

Firearms

306.1 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.

306.2 POLICY

The Richland 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.

306.3 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 a qualified armorer.

If other weapons not provided by the Department may not be carried by members in the performance of their official duties without the express written authorization of the member's Division Commander including but not limited to:

- (a) Chemical or electronic weapons.
- (b) Impact weapons.
- (c) Any weapon prohibited, or restricted by law, or that is not covered elsewhere by department policy.

This exclusion does not apply to the carrying of a single folding pocketknife that is not otherwise prohibited by law.

306.3.1 HANDGUNS

The authorized department-issued handgun is the Glock 17, 19 and 43; 9mm.

306.3.2 PATROL RIFLES

The authorized department-issued patrol rifle is the FN-15, AR - 15, .223 and .556. Members desiring to carry an authorized but personally owned patrol rifle must receive written approval from the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

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.

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- (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 should be properly secured consistent with department training in a locking weapons rack or vault in the patrol vehicle, as provided by the department.

306.3.3 PERSONALLY OWNED DUTY FIREARMS

Members 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 following restrictions:

The firearm shall be in good working order and approved by the department.

- (a) The firearm shall be inspected by the Department Armorer or qualified designee (at the department's expense) prior to being carried and thereafter shall be subject to inspection whenever it is deemed necessary.
- (b) Prior to carrying the firearm, 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 firearm functions properly.
- (c) Members shall provide written notice of the make, model, color, serial number and caliber of the firearm to the Training Sergeant, who will maintain a list of the information.

306.3.4 AUTHORIZED SECONDARY HANDGUN

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

The handgun shall be in good working order and approved by the department.

- (a) Only one secondary handgun may be carried at a time.
- (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 should 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 Department Armorer or qualified designee (at the department's expense, limited to two (2) times per year) 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 of the make, model, color, serial number and caliber of a secondary handgun to the Training Sergeant, who will maintain a list of the information.

306.3.5 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) A personally owned firearm shall be used, carried and inspected in accordance with the Personally Owned Duty Firearms requirements in this policy.
 - 1. The purchase of the personally owned firearm and ammunition shall be the responsibility of the member.
- (b) The firearm should be carried concealed at all times and in such a manner as to prevent unintentional cocking, discharge or loss of physical control.
- (c) It will be the responsibility of the member to submit the firearm to the Department Armorer or designee for inspection prior to being personally carried. Thereafter the firearm shall be subject to periodic inspection by the Department Armorer.
- (d) The member will successfully qualify with the firearm prior to it being carried.
- (e) Members shall provide written notice of the make, model, color, serial number and caliber of the firearm to the Training Sergeant, who will maintain a list of the information.
- (f) 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.
- (g) Members shall only carry department-authorized ammunition.
- (h) When armed, officers should carry their law enforcement credentials and are highly encouraged to carry their badges and commission card.

306.3.6 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

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firearms qualification at the discretion of the training unit. Replacements for unserviceable or depleted ammunition issued by the Department shall be dispensed by the Training Officer when needed, in accordance with established policy. Members carrying authorized firearms of the same caliber issued by the department will be provided duty ammunition. [See attachment: RPD Approved Weapons Table.pdf](#)

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.

306.4 EQUIPMENT

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

306.4.1 REPAIRS OR MODIFICATIONS

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

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 Chief of Police or designee.

Modification means to alter or change the internal function and or any internal part of the firearm.

Any modifications to the member's personally owned firearm should be done at his/her expense and must be approved by the Chief of Police or designee.

306.4.2 HOLSTERS

While on duty, only department-approved holsters shall be used and worn by members. Members should periodically inspect their holsters to make sure they are serviceable and provide the proper security and retention of the handgun.

306.4.3 TACTICAL LIGHTS

Tactical lights may only be installed on a firearm and carried on duty after they have been approved by the Training Unit. 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.

306.4.4 OPTICS OR LASER SIGHTS

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

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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.

306.5 SAFE HANDLING, INSPECTION AND STORAGE

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

- (a) Members should 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 Training Officer. Members should only dry fire or practice their draw in a method in which they have been trained.
- (c) Members shall not clean, repair, load or unload a firearm anywhere in the Department, except where clearing barrels are present.
- (d) 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.
- (e) Members should 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) Members shall not use any automatic firearm, heavy caliber rifle, gas or other type of chemical weapons or firearm from the armory, except with the approval of the Division Commander.
- (g) Any firearm authorized by the Department to be carried on duty that is determined by a member to be malfunctioning or in need of service or repair shall not be carried. It should be promptly presented to the Department or a Department Armorer approved by the Department for inspection and repair. Any firearm deemed in need of repair or service by the Department Armorer 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.

306.5.1 INSPECTION AND STORAGE

Handguns should be inspected regularly and upon access or possession by another person. Rifles should 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 rifle shall be done while standing outside of the patrol vehicle. All firearms shall be pointed in a safe direction or into clearing barrels.

Personally owned firearms may be safely stored in lockers at the end of the shift. Department-owned firearms should be stored in the appropriate equipment storage room. Handguns may remain loaded if they are secured in an appropriate holster. Rifles should be stored in the designated equipment storage area.

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306.5.2 STORAGE AT HOME

Members shall ensure that all firearms stored in compliance with state law and in a manner which makes them inaccessible to children and other who should not have access. In Department issued vehicles, firearms left in the vehicle will be secured in a rifle rack or locked box. Members should not permit department-issued firearms to be handled by anyone not authorized by the Department to do so. Members should be aware that negligent storage of a firearm could result in civil or criminal liability.

306.5.3 ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Firearms should 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.

306.6 FIREARMS TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

All members will certify at least annually with their duty firearms. Members will certify with off-duty and secondary firearms at least annually. Training and qualifications must be on an approved range course.

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

306.6.1 NON-CERTIFICATION OR NON-QUALIFICATION

If any member fails to meet minimum standards for firearms training or qualification for any reason, including injury, illness, duty status or scheduling conflict, that member should submit a memorandum to his/her immediate supervisor prior to the end of the required training or qualification period.

Those who fail to meet minimum standards or qualify on their first shooting attempt shall be provided remedial training and will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) Additional range assignments may be scheduled to assist the member in demonstrating consistent firearm proficiency.
- (b) Members shall be given credit for a range training or qualification when obtaining a qualifying score or meeting standards after remedial training.
- (c) No range credit will be given for the following:
 1. Unauthorized range make-up.
 2. Failure to meet minimum standards or qualify after remedial training.

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

306.7 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

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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, a written report should be submitted or recorded statement provided no later than the end of the next regularly scheduled shift, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.

306.7.1 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.

306.7.2 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.

306.7.3 WARNING SHOTS

An officer should not use a firearm to fire a warning shot.

306.8 TRAINING OFFICER DUTIES

The range will be under the exclusive control of the Training Officer. All members attending will follow the directions of the Training Officer. The Training Officer will maintain a roster of all members attending the range and will submit the roster to the Training Sergeant after each range date. Failure of any officer to sign in and out with the Training Officer may result in non-participation or non-qualification.

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

The Training Officer has the responsibility of making periodic inspections, at least once a year, of all duty weapons carried by officers of this department to verify proper operation. The Training Officer has the authority to deem any department-issued or personally owned firearm unfit for

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service. The member will be responsible for all repairs to his/her personally owned firearm; it will not be returned to service until inspected and approved by the Training Officer.

The Training Officer has the responsibility for ensuring each member meets the minimum requirements during training shoots and, on at least a yearly basis, can demonstrate proficiency in the care, cleaning and safety of all firearms the member is authorized to carry.

The Training Officer shall complete and submit to the Training Sergeant documentation of the training courses provided. Documentation should 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 Training Officer should keep accurate records of all training shoots, qualifications, repairs, maintenance or other records as directed by the Training Sergeant.

306.9 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) 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.
- (b) Officers must carry their Richland 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).
- (c) The Richland Police Department must submit a National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) message prior to the officer's travel. If approved, TSA will send the Richland Police Department an NLETS message containing a unique alphanumeric identifier. The officer must present the message on the day of travel to airport personnel as authorization to travel while armed.
- (d) 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.
- (e) Officers must have completed the mandated TSA security training covering officers flying while armed. The training should be given by the department-appointed instructor.
- (f) It is the officer's responsibility to notify the air carrier in advance of the intended armed travel. This notification should be accomplished by early check-in at the carrier's check-in counter.

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- (g) Any officer flying while armed should discreetly contact the flight crew prior to take-off and notify them of his/her assigned seat.
- (h) 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.
- (i) Officers should 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.
- (j) Officers shall not consume alcoholic beverages while aboard an aircraft, or within eight hours prior to boarding an aircraft.

306.10 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 should carry his/her Richland 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, installation, building, base or park. Federal authority may not shield an officer from arrest and prosecution in such locally restricted areas.

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

Attachments

RPD Approved Weapons Table.pdf



Richland Police Department Approved Weapons Table

On Duty Secondary/Backup pistol and ammunition requirements:

Manufacturer	Ammunition
- Smith & Wesson - Colt - Kimber - Ruger - Glock - Springfield - SCCY - Remington - Sig Sauer - Beretta - KelTec - Walther - Heckler and Koch (H&K) - FN Herstal - Taurus - Para Ordinance - Kahr Arms - Bersa - Browning - Steyr	Ammunition must be hollow point, self-defense type rounds which are law enforcement approved. Approved calibers must be between .38 to .45 caliber (the smallest being .380 or 38spl, to the largest being .45 caliber).

All backup firearms will be approved by a designated member of the firearms cadre and training sergeant. Any exception to these guidelines will require command level approval.