn member of this agency be unable to complete firearms qualification with the requisite passing score, the Firearms Training Unit shall immediately inform that member's supervisor, who shall immediately arrange with the firearms training staff to schedule the employee as soon as possible for remedial training.
 - a. If, during an official firearms qualification training day, a deputy fails to qualify with his/her duty handgun, the deputy shall be placed on Administrative Leave and shall not be returned to full duty until such time as the deputy has a successful qualification score. The deputy shall surrender his/her duty handgun to the Firearms Training Unit pending a successful qualification. While on leave, the deputy shall have no law enforcement powers. If a deputy fails to successfully qualify and he/she has driven a county vehicle to the firearms range, the county vehicle shall remain parked at the Training Center until the deputy has successfully qualified. The deputy shall report to the Firearms Training Unit for remedial firearms training as coordinated with the deputy's supervisor. If the deputy fails to qualify with his/her duty handgun after receiving remedial training over a reasonable period, he/she is subject to the loss of his/her law enforcement certification in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Code of Virginia and DCJS regulations.
 - b. If the deputy fails to qualify with his/her issued rifle or shotgun during any official firearms qualification course, the deputy shall relinquish the weapon to the Firearms Training Unit immediately and no longer have its use. If a deputy has been issued a rifle or shotgun and fails to qualify on six consecutive courses of fire with that weapon, the deputy shall be required to re-enroll in the basic operator's course for the weapon system.
 - c. At a minimum, each deputy assigned to the Operations Bureau shall be required to maintain proficiency in either the rifle or shotgun. If the deputy fails to qualify with an issued long gun, that deputy will be required to report to the range for remedial training as directed by the Firearms Training Unit supervisor.

IV. FIREARM QUALIFICATION FOR RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

A. Retired law enforcement officers who meet the eligibility requirements set forth in LEOSA may be afforded the opportunity to complete a firearm qualification course one time per year under the supervision of the Firearms Training Unit.

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. According to 18 U.S. Code § 926C, an eligible retired law enforcement officer is someone who:

i. Separated from service in good standing from service with a public agency as a law enforcement officer.

ii. Before such separation, was authorized by law to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of, or the incarceration of any person for, any violation of law, and had statutory powers of arrest or apprehension under section 807(b) of title 10, United States Code (article 7(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

iii. Before such separation, served as a law enforcement officer for an aggregate of 10 years or more; or, separated from service with such agency, after completing any applicable probationary period of such service, due to a service-connected disability, as determined by such agency.

iv. Has not been officially found by a qualified medical professional employed by the agency to be unqualified for reasons relating to mental health and as a result of this finding will not be issued the photographic identification as described in 18 U.S.C. §926C subsection (d)(1); or has not entered into an agreement with the agency from which the individual is separating from service in which that individual acknowledges he or she is not qualified under this section for reasons relating to mental health and for those reasons will not receive or accept the photographic identification as described in 18 U.S.C. §926C subsection (d)(1);

v. Is not under the influence of alcohol or another intoxicating or hallucinatory drug or substance; and

vi. Is not prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm.

2. Application Process

- a. Prior to qualification, each retired law enforcement officer shall submit the Retired Law Enforcement Officer Firearms Qualification Application (LCSO Form 6.52) and the Release of Information Necessary for NCIC/VCIN Query (LCSO Form 6.53) to the Firearms Training Unit.
- b. The Firearms Training Unit shall review each application to ensure it is complete and determine whether the applicant meets the eligibility requirements of 18 U.S. Code § 926C.
 - i. This review shall include a VCIN and NCIC criminal history check using purpose code "F" to ensure there are no firearm disqualifiers.
- c. After review, each applicant shall be notified whether his/her application has been approved or denied.
 - i. If approved, the applicant will be notified of available upcoming qualification dates.
 - ii. If an applicant does not meet the eligibility requirements listed above, he/she will not be allowed to participate in the agency's firearm qualification process.
- d. Retired law enforcement officers must complete this application process in its entirety each year they wish to attend a firearm qualification. The application and instructions are located on the LCSO website.

3. Qualification

- a. Firearm qualifications for retired law enforcement officers shall not be conducted at the same time as regularly scheduled firearm qualifications for sworn employees.
- b. On the date of qualification, the Firearms Training Unit shall verify the identity of each retired law enforcement officer in attendance, ensuring that each retiree has been approved to attend.
- c. Prior to the firearm qualification, each attendee shall complete the Waiver and Release form (LCSO Form 6.54) and the range safety rules (LCSO Form

1.12).

- d. Each attendee shall provide his/her own firearm, ammunition, and belt holster.
- e. The Firearms Training Unit shall maintain and follow a lesson plan specifically prepared for retired law enforcement officers, which shall include, at a minimum:
 - i. A safety briefing
 - ii. An explanation of the Range rules
 - iii. A DCJS-approved qualification course
 - (a) Firearm qualifications will be scored in accordance with DCJS standards for active law enforcement officers.
 - (b) No attendee may attempt more than two qualification courses on any given day.
 - (c) Any attendee who fails to qualify may re-apply to attend later.
- f. Upon completion of the firearm qualification course, the results for each attendee shall be recorded on the LEOSA Qualification Record form (LCSO Form 6.55).

4. Administrative Responsibilities

- a. Following each qualification date, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office shall provide an identification card signifying proof of qualification to each attendee who successfully completes the DCJS-approved qualification course.
 - i. Each attendee will be notified by the Firearms Training Unit when the card is available for pick up.
 - (a) If payment for the qualification course is required, each attendee must provide payment to the Records Section prior to receiving his/her qualification card.

- (1) The fee to be charged a retired law enforcement officer for this program shall be determined by the Sheriff or his/her designee.
 - (2) The Records Section shall be responsible for the receiving, documenting, and processing of all payments for retired law enforcement officer firearm qualifications. Once all requirements have been met, the Records Section shall issue the qualification card.
 - (3) Law enforcement officers who retired from the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office are not be required to pay for LEOSA qualifications.
- b. The Firearms Training Unit shall update the LEOSA Verification File with the names and dates of qualification for all retired law enforcement officers who successfully complete the DCJS-approved firearm qualification course through the LCSO.
 - c. The Firearms Training Unit shall notify ECC of all retired law enforcement officers who successfully complete the DCJS-approved firearm qualification course for entry into VCIN.
 - d. The Firearms Training Unit Supervisor shall be responsible for maintaining the records of retired law enforcement officer firearm qualifications.