


**LANCASTER POLICE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL**

<b>Effective Date</b> August 19, 2015		<b>Amended Date</b> July 3, 2017		<b>Directive</b> 3.01.1	
<b>Subject</b> Firearms and Qualification					
<b>Reference</b>				<b>Approved</b>  Chief of Police	
<b>Distribution</b> All Personnel City Manager City Attorney		<b>TPCA Best Practices Recognition Program Reference</b> 3.01; 3.02; 3.03; 6.04; 6.05		<b>Review Date</b> July 3, 2017	
				<b>Pages</b> 5	

This Operations Directive is for internal use only and does not enhance an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as a creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this Operations Directive, if proven, may only form the basis for a complaint by this Department, and only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

**SECTION 1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to regulate the firearms qualifications and annual inspections of all department weapons for all sworn personnel.

**SECTION 2 POLICY**

It is the policy of the department to ensure that officers are properly trained not only in the use of appropriate firearms and the circumstances of their use, but also in their safety and maintenance, regarding both on and off-duty weapons. Supervisors and the Firearms Instructors shall rigorously enforce departmental firearms standards. All officers shall qualify at least annually with the officer's firearm and with any other firearm used or carried either on-duty or off-duty.

**SECTION 3 PROCEDURES**

**A. AUTHORITY TO CARRY WEAPONS AND USE FORCE (TPCA 6.05)**

1. Sworn officers who are licensed peace officers of the State of Texas are authorized to carry firearms and other weapons as identified in these directives, and to use force when necessary and to the extent authorized by these orders and state law in enforcing the law and protecting the public.
2. Sworn officers who are off-duty are encouraged to carry firearms, subject to the guidelines of this order, to protect themselves or others from imminent death or serious bodily injury in the event they must intervene in an incident off-duty before the arrival of on-duty officers. When not in uniform, officers will not allow any weapon to be visible to the public unless it is carried in a holster and the officer's badge is displayed adjacent to the weapon.
3. Officers are not to carry any weapon when off-duty if they have consumed or intend to consume any alcoholic beverages.

**B. ON-DUTY WEAPONS, ISSUANCE AND USE (TPCA 6.04)**

1. Handguns

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- a. Officers are issued the Glock 22 Gen 4, .40 caliber pistol.
  - b. Officers who are assigned to a specialized unit are authorized to carry the specialized units issued handgun.
  - c. The Chief of Police may authorize the on-duty carry of another handgun. Authorization will be made on a case by case basis.
  - d. The department's Range Master or Firearms Instructor shall issue departmental weapons to authorized officers.
2. Backup Handguns
- a. Officers who wish to carry a second or backup handgun while on-duty must make a written request to the Chief of Police stating the make, model, caliber, and serial number of the handgun. Backup handguns shall be no smaller than .25 caliber and no larger than .45 caliber. Officers will be required to qualify with the handgun before permission will be granted to carry it as a backup.
3. Shotguns
- a. The department issues the Remington Model 870, 12 gauge shotguns, which are placed in the department's marked patrol vehicles for use by officers.
  - b. The department issues Winchester Model 1200, 12 gauge shotguns, which are placed in the department's unmarked vehicles.
4. Patrol Rifles
- a. Patrol rifles must be .223 caliber, of legal length and configured in semi-automatic operation. Fully-automatic weapons are not permitted except as employed by the SURGE Team. After the appropriate training, officers may be authorized to carry the patrol rifle.
  - b. Approved patrol rifles include:
    - i. Colt AR-15
    - ii. Bushmaster AR-15
    - iii. Ruger Mini-14
    - iv. Other manufactured AR-15 style rifles with approval of the department's Range Master
  - c. The maximum magazine capacity is thirty (30) rounds for the patrol rifle.

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- d. Patrol rifles may not be equipped with magnification optics. Patrol rifles may be equipped with non-magnifying tactical sights subject to the approval of the department's Range Master.
- e. If officers choose to utilize an approved electronic sighting system they must complete a qualification course as outline in this directive prior to carrying the weapon on duty while utilizing the electronic sight.

**5. Ammunition**

- a. The department will issue approved ammunition for on-duty use for the department issued handguns and shotguns. Officers will not carry any other ammunition for on-duty use.
- b. Officers who carry a patrol rifle must carry department approved ammunition in the rifle. Department approved ammunition will be factory loaded Hornady .223 caliber 65 grain TAP rounds. Reloaded ammunition and/or full metal jacketed ammunition will be provided by the department for training only. Tracer, explosive, incendiary or armor-piercing ammunition is not permitted.

**C. FIREARMS QUALIFICATION (TPCA 3.01)**

- 1. Officers shall participate in at least one firearms qualification session annually with each type of weapon they carry, i.e. handgun, shotgun, and patrol rifle or other specialized firearm. Qualification shall be a score of eighty percent (80%) for handguns, eighty percent (80%) for shotguns, eighty percent (80%) for back-up/off-duty handguns, ninety percent (90%) for patrol rifles such as M-16 or AR-15, ninety percent (90%) for MP-5, and one hundred percent (100%) for sniper rifles based upon a prescribed course designed by a Lancaster Police Department certified Texas Commission on Law Enforcement firearms instructor and approved by the Chief of Police.

**D. INSPECTION OF FIREARMS (TPCA 3.03)**

- 1. Every weapon authorized by the department for on-duty use will be inspected annually. A member of the Lancaster Police Department who is a Texas Commission on Law Enforcement certified firearms instructor will conduct the inspection. The inspections may take place in conjunction with the annual firearms qualification.

**E. WEAPONS QUALIFICATION AND TRAINING (TPCA 3.01)**

- 1. All Texas Commission on Law Enforcement credit firearms training for handguns, shotguns, back-up/off-duty handguns and patrol rifles will be conducted by a Lancaster Police Department certified Texas Commission on Law Enforcement firearms instructor.
- 2. All less lethal weapons instruction will be conducted by an instructor certified to instruct the use of less lethal weapons.
- 3. All weapons qualification courses will require the officer to demonstrate safety, proper techniques, accuracy, proficient handling of the weapon, and the proper care and cleaning of the weapon as

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determined by the firearms instructor. All weapons must be inspected by the firearms instructor prior to the officer or the weapon leaving the range.

4. All Texas Commission on Law Enforcement qualification courses will be reviewed by a Lancaster Police Department firearms instructor to ensure that the course at the least meets the minimum standards per Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Rule 217.21.
5. Any officer who fails to qualify with a score of at least eighty percent (80%) with a handgun will be given individual training by a firearms instructor to assist the officer in qualifying. After sufficient instruction as determined by the firearms instructor, the officer will again attempt to qualify. If the officer fails to qualify with a score of at least eighty percent (80%) with a handgun on the second attempt the officer will again be given individual training by a firearms instructor to assist the officer in qualifying. After sufficient instruction as determined by the firearm instructor, the officer will again attempt to qualify.
6. If the officer fails to qualify with a score of at least eighty percent (80%) during the third attempt the officer will be placed on alternative duty as decided by the Chief of Police until the officer can achieve a qualifying score. The officer will be required to complete remedial training as prescribed by the firearms instructor and approved by the Chief of Police prior to returning to their regular duties. In no case will an officer be allowed to carry a handgun until the officer has demonstrated proficiency, and the officer has achieved a score of eighty percent (80%).
7. Any officer who fails to qualify with a minimum score of eighty percent (80%) with a shotgun will be given individual training by a firearms instructor to assist the officer in qualifying. After sufficient instruction as determined by the firearms instructor, the officer will again attempt to qualify. If the officer fails to qualify with a minimum score of eighty percent (80%) the officer will again be given individual training by a firearms instructor to assist the officer in qualifying. After sufficient instruction as determined by the firearm instructor, the officer will again attempt to qualify. If the officer fails to qualify on the third attempt the officer will be suspended from carrying a shotgun. The officer will be required to complete remedial shotgun training as prescribed by the firearms instructor and approved by the Chief of Police prior to carrying the shotgun. In no case will an officer be allowed to carry the shotgun until the officer has demonstrated proficiency, and the officer has achieved a score of eighty percent (80%).
8. Any officer who fails to qualify with a minimum score of ninety percent (90%) with a patrol rifle at a distance of up to one hundred (100) yards will be given individual training by a firearms instructor to assist the officer in qualifying. After sufficient instruction as determined by the firearms instructor, the officer will again attempt to qualify. If the officer fails to qualify with a minimum score of ninety percent (90%) at a distance of up to one hundred (100) yards during the second attempt, the officer will be suspended from carrying the patrol rifle. The officer will be required to complete remedial rifle training as prescribed by the firearms instructor and approved by the Chief of Police prior to carrying the rifle. In no case will an officer be allowed to carry the patrol rifle until the officer has demonstrated proficiency, and the officer has achieved a score of ninety percent (90%) at a distance up to one hundred (100) yards.
9. If an officer fails to qualify with a minimum score of ninety percent (90%) with a patrol rifle at a distance up to one hundred (100) yards on the first attempt but does qualify on the second attempt the officer will be approved to carry a patrol rifle. If the officer though does not qualify with

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a ninety percent (90%) with a patrol rifle at a distance up to one hundred (100) yards on the first attempt at the next scheduled qualification then the officer will not be able allowed to carry a patrol rifle until the officer completes a patrol rifle training course and receives permission from the Chief of Police.

10. A firearms instructor can recommend to the Chief of Police that an officer not be permitted to carry a particular weapon because of a lack of proficiency, even when the officer has achieved a qualifying score. If an officer fails to achieve a qualifying score, fails to demonstrate proper technique, proper handling, or proper safety, then the firearms instructor shall forward a memorandum explaining the employee's failure to qualify to the officer's Division Commander who shall notify the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police shall make the final decision regarding the officer's assignment and whether the officer should or should not carry a weapon while working in that assignment.
11. All training and qualifications will be documented and signed by the firearms instructor. The documentation shall be maintained indefinitely in the officer's training file.

**F. DEADLY FORCE TRAINING (TPCA 3.02)**

1. All officers will attend annual training regarding the use of deadly force. This training will be conducted by a Texas Commission on Law Enforcement certified instructor, and the training should consist of policy, Texas law, deadly force scenario simulator, classroom training, practical exercises, or any combination thereof. The training must include the proper use of any firearm used by the officer in the performance of their law enforcement duties.
2. Deadly force training will normally be conducted during the annual firearms training.

**G. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

1. All members of the department shall know and comply with all aspects of this directive.
2. All Division Commanders and supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions and intent of this directive.