



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**Chapter:** Operations

**Section:** 404.2

**Subject:** Firearms

**Topic:** Authorized Weapons and Ammunition

**Enacted:** 10/25/2017

**Last Review:** 02/10/2025

**Review:** 01/01/2027

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy and procedures governing authorized firearms and ammunition which may be used by sworn members of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.

## II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office that sworn agency personnel shall only carry authorized firearms and ammunition.

## III. PROCEDURE

### A. Issued Firearms

1. The issued service pistol shall be standard equipment for all sworn Sheriff's Office personnel.
2. Shotguns and patrol rifles may be issued in accordance with [General Order 403.1](#).

### B. Non-issued Firearms

1. The Firearms Training Unit supervisor may authorize the carrying of a secondary (back-up) and/or off duty firearm by deputies and shall retain a record using LCSO Form 1.13 – Secondary Firearm Request to memorialize such authorization.
2. The Sheriff or his/her designee may authorize the carrying of a firearm in lieu of the issued service firearm while on duty based on operational needs.
3. No more than two additional approved weapons may be utilized for off-duty and secondary (back-up) use by any given sworn deputy.
4. Any weapon to be carried shall conform to the following specifications:
  - a. .380 ACP, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, 9mm Luger, 10mm, .40 S&W, or .45 ACP.

- b. Barrel length of 1.8 to 4 inches for revolvers, and up to 5.5" for semi-automatic handguns.
- c. Any weapon carried must meet or exceed technical and safety specifications of agency issued weapons.
- d. Deputies must qualify with their secondary (back-up) and/or off-duty weapons at least once a year.

**C. Off-duty Carry of Firearms**

- 1. Under no circumstances shall any deputy carry an issued or off-duty weapon while or after consuming alcoholic beverages to the degree that physical and/or mental abilities have been impaired.
- 2. The carrying of a firearm while a deputy is in an off-duty status is optional.
- 3. While attending the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy/Skyline Regional Criminal Justice Academy Basic School, a recruit shall not carry his/her issued firearm. Upon graduation from academy training, the recruit may wear his/her issued firearm in an off-duty capacity.
  - a. Provided there is just cause to do so, newly hired deputies with prior law enforcement certification may request permission from the Sheriff or his/her designee to carry their issued pistol while attending the NVCJA. If approval is given, the weapon shall not be carried while attending class or on academy premises while attending the basic school.
- 4. Until a newly hired Deputy Sheriff has become certified through the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy or Skyline Regional Criminal Justice Academy and their respective Field Training or Corrections Training Program, no requests for an off-duty firearm will be approved.

**D. General Ammunition Requirements**

- 1. Ammunition carried on-duty, off-duty, and for use in secondary firearms shall only be that issued by the agency and shall not be altered in any manner.
- 2. Hand-loaded or remanufactured ammunition will not be used or carried in agency issued firearms.

**E. Weapon-mounted lights**

- 1. A weapon-mounted light is a device specifically designed to be an extension of

the firearm for the sole purpose of illuminating areas or subjects when circumstances justify that a deputy deploy his/her firearm.

- a. Weapon-mounted lights are not a substitute for a hand-held flashlight.
  - b. Searches of persons, vehicles, or property shall only be conducted with the officer's hand-held flashlight, unless the circumstances justify that the deputy deploy his/her firearm.
2. Weapon-mounted lights shall be affixed to the service pistol and remain in place for the duration of a deputy's shift.
    - a. Deputies assigned to non-uniformed positions may affix a weapon-mounted light to their service pistol prior to an operational assignment and may remove the light only after completion of the assignment.
  3. Weapon-mounted lights shall not be removed from a weapon for use as a hand-held light.
  4. Prior to being issued or carrying a weapon-mounted light, deputies must successfully complete a training program authorized by the Firearms Training Unit.
  5. Only the issued weapon-mounted light shall be utilized on the service pistol, and it shall not be altered in any way.
  6. When a weapon-mounted light is affixed to the service pistol, the service pistol must be carried in a holster designed to accommodate both the pistol and the light.
  7. A violation of this policy may result in remedial training, discipline, and/or the removal of the weapon-mounted light.

**F. Maintenance**

1. Deputies are required to maintain all issued firearms in an operationally ready condition. This includes cleanliness, lubrication, batteries for lights/optics, etc.
2. Only Loudoun County Sheriff's Office armorers are authorized to repair, disassemble past the point of field stripping, or adjust agency-owned firearms.
3. Deputies will not allow an agency-owned firearm to be disassembled or altered in any way by anyone who is not authorized.

4. The Firearms Training Unit will be responsible for determining what level of repair is needed on all agency-owned firearms and decide if an outside entity will be used for repair.