



# TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL ORDERS

<b>Subject:</b> Patrol Rifle		<b>General Order Number:</b> 390.35
<b>Section:</b> 300- Law Enforcement Operations		<b>Subsection:</b> 90- Use of Force/Weapons
<b>Amends/Supersedes:</b> 3-5, 390.35 (10/20/2019); 390.35 (03/08/2023)		
<b>Effective Date:</b> 10/20/2019	<b>Revised Date:</b> 08/01/2024	<b>Review Date:</b> As Needed
<b>Per Order Of:</b> Patrick W. Jones, Chief of Police		
<b>RIPAC:</b>		
<b>Distribution:</b> Sworn Department Members		

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Tiverton Police Department, and is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

### I. POLICY

This document contains the Department's policy and procedures regarding patrol rifles. Included in this document are topics relating to training, deployment, ammunition, maintenance and transport of assigned patrol rifles.

### II. PURPOSE

In order to more effectively and accurately address the increasing level of fire power and body armor utilized by criminal suspects, the Tiverton Police Department will make patrol rifles available to qualified officers as an additional and more immediate tactical resource.

### III. DEFINITION

A patrol rifle is an authorized weapon, which is issued by the department or personally owned by a sworn member to the department, and which is made available to properly trained and qualified officers as a supplemental resource to their duty handgun or shotgun. Personally owned patrol rifles may be carried for patrol duty as long as they comply with the guidelines set forth in this General Order.

### IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Patrol rifles may be deployed by qualified officers to:
  - 1. Provide a more immediate tactical response to calls involving armed and/or violent offenders;
  - 2. Increase citizen and officer safety at high-risk incidents;
  - 3. Provide for more accurate and controlled shot placement, if necessary.
- B. It is not intended that officers, who are assigned patrol rifles, perform as part of a tactical unit, but they may be used to assist any tactical unit with

perimeter/containment. Officers may also be required to act as a force in order to stop an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury (i.e. active shooter incident).

- C. The only patrol rifles authorized for use by department members are those that comply with the guidelines set forth in this General Order.
  - 1. The patrol rifle issued by the department is:
    - Make: Smith and Wesson
    - Model: M&P 15
    - Caliber: .223/556
- D. Discharge of Patrol Rifle  
The discharge of the patrol rifle shall be governed by Tiverton Police Department General Order 390.10 *Use of Force*.
- E. Patrol Rifle Training and Qualification
  - 1. Training
    - a. Officers authorized to deploy patrol rifles will be trained in the operation by a qualified patrol rifle instructor.
    - b. Selected officers must successfully complete a department approved patrol rifle course prior to being allowed to deploy the rifle in tactical situations.
    - c. Each officer who is trained in patrol rifle deployment shall receive in service rifle training by a certified Patrol Rifle Instructor. He/she shall qualify at least once a year with the Patrol Rifle.
    - d. Records relative to qualification with patrol rifles are to be maintained by the Planning and Training Lieutenant.
    - e. Successful completion for qualification includes an 80% or higher on the qualification course.
    - e. In the event that an officer is not able to satisfactorily pass a qualification session, the patrol rifle instructor conducting the training session will attempt to assess any deficiencies. The officer will receive remedial training. The officer will be allowed to re-qualify. In the event that an officer cannot qualify, the officer will not be authorized to carry a patrol rifle for patrol duty.
- F. Deployment Guidelines
  - 1. The patrol rifle, department issued or individually owned may be deployed under any of the following conditions:
    - a. For a perimeter/containment situation involving a hostage and/or barricaded subject;
    - b. An “Armed Subject” call;
    - c. A felony or high-risk traffic stop;
    - d. A “Hold-up” or armed robbery call;
    - e. Where the officer has a reasonable expectation that there is potential for an armed subject encounter;
    - f. Upon the request of a supervisor.

G. Ammunition

1. Officers shall only carry Department-approved and issued ammunition. The Nosler Ballistic Tip, 55-grain, orange tipped, 223/5.56mm caliber is the Department's approved duty ammo for the patrol rifle.
2. Officers will carry up to four (4) magazines filled with twenty five (25) rifle rounds when deploying the patrol rifle.
3. Each department issued, or privately owned patrol rifle, must be equipped with a department-approved weapon mounted light and sling.

H. Rifle Maintenance

1. Officers authorized to deploy rifles are responsible for cleaning and proper function of their assigned patrol rifle or approved personally owned patrol rifle.
2. Only a patrol rifle armorer is authorized to repair any malfunctions or mechanical failures. Officers are not permitted to modify patrol rifles designated for Department use without permission from a patrol rifle armorer and the Chief of Police.
3. All patrol rifles are subject to inspection at any time and will be inspected by patrol rifle armorer. The patrol rifle will also be inspected by a patrol rifle armorer before being issued and/or authorized for use. Patrol rifles found to be unsafe or defective will not be sanctioned by the department or used for qualifications until repaired or replaced.
4. Any damage to the patrol rifle or mechanical failure of any kind shall be immediately reported, in writing, to a supervisor and a patrol rifle armorer and the patrol rifle will be taken out of service until it is repaired. If left in a designated locker, the patrol rifle will be tagged, identifying the deficiency and the bolt will be locked open and a lock device put in place.
5. Failure to properly maintain an assigned patrol rifle may result in disciplinary action.

I. Transporting and Storage of the Rifle

1. The patrol rifle shall be secured in a designated locked storage area when not in use.
2. The patrol rifle shall be unloaded prior to being brought into the station. When being readied for use on patrol, the patrol rifle should have the magazine inserted and placed in the designated storage area in the patrol vehicle. The patrol rifle will be unloaded and returned to the designated storage area after every shift.
3. The patrol rifle shall be kept in the secured storage area unless
  - a. The patrol rifle is in for repair;
  - b. The patrol rifle is in use in the field;
  - c. The patrol rifle is being cleaned in an assigned area;
  - d. The patrol rifle is being inspected;
  - e. The patrol rifle is being used in training.
4. When the patrol rifle is in use in the field, it may be transported:
  - a. In a carrying case secured in the trunk or rear cargo area (SUV) of a department vehicle. The exception to the above would be situation in which a vehicle is being used to deploy officers or during an on-going operation.
  - b. In a locking gun rack installed in a department vehicle.
  - c. In a secure storage container mounted inside a Department vehicle.

5. When carried in a vehicle, the patrol rifle shall be in the following mode:
  - a. Safety On;
  - b. Bolt forward on an empty chamber;
  - c. Magazine inserted into the rifle;
  - d. Ejection port cover closed.

**V. CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE USE OF PERSONALLY OWNED PATROL RIFLES**

- A. Officers may carry personally owned patrol rifles only after meeting eligibility and qualification criteria as outlined in this General Order.
- B. Personally owned patrol rifles shall comply with the guidelines set forth in this General Order
- C. Personally owned patrol rifles will be stored in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the General Order
- D. Rifle Accessories and Ammunition  
The rifle will be an AR-15 based system of .223 caliber/5.56 mm, U.S. made, semi-automatic (no fully automatic or burst capability). The rifle may have a fixed or collapsible stock; shall have a tactical sling attached and shall be equipped with a weapon mounted light and may be outfitted with an approved optical site. Internal modifications to the weapon are not permitted. External modifications will comply with this General Order and applicable state and federal law.
  1. The following modifications/accessories are prohibited without authorization by a patrol rifle armorer and the Chief of Police:
    - a. Silencers/suppressors;
    - b. Laser sighting systems;
  2. Only Department-issued ammunition will be carried/used on duty. Magazine capacity will not exceed 30 rounds. No drum style or extended round magazines are authorized.
- E. Training, Qualifications and Inspection
  1. Prior to carrying/using a department owned or personally owned patrol rifle on duty, each officer will successfully complete all training and qualifications (See Section VI below). The personally owned patrol rifle will also be inspected by a patrol rifle armorer before being authorized for use while on duty.
- F. Restrictions
  1. The authorization for use of personally owned rifles and accessories must be controlled and only those officers specifically designated by the Chief of Police will be allowed to deploy the patrol rifle. Selection of officers is at the sole discretion of the Chief of Police or his/her designee. Only those officers meeting the qualifications established by the Tiverton Police Departments Patrol Rifle Policy may carry and use a personally owned rifle approved by the Department. Additionally, personally owned rifle must meet the operating safety criteria established by a department armorer.
  2. Personally owned patrol rifles used for duty purposes are subject to the following:
    - a. Inspection by a patrol rifle armorer at any time;

- b. Serial number registration with the Department;
  - c. Investigative seizure;
  - d. All other conditions imposed upon duty-use firearms.
3. The Tiverton Police Department will reimburse the authorized officer due to loss, theft or damage to personally owned patrol rifles or accessories that are reasonably utilized and secured in accordance with the departmental policies and procedures. Any loss, theft or damage must be immediately reported, through the chain of command, to the Chief of Police.
  4. Any violation of this policy (including failure to qualify with the patrol rifle) may result in the revocation of the authorization to carry/use the personally owned patrol rifle and/or disciplinary action consistent with current department policy. Participation in this program is voluntary and continued participation is at the discretion of the Chief of Police

## **VI. QUALIFICATION**

- A. Qualification rules.
  1. All officers who wish to carry/use a department owned or personally owned patrol rifle while on duty shall be required to attend and successfully complete a Department authorized patrol rifle training course.
  2. All officers who wish to carry/use a Department owned or personally owned patrol rifle while on duty shall achieve minimum qualifying scores on a prescribed course
  3. The patrol rifle training shall include a live fire qualification course. All officers shall qualify with department authorized patrol rifle instructor on a department-authorized course of fire in order to successfully complete the training.
  4. Prior to being authorized to carry/use a patrol rifle, each officer shall be required to have instruction on the department's Use of Force Policy, General Order 390.10; Department Authorized Firearms Policy, General Order 390.20; and Range Safety Rules before being allowed to carry a patrol rifle.
  5. Prior to being authorized to carry/use a patrol rifle, each officer must be familiar with recognized safe-handling procedures for the use of these weapons.
- B. Annual Certification.
  1. The department certified patrol rifle instructor conducting the certification shall prepare and submit a written report to the Planning and Training Lieutenant and the Chief of Police documenting each annual firearms qualification session.
  2. All officers shall be required to shoot a qualifying score on a department authorized course of fire at least once per calendar year in order to maintain authorization to carry/use a patrol rifle on duty.
  3. All patrol rifles shall be inspected by a department certified patrol rifle armorer during the annual certification.
  4. The department patrol rifle instructor shall complete a Weapon Qualification and Inspection Form (TPD 15-006) for each officer that they qualify.

5. A completed copy of the Weapon Qualification and Inspection Form (TPD 15-006) shall be forwarded to the Planning and Training Lieutenant.
- C. POST Submission
1. The department certified patrol rifle instructor shall submit to the Rhode Island Commission on Police Officers Standards and Training (RIPOST), on an annual basis, a proposal for the training and qualification of officers on all firearms which they are authorized to carry or use in the performance of their official duties.
  2. A copy of the proposal will be forwarded to the Planning and Training Lieutenant.

## **VII. INSPECTION AND REMOVAL OF WEAPONS FROM SERVICE**

- A. All patrol rifles approved for on-duty use will be submitted to a department certified patrol rifle armorer for inspection during the annual certification. This inspection will be to ensure the weapon is serviceable, in a safe operating condition, and of an authorized type/caliber.
- B. When a patrol rifle fails inspection, the armorer will advise the officer and provide written notice to the Chief of Police. The officer will not utilize the patrol rifle until deficiencies are corrected.
- C. If a patrol rifle fails the inspection it may be resubmitted for re-inspection once the necessary repairs have been completed (at officer's expense, in the case of personally owned patrol rifles). Meanwhile, if currently registered, the patrol rifle shall be removed from the officer's list of authorized weapons.
- D. At the completion of the annual certification, the patrol rifle armorer shall provide written notice to the Planning and Training Lieutenant and the Chief of Police documenting the results of the inspections.