

**FAIRFAX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**SOP NUMBER: 031a
SUBJECT: RIFLE POLICY, TRAINING
& QUALIFICATION**

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines governing firearms training, storage and qualification for The M-16, HK-416 and Remington 700 for the members of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office.

II. POLICY

Deputies selected for issuance of a rifle must first complete the appropriate basic training for that rifle at the Fairfax County Firearms Training Unit. They must qualify bi-annually in addition to bi-annual training.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Responsibilities.

1. Administrative Services Division Commander, along with a designated individual in the rank of 2nd Lieutenant or above to serve as the coordinator, will be responsible for administrative and logistical issues.
 - a. Provision of all firearms training
 - b. Accountability of firearms
 - c. Oversee the selection process of eligible deputies to the rifle program
 - d. Ensure that each deputy meets qualification standards to maintain rifleman status
2. Range Coordinator/Armor
 - a. Thoroughly inspect and test each rifle for proper function and accuracy prior to placing them in service
 - b. Schedule semi-annual qualification sessions
 - c. Ensure each rifleman attends scheduled training and forward qualification scores to the academy in-service section for record keeping
 - d. Issue of firearms to deputies that meet qualification standards
 - e. Perform maintenance of all rifles
3. Riflemen
 - a. Maintain security of the issued weapon in an approved, designated location
 - b. Maintain proficiency with the weapon through semi- annual qualifications and attending semi-annual training
 - c. Shall avoid unnecessary public display of the rifle

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- d. Employ ammunition issued and approved by Fairfax County Firearms Training Unit.
- B. Selection of Riflemen
 - 1. The selection of riflemen will provide for a balanced availability throughout the Sheriff's Office (SERT, Civil Enforcement, Courts, ADC staff, etc...) subject to the needs of the agency.
 - 2. Initial implementation of this initiative should provide for those Deputies who have previously completed the established 50 hour Patrol Rifle or Basic Sniper School by the Fairfax County Firearms Training Unit. These Deputies will be considered as priority candidates for this program.
 - 3. Additional selection criteria should include the following at a minimum
 - a. Currently serving as a Private First Class or above
 - b. Demonstrates professional competence and judgment
 - c. A written recommendation in memorandum format endorsed by the candidate's reviewing authority/first line supervisor and Branch Chief/Division Commander
 - d. The ability to re-qualify with the rifle
- C. Qualification.
 - 1. Initial
 - a. Completion of the 50 hour Basic Patrol Rifle or 80 hour Basic Sniper School is mandatory for participation in the rifle program.
 - b. The qualification will include a written test, Standards drills and a qualification course.
 - c. A Deputy must achieve a qualifying score on the approved course of fire with the issued weapon.
 - 2. Subsequent Qualification
 - a. A deputy who changes rifles for a similar rifle is required to re-qualify with the new weapon.
 - b. Mandatory re-qualification will be held semi-annually.
 - c. There will be two additional mandatory training days. This timeframe will be utilized for tactical drills to maintain proficiency.

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- d. A rifleman may be removed from the program for failure to maintain a qualifying score, or adherence to agency SOP's.

D. Operational Procedures

1. Deputies shall carefully consider the deployment and use of a rifle based upon the specific circumstances of the operational situation. This consideration shall include an evaluation of the specific event, the known or expected threat level, and also the ballistic performance or limitations of the supplemental firearm and ammunition. This will be ideally used as, containment, defensive cover, or "standoff" weapon.
2. For operational situations involving the preplanned deployment of a rifle, a supervisor shall approve the deployment of the rifle and this shall be documented on a written operations plan. Examples of such deployments are increased national threat level and mutual aid situations.
3. In the event of an active critical incident where the immediate use of deadly force is justified, a qualified rifleman, bearing in mind the capabilities and limitations of the weapon, is authorized to deploy and use a rifle without supervisory pre-authorization. The deployment of the rifle will be accordance with procedures set forth in SOP 032.
4. Due to the nature of these firearms, enhanced security requirements for storage are mandated. Affirmative steps shall be taken to secure these weapons from unauthorized access or theft at all times.

The rifles assigned to the ADC, PRC, and Courthouse shall be stored in vaults in the secure SERT office and secure office areas (caged) in both courthouses.

Rifles assigned to deputies with agency vehicles shall be stored in security lock boxes within such vehicles. If a lock box is not available, then the rifle should be stored within a hard case capable of being locked.

The locked case may be carried and stored in the vehicle truck provided that it is secured to a fixed point in the truck with a security cable and lock. In all cases, rifles will be secured using one of the aforementioned "two-barrier" security protocols.

Recommended areas for storage and safe keeping:

- a. SERT Office (SERT Members)
- b. GW53 – ADC Supply Vault (ADC and PRC Staff)
- c. Courthouse Vault
- d. Civil Enforcement Vault
- e. Administrative Services Office Vault

E. Conditions of Readiness

1. Storage and patrol condition: rifles stored in a protective hard case, security box or designated vaults, shall be unloaded, bolt closed, safety engaged. Three magazines will be carried or accompany the rifle.

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2. Deployment and Carry condition: Magazine inserted into receiver, loaded chamber, and safety engaged.

**09/02/05
DATE APPROVED**

**09/06/05
DATE EFFECTIVE**

Revised: June 2009



**STACEY A. KINCAID
SHERIFF**