

Firearms

305.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for issuing firearms, the safe and legal carrying of firearms, firearms maintenance and firearms training.

This policy does not apply to issues related to the use of firearms that are addressed in the Use of Force or Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths policies.

This policy only applies to those members who are authorized to carry firearms.

305.2 POLICY

The La Mesa Police Department will equip its members with firearms to address the risks posed to the public and Department members by violent and sometimes well-armed persons. The Department will ensure firearms are appropriate and in good working order and that relevant training is provided as resources allow.

305.3 AUTHORIZED FIREARMS, AMMUNITION AND OTHER WEAPONS

Members shall only use firearms that are issued or approved by the Department and have been thoroughly inspected by the Rangemaster. Except in an emergency or as directed by a supervisor, no firearm shall be carried by a member who has not qualified with that firearm at an authorized Department range.

All other weapons not provided by the Department, including but not limited to edged weapons, chemical or electronic weapons, impact weapons or any weapon prohibited or restricted by law or that is not covered elsewhere by Department policy, may not be carried by members in the performance of their official duties without the express written authorization of the member's Division Commander. This exclusion does not apply to the carrying of a single folding pocketknife that is not otherwise prohibited by law.

Officers shall carry their Police Department identification card on their person when carrying firearms, both on- and off-duty (unless authorized by the Chief of Police during certain undercover operations.) The carrying of a firearm while off-duty shall be at the option of the officer.

Officers should use every tactical tool at their disposal to avoid surrendering their weapon.

305.3.1 HANDGUNS

Officers on-duty may carry the firearm issued to them by the Department or another personally-owned duty firearm meeting the minimum criteria:

- (a) A handgun of recent manufacture and safe operating condition chambered in 9mm, .40 S&W, or .45 calibers.
- (b) Handguns must be black, blue steel, or stainless steel. Any other color must be approved before use.

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- (c) Double Action, Double Action Only, and "Safe Action" are authorized. Officers desiring to carry Single Action semi-automatic pistols must first complete an approved transition course prior to using that handgun.
- (d) The minimum magazine capacity for uniformed personnel is seven (7) rounds. The minimum magazine capacity for non-uniformed personnel is six (6) rounds. Uniformed personnel must carry at least three (3) magazines of ammunition while on duty.
- (e) Holsters and spare magazine pouches must meet current uniform policy standards and are to be purchased at the officer's expense.
- (f) Aftermarket sights, grips, or other modifications to the handgun must be approved by the Rangemaster before use. Stock trigger systems shall not be modified, or caused to be modified, by an officer.

305.3.2 SHOTGUNS

The authorized Department-issued shotgun is the Remington 870P 12 gauge. Other shotguns may be approved at the discretion of the Division Commander

- (a) Deployment - The decision to deploy a shotgun rests with the individual officer and should be based on the information known to that officer at the time of the deployment.
 - 1. The shotgun may be deployed in most cases where a felony is in progress. A shotgun should be deployed when it has already been determined that firearms are involved.
 - 2. When a shotgun is deployed, the officer removing the shotgun should broadcast "Unit, Code S". Because this information may be of tactical value to the Field Supervisor and other responding units, officers should broadcast this information as long as tactical and practical considerations are not prohibitive. (Incident on emergency traffic only, officer confronted with immediate life threatening actions.)
 - 3. The first officer on scene should evaluate the situation and indicate to cover officers the need for additional shotguns, and/or other use of force options.
 - 4. Officers are responsible for returning the shotgun to the locked holder in their vehicle, in the proper "Patrol Ready" condition after deployment.
- (b) Displaying Shotguns and Warning Shots
 - 1. A member of the Department shall not display a shotgun in the performance of duty except under circumstances known and reasonably believed to be life threatening, or under circumstances that are recognizable by the officer as being potentially dangerous.
 - 2. The same rules apply to the shotgun as the handgun with regard to warning shots and firing at moving vehicles (see Department Rule 4.18).
- (c) Shotgun Procedures
 - 1. Shotguns are not to be used as clubs and are not to be used to strike another person. Their use as such is generally prohibited except when immediately

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necessary to protect the officer or another person from death or serious bodily injury.

(d) Maintenance

1. Armory Storage

(a) Shotguns assigned to the armory shall be stored unloaded with the action open and safety on.

2. Vehicle Storage

(a) Shotguns are maintained locked in the vehicle in the following condition, known as "Patrol Ready":

1. Chamber empty
2. Magazine fully loaded
3. Hammer released
4. Safety off

(b) During vehicle checks, officers shall assure themselves that the shotgun is in the required condition for vehicle storage.

(c) Officers wanting to check their patrol vehicle's shotgun, or make "Patrol Ready", shall at a minimum perform the following procedures:

1. Activate the safety to the "ON" position.
2. Remove the weapon from the vehicle and ensure the weapon is pointed in a safe direction.
3. Unload all ammunition from the weapon.
4. Visually and manually verify that the chamber, receiver, and magazine tube are unloaded of all ammunition.
5. Verify magazine cap and front sight are secure.
6. Verify barrel is clear of obstruction (this may be accomplished by ensuring ambient light is present in the barrel when viewed through the open ejection port of the receiver.)
7. Verify the action is closed on an empty chamber.
8. Activate the safety to the "OFF" position.
9. While pointing the weapon in a safe direction (such as an appropriate bullet trap while at the station), depress the trigger.
10. Reload the magazine tube with the ammunition desired by the officer for duty use (00 Buck and/or Slug.)

(d) Return the weapon to the vehicle and lock in the appropriate weapon rack.

1. Officers wanting to perform an additional function check of their patrol vehicle's shotgun may perform the following five-point safety check after first unloading the weapon:

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- (a) Place the safety on, unscrew the magazine end cap, and remove the barrel to check for obstructions.
- (b) Check the breech end of the barrel for cracks or marring to the extractor and ejector slots.
- (c) Slide the fore-end half way forward and check spring tension on the extractor.
- (d) Slide the fore-end completely forward and pull the trigger. Safety should prevent the trigger from releasing.
- (e) Take the safety off, cover the firing pin hole with a thumb or finger and pull the trigger. The firing pin should be felt by the thumb or finger. Replace the barrel without re-cocking the weapon.

3. Shotgun Malfunction

- (a) Should a shotgun malfunction, become inoperable and/or become jammed with live ammunition, the following procedure is to be followed:
 1. The Field Supervisor will be notified and the weapon will be taken to the armory. At the armory, the Field Supervisor, or authorized designee, will attempt to unload the weapon and correct the malfunction.
 2. If the Field Supervisor, or authorized designee, is unable to correct the problem, the weapon will be tagged noting the problem. The weapon will be stored in the armory in as safe a condition as possible.
 3. The Watch Commander will be notified in writing of the malfunction. The Watch Commander will then notify the proper personnel to see that the weapon is repaired.

305.3.3 PATROL RIFLES

The authorized Department-issued patrol rifle are the Colt M4 Carbine and the Smith & Wesson M&P 15 Sport II .223. Other rifles may be approved at the discretion of the Division Commander. Members of the Special Response Team are authorized to carry their issued rifle on patrol.

The approved tactical use of rifles is not meant to subrogate or take the place of using a SWAT team from another jurisdiction or the Department's Special Response Team, but rather to make available to sworn personnel, weapons designed to match the firepower and tactics necessary to improve the safe entry to places for search and arrest warrants, containment of violent persons, or the rescue of persons in those situations where a SWAT team from another jurisdiction or the Department's Special Response Team are not immediately available, or by policy will not respond.

All rifles will be approved by the Department, in .223 or 9mm caliber, and will be semi-automatic only, with iron sights. Rifles may be equipped with slings, collapsible stocks, a light and/or targeting equipment, excluding 2 power or greater scopes. The additional targeting equipment must not

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interfere with the use of the iron sights. All ammunition will be approved by the Department. Rifles shall normally be carried with the bolt forward, chamber empty, and a full magazine in the magazine well. Rifles shall be transported in an approved rack, or hard case, or other method which prevents damage to the rifle during transit. It is the individual officer's responsibility to zero their weapon.

Rifles will only be utilized in pre-planned or high risk situations by those officers who have been selected, trained, and qualified on those specific weapon(s). When a rifle is deployed, the officer deploying the rifle shall generally broadcast "Unit (call sign), Code R". Because this information may be of tactical value to the field supervisor and other responding units, officers should broadcast this information as long as tactical and practical considerations are not prohibitive. (Incident on emergency traffic only, officer confronted with immediate life threatening actions.)

The Chief of Police may select a number of sworn personnel to be trained in the use of rifles. Normally, a sufficient complement of personnel will be selected and trained to maximize the likelihood of at least one trained person being available at all times. Personnel selected shall receive initial training in the use and care of the approved rifle(s).

Members may deploy the patrol rifle in any circumstance where the member can articulate a reasonable expectation that the rifle may be needed. Examples of some general guidelines for deploying the patrol rifle may include but are not limited to:

- (a) Situations where the member reasonably anticipates an armed encounter.
- (b) When a member is faced with a situation that may require accurate and effective fire at long range.
- (c) Situations where a member reasonably expects the need to meet or exceed a suspect's firepower.
- (d) When a member reasonably believes that there may be a need to fire on a barricaded person or a person with a hostage.
- (e) When a member reasonably believes that a suspect may be wearing body armor.
- (f) When authorized or requested by a supervisor.
- (g) When needed to euthanize an animal.

When not deployed, the patrol rifle shall be properly secured consistent with Department training in a locking weapons rack in the patrol vehicle. All personnel outside of Patrol shall secure their weapons as deemed appropriate and in accordance with State Law.

305.3.4 SUB-MACHINE GUN (SMG)

- (a) The approved tactical use of the SMG is not meant to replace the use of a SWAT team, but rather to make available to sworn Department personnel a weapons system that is designed to meet or exceed the weapons capability of an offender(s). The Department's adoption of the SMG and associated tactical training is provided in an effort to improve the safe entry to places for search and arrest warrants, containment

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of violent persons or the rescue of persons in those situations where a SWAT team is not immediately available to respond.

- (b) All SMG's shall be Department-issued weapons and shall chamber only Department-approved ammunition. The SMG may be equipped with a tactical sling and the Department-approved Sure Fire tactical lighting system.
- (c) When not in use, the SMG shall be carried with the bolt forward, chamber empty, with the safety selector switch on safe. The SMG shall be transported in a Department-approved case which prevents damage to the SMG during transit.
- (d) An "SMG Operator" is a sworn officer who has successfully completed a Department-approved SMG training course.
- (e) The SMG shall be issued to an SMG Operator and that SMG Operator shall train with the SMG issued to them. An SMG Operator may utilize the SMG in pre-planned operations or high-risk situations. Each SMG Operator is responsible to zero (sight in) their weapon and to maintain a zeroed weapon through regular checks and maintenance.
- (f) No modifications or repairs shall be made to the SMG except by a certified SMG Armorer.
- (g) The Chief of Police may select sworn personnel to be trained in the physical operation and the tactical use of the sub-machine gun. Personnel selected shall receive certified initial training in the use and care of the SMG.

305.3.5 PERSONALLY OWNED DUTY FIREARMS

Non-probationary officers desiring to carry an authorized but personally owned duty firearm must receive written approval from the Chief of Police or the authorized designee. Once approved, personally owned duty firearms are subject to the restrictions listed in 306.3.1.

305.3.6 AUTHORIZED SECONDARY HANDGUN

Members desiring to carry Department or personally owned secondary handguns are subject to the following restrictions:

- (a) The handgun shall be in good working order and on the Department list of approved firearms.
 - 1. Revolvers: Any double-action revolver of recent manufacture and suitable quality.
 - 2. Pistols: Any double-action pistol, or single-action pistol with a positive safety mechanism, of recent manufacture and suitable quality.
 - 3. Derringers: Any derringer of recent manufacture and suitable quality.
- (b) The purchase of the handgun and ammunition shall be the responsibility of the member unless the handgun and ammunition are provided by the Department.
- (c) The handgun shall be carried concealed at all times and in such a manner as to prevent unintentional cocking, discharge or loss of physical control.

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- (d) The handgun shall be inspected by the Rangemaster prior to being carried and thereafter shall be subject to inspection whenever it is deemed necessary.
- (e) Ammunition shall be the same as Department issue. If the caliber of the handgun is other than Department issue, the Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall approve the ammunition.
- (f) Prior to carrying the secondary handgun, members shall qualify under range supervision and thereafter shall qualify in accordance with the Department qualification schedule. Members must demonstrate proficiency and safe handling, and that the handgun functions properly.
- (g) Members shall provide written notice (qual-sheet) of the make, model, color, serial number and caliber of a secondary handgun to the Rangemaster, who will maintain a list of the information.

An officer may appeal disapproval of their weapon by the Rangemaster through the officer's chain of command to the Chief of Police.

305.3.7 AUTHORIZED OFF-DUTY FIREARMS

The carrying of firearms by members while off-duty is permitted by the Chief of Police but may be rescinded should circumstances dictate (e.g., administrative leave). Members who choose to carry a firearm while off-duty, based on their authority as peace officers, will be required to meet the following guidelines:

- (a) The member may use his/her duty firearm or may use a personally owned firearm that is carried and inspected in accordance with the Personally Owned Duty Firearms requirements in this policy. A member carrying his/her duty firearm will be deemed to have complied with (c), (d) and (e) of this section.
 - 1. The purchase of the personally owned firearm and ammunition shall be the responsibility of the member.
- (b) The firearm shall be carried concealed at all times and in such a manner as to prevent accidental unintentional cocking, discharge or loss of physical control.
- (c) It will be the responsibility of the member to submit the firearm to the Rangemaster for inspection prior to being personally carried. Thereafter the firearm shall be subject to periodic inspection by the Rangemaster.
- (d) Prior to carrying any off-duty firearm, the member shall demonstrate to the Rangemaster that he/she is proficient in handling and firing the firearm and that it will be carried in a safe manner.
- (e) The member will successfully qualify with the firearm prior to it being carried.
- (f) Members shall provide written notice of the make, model, color, serial number and caliber of the firearm to the Rangemaster, who will maintain a list of the information.
- (g) If a member desires to use more than one firearm while off-duty, he/she may do so, as long as all requirements set forth in this policy for each firearm are met.
- (h) Members shall only carry Department-authorized ammunition.

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- (i) When armed, officers shall carry their badges and La Mesa Police Department identification cards under circumstances requiring possession of such identification.

305.3.8 AMMUNITION

Members shall carry only Department-authorized ammunition. Members shall be issued fresh duty ammunition in the specified quantity for all Department-issued firearms during the member's firearms qualification. Replacements for unserviceable or depleted ammunition issued by the Department shall be dispensed by the Rangemaster when needed, in accordance with established policy.

Members carrying personally owned authorized firearms of a caliber differing from Department-issued firearms shall be responsible for obtaining fresh duty ammunition in accordance with the above, at their own expense.

305.4 EQUIPMENT

Firearms carried on- or off-duty shall be maintained in a clean, serviceable condition. Maintenance and repair of authorized personally owned firearms are the responsibility of the individual member.

305.4.1 REPAIRS OR MODIFICATIONS

Each member shall be responsible for promptly reporting any damage or malfunction of an assigned firearm to a supervisor or the Rangemaster.

Firearms that are the property of the Department or personally owned firearms that are approved for Department use may be repaired or modified only by a person who is Department-approved and certified as an armorer or gunsmith in the repair of the specific firearm. Such modification or repair must be authorized in advance by the Rangemaster.

Any repairs or modifications to the member's personally owned firearm shall be done at his/her expense and must be approved by the Rangemaster.

305.4.2 HOLSTERS

Only Department-approved holsters shall be used and worn by members. Members shall periodically inspect their holsters to make sure they are serviceable and provide the proper security and retention of the handgun.

305.4.3 TACTICAL LIGHTS

Tactical lights may only be installed on a firearm carried on- or off-duty after they have been examined and approved by the Rangemaster. Once the approved tactical lights have been properly installed on any firearm, the member shall qualify with the firearm to ensure proper functionality and sighting of the firearm prior to carrying it.

305.4.4 OPTICS OR LASER SIGHTS

Optics or laser sights may only be installed on a firearm carried on- or off-duty after they have been examined and approved by the Rangemaster. Any approved sight shall only be installed in strict accordance with manufacturer specifications. Once approved sights have been properly

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installed on any firearm, the member shall qualify with the firearm to ensure proper functionality and sighting of the firearm prior to carrying it.

Except in an approved training situation, a member may only sight in on a target when the member would otherwise be justified in pointing a firearm at the target.

305.5 SAFE HANDLING, INSPECTION AND STORAGE

Members shall maintain the highest level of safety when handling firearms and shall consider the following:

- (a) Members shall not unnecessarily display or handle any firearm.
- (b) Members shall be governed by all rules and regulations pertaining to the use of the range and shall obey all orders issued by the Rangemaster.
- (c) Members shall not load or unload a firearm anywhere in the Department, except where clearing barrels are present.
- (d) Shotguns or rifles removed from vehicles or the equipment storage room should be loaded and unloaded in the parking lot and outside of the vehicle, using clearing barrels or shotgun plates when feasible.
- (e) Members shall not place or store any firearm or other weapon on Department premises except where the place of storage is locked. No one shall carry firearms into the jail section or any part thereof when securing or processing an arrestee, but shall place all firearms in a secured location. Members providing access to the jail section to persons from outside agencies are responsible for ensuring firearms are not brought into the jail section.
- (f) Any firearm authorized by the Department to be carried on- or off-duty that is determined by a member to be malfunctioning or in need of service or repair shall not be carried. It shall be promptly presented to the Department or a Rangemaster approved by the Department for inspection and repair. Any firearm deemed in need of repair or service by the Rangemaster will be immediately removed from service. If the firearm is the member's primary duty firearm, a replacement firearm will be issued to the member until the duty firearm is serviceable.

305.5.1 INSPECTION AND STORAGE

Handguns shall be inspected regularly and upon access or possession by another person. Shotguns and rifles shall be inspected at the beginning of the shift by the member to whom the weapon is issued. The member shall ensure that the firearm is carried in the proper condition and loaded with approved ammunition. Inspection of the shotgun and rifle shall be done while standing outside of the patrol vehicle. All firearms shall be pointed in a safe direction or into clearing barrels.

305.5.2 STORAGE AT HOME

Members shall ensure that all firearms and ammunition are locked and secured while in their homes, vehicles or any other area under their control, and in a manner that will keep them inaccessible to children and others who should not have access. Members shall not permit Department-issued firearms to be handled by anyone not authorized by the Department to do so.

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Members should be aware that negligent storage of a firearm could result in civil and criminal liability (Penal Code § 25100).

305.5.3 STORAGE IN VEHICLES

When leaving a handgun in an unattended vehicle, members shall ensure that it is locked in the trunk, or in a locked container that is placed out of view, or in a locked container that is permanently affixed to the vehicle's interior and not in plain view, or in a locked toolbox or utility box permanently affixed to the vehicle (Penal Code § 16850; Penal Code § 25140; Penal Code § 25452).

If the vehicle does not have a trunk or a locked container, then the firearm should be locked within the center utility console that can be locked with a padlock, keylock, combination lock, or other similar locking device (Penal Code § 25140).

Officers are exempt from these requirements during circumstances requiring immediate aid or action in the course of official duties (Penal Code § 25140).

305.5.4 ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Firearms shall not be carried by any member, either on- or off-duty, who has consumed an amount of an alcoholic beverage, taken any drugs or medication, or has taken any combination thereof that would tend to adversely affect the member's senses or judgment.

305.6 FIREARMS TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

All members who carry a firearm while on-duty are required to successfully complete training quarterly with their duty firearms. In addition to quarterly training, all members will qualify at least annually with their duty firearms. Members will qualify with off-duty and secondary firearms quarterly. Training and qualifications must be on an approved range course. If there are time restraints made by the Rangemaster at the range, then the officer must qualify with each of their secondary/back-up firearms at least annually.

At least annually, all members carrying a firearm should receive practical training designed to simulate field situations including low-light shooting.

The time interval between firearms qualifications may be extended due to operational needs, with the approval of the Chief of Police. Members of the Department assigned to other law enforcement units may complete their firearms qualification requirements with those units, as approved by the Department Training Sergeant.

Shotgun qualifications will be conducted in conjunction with all regularly scheduled firearms qualification sessions. All sworn personnel shall complete an approved shotgun qualification course of fire, with a Department shotgun, during regular firearms qualification sessions.

Personnel trained to utilize rifles shall qualify quarterly. Any officer who misses quarterly qualification shall be removed from the list of rifle qualified personnel. The officer shall be placed back on the list of rifle qualified personnel after successfully qualifying with their rifle(s) the following quarter.

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An SMG Operator shall qualify with the sub-machine gun on a quarterly basis. Any SMG Operator who misses quarterly qualification shall be removed from the list of SMG qualified personnel. An officer may be placed back on the list of qualified SMG Operators after they have successfully qualified with the sub-machine gun.

305.6.1 NON-CERTIFICATION OR NON-QUALIFICATION

If any member fails to meet minimum standards for firearms training or qualification range staff shall forward a memo via the chain of command documenting the failure. For any reason, including injury, illness, duty status or scheduling conflict, that member shall submit a memorandum to his/her immediate supervisor prior to the end of the required training or qualification period.

A Division Commander may place a member of their Division in a limited duty assignment if the member fails to achieve a passing score after three attempts for a firearms qualification session. The member shall remain in the limited duty assignment until they attend remedial training and achieve a passing score. This time frame may be dictated by range and Rangemaster availability.

A Division Commander may excuse a member of the Department from firearms qualifications upon receipt of a written request from the member describing the particular circumstances which make the request necessary and describing the member's demonstrated history of firearms proficiency.

Members of the Department on previously scheduled and approved vacation will normally be excused from a single firearms qualification and make-up without a written request. Members who are on previously scheduled and approved vacation for two or more consecutive firearms qualifications may request to be excused as outlined above.

Members who repeatedly fail to meet minimum standards will be removed from field assignment and may be subject to disciplinary action.

305.7 FIREARM DISCHARGE

Except during training or recreational use, any member who discharges a firearm intentionally or unintentionally, on- or off-duty, shall make a verbal report to his/her supervisor as soon as circumstances permit. If the discharge results in injury or death to another person, additional statements and reports shall be made in accordance with the Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths Policy. If a firearm was discharged as a use of force, the involved member shall adhere to the additional reporting requirements set forth in the Use of Force Policy.

In all other cases, written reports shall be made as follows:

- (a) If on-duty at the time of the incident, the member shall file a written report with his/her Division Commander or provide a recorded statement to investigators prior to the end of shift, unless otherwise directed.
- (b) If off-duty at the time of the incident, the member shall file a written report or provide a recorded statement no later than the end of the next regularly scheduled shift, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.

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305.7.1 DESTRUCTION OF ANIMALS

Members are authorized to use firearms to stop an animal in circumstances where the animal reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to human safety and alternative methods are not reasonably available or would likely be ineffective.

In circumstances where there is sufficient advance notice that a potentially dangerous animal may be encountered, Department members should develop reasonable contingency plans for dealing with the animal (e.g., fire extinguisher, conducted energy device, oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray, animal control officer). Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any member from shooting a dangerous animal if circumstances reasonably dictate that a contingency plan has failed, becomes impractical, or if the animal reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to human safety.

305.7.2 INJURED ANIMALS

With the approval of a supervisor, a member may euthanize an animal that is so badly injured that human compassion requires its removal from further suffering and where other dispositions are impractical.

Stray or abandoned injured animals that may be moved or taken to an available veterinarian should not be euthanized. With supervisor approval, abandoned injured animals (with the exception of dogs and cats) may only be euthanized after a reasonable search to locate the owner has been made. Injured dogs and cats found without their owners shall be taken to an appropriate veterinarian for determination of whether they should be treated or humanely destroyed (Penal Code § 597.1).

305.7.3 WARNING AND OTHER SHOTS

Shots fired into the air or ground in an attempt to cause a fleeing suspect to stop or surrender present a danger to the officer and innocent persons and are prohibited.

In extremely rare and extraordinary situations where the safety of the officer or another person is involved, the firing of a warning shot may be permissible.

305.8 DEPARTMENT RANGEMASTERS

The Chief of Police shall appoint a number of Rangemasters who shall be responsible for conducting firearms qualifications. One Rangemaster, who will typically be the rank of sergeant, will be designated as the lead Rangemaster. The lead Rangemaster will coordinate with the Training Sergeant on all qualifications. The lead Rangemaster will also be responsible for the Department's Armory. These duties include maintaining an inventory of all Department weapons, their issuance and maintenance, and maintaining adequate ammunition supplies.

- (a) Department personnel seeking appointment as a Rangemaster shall submit a written request to the Chief of Police which includes a summary of their applicable training and experience.
- (b) Prior to acting as a Rangemaster, personnel must successfully complete Department-approved training in range operations, safety practices and procedures, and firearms inspection and operation procedures.

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305.9 RANGEMASTER DUTIES

The range will be under the exclusive control of the Rangemaster. All members attending will follow the directions of the Rangemaster. The Rangemaster will maintain a roster of all members attending the range and will submit the roster to the Training Sergeant after each range date.

The range shall remain operational and accessible to Department members during hours established by the Department.

The Department armorer has the responsibility of making periodic inspection, at least once a year, of all duty firearms carried by members of this Department to verify proper operation. The Rangemaster has the authority to deem any Department-issued or personally owned firearm unfit for service. The member will be responsible for all repairs to his/her personally owned firearm and it will not be returned to service until inspected by the Rangemaster. A Department armorer shall fire two (2) five (5) rounds from each weapon into the bullet trap after the completion of each inspection to ensure proper functionality.

The Rangemaster shall complete and submit to the Training Sergeant documentation of the training courses provided. Documentation shall include the qualifications of each instructor who provides the training, a description of the training provided and, on a form that has been approved by the Department, a list of each member who completes the training. The Rangemaster should keep accurate records of all training shoots, qualifications, repairs, maintenance or other records as directed by the Training Sergeant.

The Rangemaster shall report to the Department Training Sergeant, or in their absence, the Watch Commander, any member of the Department who fails three times to achieve a passing score in any phase of a firearms qualification session. The report shall include a recommendation for corrective action. The Rangemaster shall provide remedial training to the member who failed the qualification. The time and location for this remedial training will be prescribed by the Division Commander or authorized designee.

The Rangemaster shall report to the Department Training Sergeant, or in their absence, the Watch Commander, any members of the Department who fail to attend a firearms qualification session.

305.10 DEPARTMENT TRAINING SERGEANT

(a) Firearms Qualification Sessions

1. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall schedule firearms qualification sessions as provided for in this Instruction. The Training Sergeant shall reserve the necessary range facilities and schedule the appropriate Department personnel to attend firearms qualification sessions.
2. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall determine or approve all courses of fire for firearms qualifications and determine or approve minimum passing standards.

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3. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall ensure that a qualified Rangemaster is assigned to conduct each firearms qualification session.
 4. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall coordinate with the lead Rangemaster on the firearms qualification sessions listed in this section.
- (b) Administrative Responsibilities
1. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall arrange training courses for Rangemasters in range operations, safety practices and procedures, and firearms inspection and operation procedures.
 2. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall maintain records of firearms qualifications for all applicable members of the Department.
 3. The Department Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall arrange for remedial training and/or another firearms qualification session for members who fail to attend, or achieve a passing score for, a firearms qualification session.
 4. Upon receiving a report that a member of the Department has failed to achieve a passing score at a firearms qualification session, or failed to attend a session, the Training Sergeant or authorized designee shall advise that member's Division Commander.

305.11 DEPARTMENT ARMORERS

- (a) The Chief of Police shall appoint firearm armorers who shall be responsible for conducting duty firearms inspections.
1. Prior to acting as a Department armorer, selected personnel must successfully complete a Department-approved armorer's course.
 2. Armorers may only complete a detailed inspection on those firearms they are certified to inspect. Armorers may conduct field inspections and function tests on all other firearms.
- (b) Armorer Responsibilities
1. Armorers shall conduct a detailed inspection on each Department-owned firearm on an annual basis. This inspection will include a five two round function test fire into the bullet trap and completion of the inspection form.

305.12 "SUPER TRAP HOT BOX"

- (a) The bullet traps shall be used as a safety backdrop when loading and unloading firearms and to clear jams or other malfunctions while on Department property.
1. "Super Trap Hot Boxes" are located in the police station. Rifle rounds shall only be fired in traps marked as suitable for that type of ammunition.
- (b) The Rangemaster Coordinator shall insure that bullet traps are inspected, cleaned, and maintained in a serviceable condition at all times.

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- (c) Personnel shall follow posted guidelines in the use of the bullet traps. The traps are limited to the types and caliber of ammunition they may receive. Personnel shall always wear eye and ear protection when using the traps.
- (d) Prior to test firing a weapon into a trap, personnel shall notify the Watch Commander and the Communications Center of the pending firearm discharge.

305.13 FLYING WHILE ARMED

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has imposed rules governing law enforcement officers flying armed on commercial aircraft. The following requirements apply to officers who intend to be armed while flying on a commercial air carrier or flights where screening is conducted (49 CFR 1544.219):

- (a) The NLETS message request will be approved in writing by the Chief of Police prior to transmittal. A memo describing the officer's operational need and the details of the flight must be sent by the officer to the Chief of Police for approval no later than one week prior to the flight, unless there are exigent circumstances. The approved memo will be given to the Police Services Specialist and they will direct that an NLETS message be sent. A copy of the memo will be retained by the Police Services Specialist until the officer returns from the armed flight. [See attachment: Sample Flying Armed Request Memo.pdf](#) ; [See attachment: Sample Agency Message to TSA.pdf](#) ; and [See attachment: Sample Message Returned to LEO For Day of Travel.pdf](#)
- (b) Officers wishing to fly while armed must be flying in an official capacity, not for vacation or pleasure, and must have a need to have the firearm accessible, as determined by the Department based on the law and published TSA rules.
- (c) Officers must carry their La Mesa Police Department identification card, bearing the officer's name, a full-face photograph, identification number, the officer's signature and the signature of the Chief of Police or the official seal of the Department and must present this identification to airline officials when requested. The officer should also carry the standard photo identification needed for passenger screening by airline and TSA officials (e.g., driver license, passport).
- (d) A National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) message must be sent to ORI VAFAM0199 a minimum of 24 hours before the day of travel. Specific instructions for how to format the message to TSA are provided on the NLETS website. The three letter Airport Code must be included in the message and can be found at the following website: <http://www.faa.gov/library/glossaries/>. An NLETS receipt, with Unique Alphanumeric Identifier, will be transmitted from the Transportation Security Operations Center (TSOC) to the Department.
- (e) An official letter signed by the Chief of Police authorizing armed travel may also accompany the officer. The letter should outline the officer's need to fly armed, detail his/her itinerary, and include that the officer has completed the mandatory TSA training for a law enforcement officer flying while armed.
- (f) Officers must have completed the mandated TSA security training covering officers flying while armed. The training shall be given by the Department-appointed instructor.

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- (g) On the day of travel, officers will check-in with the airline ticket counter, identify themselves and make sure they are in possession of the NLETS receipt containing the Unique Alphanumeric Identifier described in subsection "c." The officer will receive armed traveler paperwork provided by the airline. They will then proceed to the security screening checkpoint.
- (h) At the initial security screening checkpoint, the officer will advise the TSA Security personnel of their status and present any requested documentation of their authorized armed flying there. The officer will be directed to the Law Enforcement Officer Screening Checkpoint where the officer will present the NLETS receipt, display their badge, police identification, boarding pass, driver's license and the airline's armed traveler paperwork.
- (i) The officer will complete the Law Enforcement Officer Logbook then proceed to their boarding gate. Once at the gate, the Officer will provide the airline the armed traveler paperwork and inform the gate agent of their presence and status (flying armed).
- (j) Any officer flying while armed should discreetly contact the flight crew and any Federal Air Marshals or other law enforcement officers who are flying armed prior to take-off and notify them of his/her assigned seat.
- (k) Discretion must be used to avoid alarming passengers or crew by displaying a firearm. The officer must keep the firearm concealed on his/her person at all times. Firearms are not permitted in carry-on luggage and may not be stored in an overhead compartment.
- (l) Officers should not surrender their firearm but try to resolve any problems associated with flying armed through the flight captain, ground security manager, TSA representative or other management representative of the air carrier.
- (m) Officers shall not consume alcoholic beverages while aboard an aircraft, or within eight hours prior to boarding an aircraft.

305.14 CARRYING FIREARMS OUT OF STATE

Qualified, active, full-time officers of this Department are authorized to carry a concealed firearm in all other states subject to the following conditions (18 USC § 926B):

- (a) The officer shall carry his/her La Mesa Police Department identification card whenever carrying such firearm.
- (b) The officer is not the subject of any current disciplinary action.
- (c) The officer may not be under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicating or hallucinatory drug.
- (d) The officer will remain subject to this and all other Department policies (including qualifying and training).

Officers are cautioned that individual states may enact local regulations that permit private persons or entities to prohibit or restrict the possession of concealed firearms on their property, or that prohibit or restrict the possession of firearms on any state or local government property,

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installation, building, base or park. Federal authority may not shield an officer from arrest and prosecution in such locally restricted areas.

Active law enforcement officers from other states are subject to all requirements set forth in 18 USC § 926B.

Attachments

Sample Flying Armed Request Memo.pdf



DATE: *Date of*

Request TO: Chief

Vasquez FROM:

Officer Smith

SUBJECT: SAMPLE Flying Armed Request Memo

I, (*Full Name and ID number of Officer*), have an operational need to fly armed for the following reasons:

List the reasons why you need to fly armed: prisoner transport, investigation, class where weapons will be needed etc.

I have completed the TSA mandated training on flying

armed. My cellular telephone number is: *ten digit number*

My Department's telephone number is: *ten digit number*

I am escorting the following person: *Full name of prisoner or dignitary (leave out if not applicable)*

I am flying on the following airlines:

List your itinerary:

Date leaving, airline, flight number, connecting flights, final destination airport

Date returning, airline, return flight number, final destination airport

Authorizing Official:

Chief's Signature here

Walt Vasquez, Chief of Police

Sample Agency Message to TSA.pdf

SAMPLE AGENCY MESSAGE TO TSA

AM.PASO12345.VAFAM0199.*0008000001.TXT
LEOFA
NAM/SMITH, JOE.
AGY/BROWARD SHERIFF'S OFFICE.
BCN/BSO123456.
OFC/LOCAL.
NAO/WASHINGTON, GEORGE.
CRT/YES.
CPN/7031234989.
APN/2023456789.
EIT/PRISONER.
EIN/SMITH, JOHN.
NOA/AMERICAN AIRLINES.
FLN/AA1234.
DOF/122508.
DAP/DCA.
CAP/EWR.
FDA/BOS.

ABBREVIATION KEYS FOR NLETS MESSAGE FORMATTING

AM.[Sender ORI].[Destination ORI].

- * (AM) Designates the message as an NLETS Administrative Message.
- * Sender ORI field will be used to send the reply message back to the requester.
- * Destination ORI ensures the message is properly delivered to the LEO FA application.
- * There must be a period between each field as well as one at the end of the line.

TXT

- * Indicates the beginning of the message text.

LEOFA

- * Indicates to the application that this is a LEO FA request message. All messages without this will be ignored.

NAM

- * Full Name of the Flying Armed LEO.
- * Must be in the format of Last Name, First Name.
- * Example: NAM/Smith, Joe.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

AGY

- * Agency or department name of the Flying Armed LEO.
- * Example: AGY/Broward Sheriff's Office.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

BCN

- * Badge or credential number of the Flying Armed LEO.
- * Example: BCN/BSO123456.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

OFC

- * Officer Type
- * Must be either State or Local.
- * Example: OFC/Local.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

NAO

- * Name of Authorizing Official
- * Must be in the format of Last Name, First Name.
- * Example: NAO/Washington, George.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

CRT

- * Completed Requiring Training
- * Must be either Yes or No.
- * Example: CRT/Yes.
- * A No in this field will result in a denied reply message because all LEO flying armed must have completed required training.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

CPN

- * Cell phone number of LEO Flying Armed.
- * Must not contain dashes and must be exactly 10 digits.
- * Example: CPN/70331234989.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

APN

- * Agency or Department Number of Flying Armed LEO.
- * Must not contain dashes and must be exactly 10 digits.
- * Example: APN/2023456789.
- * This is not a required field.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

EIT

- * Escorted Individual Type
- * Must be Prisoner or Dignitary.
- * Example: EIT/Prisoner.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

EIN

- * Escorted Individuals Name
- * Must be in the format of Last Name, First Name
- * Example: EIN/Smith, John.
- * This is not a required field.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

NOA

- * Name of Airline
- * Example: NOA/American Airlines.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

FLN

- * Flight Number
- * Example: FLN/AA1234
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

DOF

- * Date of Flight
- * Must be in the format of mmddyy.
- * Example: DOF/122508
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

DAP

- * Departing Airport
- * Example: DAP/DCA
- * Must be known and recognized United States Airport.
- * Must not be more than 3 characters long.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

CAP

- * Connecting Airport
- * Example: CAP/EWR.
- * Must be a known and recognized United States Airport.
- * Must not be more than 3 characters long.
- * This is not a required field.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

FDA

- * Final Destination Airport
- * Example: FDA/BOS.
- * Must be a known and recognized United States Airport.
- * Must not be a more than 3 characters long.
- * The period at the end of the line is required.

**Sample Message Returned
to LEO For Day of Travel.pdf**

SAMPLE MESSAGE RETURNED TO LEO FOR DAY OF TRAVEL

AM.VAFAM0199.PASO12345.

TXT

FLYING ARMED LEO REQUEST APPROVED. YOUR UNIQUE ID CODE IS: WCD87947

NAME: JOE SMITH

AGENCY: BROWARD SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

AUTHORIZING OFFICIAL: GEORGE WASHINGTON

BADGE/CREDENTIAL: BSO123456

HAS DEPARTMENTAL LETTER: YES

COMPLETED TRAINING: YES

CELL PHONE: 70312344989

ESCORTED INDIVIDUAL TYPE: PRISONER

ESCORTED INDIVIDUAL: SMITH, JOHN

AIRLINE: AMERICAN AIRLINES

FLIGHT NUMBER: AA1234

FLIGHT DATE: 122508

DEPARTING AIRPORT: DCA

CONNECTING AIRPORT: EWR

FINAL DESTINATION AIRPORT: BOS

PRINT OUT THIS REPLY AND PRESNT IT AT THE AIRPORT'S LEO LANE.