



U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
United States Park Police

# General Order 3601



## Firearms

### Notes

This General Order was originally authorized by Chief Robert D. MacLean on 9-3-16 and remains effective as of that date. It has been updated to reflect changes made to incident reporting procedures by G.O. 3604 – Document Use of Force Incidents. Procedures that have been superseded by G.O. 3604 have been struck through and annotated.



### Referenced DOI Policies

446 DM 10 – Firearms and Other  
Defensive Equipment

### Referenced USPP Policies

G.O. 3604 – Documenting Use of  
Force Incidents

G.O. 3605 – Defensive Equipment

G.O. 3615 – Use of Force

[See Section 3601.12 for other  
references]

### Referenced NPS Directives

D.O. #9: Law Enforcement Program

### Referenced USPP Forms

USPP Form 65

USPP Form 137

USPP Form 138

USPP Form 139

DI-105

### Authorized by

Jessica M.E. Taylor  
Chief of Police

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Republication Date

April 9, 2025

Effective Date

September 13, 2016

## Authority

The Chief of Police is authorized to manage the United States Park Police by [145 DM 10 - United States Park Police](#) and to issue policies in the form of General Orders pursuant to [245 DM 2 - Trial Boards, United States Park Police](#), as delegated by [Director’s Order #9: Law Enforcement Program](#), and in alignment with [NPS Management Policies \(2006\), Section 8.3](#).

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### 3601.01 Policy

It is Force policy that officers are responsible for the security of their Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms and that firearm use will be limited to incidents that involve the potential loss of life or serious physical injury, the necessary destruction of animals, or for authorized training. Before using a firearm, an officer shall, WHERE FEASIBLE AND NECESSARY, identify himself/herself as a police officer. The provisions for the use of deadly force are outlined in General Order 3615 "Use of Force." Further, an officer who discharges a firearm, causing death or injury, shall be placed on a Relief of Duty Status (RoD) or other duty status as appropriate by the Shift Commander. The officer shall be provided appropriate Incident Support Services (ISS).

### 3601.02 General Provisions

An officer shall:

- A. not fire warning shots.
- B. not fire at a person in a moving vehicle nor fire from a moving vehicle except as provided in General Order 3615 "Use of Force." An example of when firing at the operator of a moving vehicle might be appropriate is when a vehicle is being operated in a manner deliberately intended to injure the officer or another. Another example of when firing at the occupant of a moving vehicle might be appropriate is when the occupant is threatening deadly force by means other than the vehicle. Generally, shots fired at a moving vehicle itself are discouraged. Force handguns are not effective in disabling or stopping a motor vehicle. In all situations, the safety of the immediate public should not be unreasonably jeopardized by the officer's action.
- C. not use a firearm (a) as an impact weapon or (b) to strike another person except to protect an officer or another person from death or serious injury when no other reasonable means of protection is available.
- D. only draw or display a firearm when, in the officer's judgment, a degree of imminent danger exists that necessitates the possible use of the firearm for the officer's safety or the safety of others.

- E. under no circumstances, use the optional illuminating system attached to the firearm for the purpose of basic illumination (e.g., as an officer would routinely use a flashlight). When the illumination system is attached to the Force-issued or Force-approved non-issued firearm, it shall be used in accordance with Section 3601.02.D of this General Order.
- F. when acting under authority granted by another agency (e.g., Deputy U.S. Marshal, Deputy Sheriff), comply with Force policy concerning the use of firearms unless the legal requirements of the vested authority are more restrictive.
- G. when carrying a firearm while in civilian attire, do so in a manner that conceals it from public view.
- H. be armed and carry only the Force-issued and/or Force-approved non-issued firearm(s), holster, and ammunition when on duty, unless otherwise authorized by his/her Division Commander (e.g., officers assigned to SWAT, Criminal Investigations Branch/Unit Detectives and Investigators and other qualified personnel). While off-duty, an officer may be armed with only one Force-issued or Force-approved non-issued firearm with holster and ammunition. When carrying a Force-issued and/or Force-approved non-issued firearm on or off duty, the firearm shall be carried with one round in the chamber and a fully loaded magazine in the magazine well of the firearm.
- I. adhere to General Order 3602 "Flying While Armed" if a Force-issued and/or Force-approved non-issued firearm is carried on an aircraft.
- J. when an officer's law enforcement authority is suspended, their corresponding authority to carrying any Force-issued or Force-approved non-issued firearm is also suspended. The official issuing the Suspension of Law Enforcement Authority Form 138 (lieutenant or above) shall immediately secure the officer's Force-issued firearm(s), ammunition, credentials, breast badge, and cap plate and notify the affected officer's Division Commanders as well as the Force Firearms Custodial Officer.

### 3601.03 Training

- A. An officer shall pass firearms qualification courses established by the Training Branch/Firearms Unit in accordance with the Department of the Interior's Department Manual at 446 DM 10.18 (1/15/2016), at least semi-annually (i.e., once every 6 months and separated by a minimum of 90 days) with each Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearm. At a minimum, all Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms shall be inspected for functionality by a firearms instructor at each qualification session.

An officer who:

1. fails to attend a qualification session during the specified qualification dates allocated for his/her primary firearm, shall have his/her law enforcement authority suspended until the officer does qualify. An officer shall make every attempt to attend a qualification session at the appropriate time and date specified in the training announcement.
2. fails to qualify with a Force-issued and/or Force-approved non-issued firearm shall, if possible, be provided immediate remedial training by the range supervisor in order to assist the officer in qualifying. No more than two attempts at qualification will be allowed per shooting session.
3. does not qualify after two attempts at qualification for his/her primary firearm shall immediately have his/her law enforcement authority suspended until the officer does qualify. The officer shall be directed to return to the range for additional training and qualification at the next available range training date.
4. who is unsuccessful in qualifying with his/her primary firearm after 40 hours of remedial training under the provisions of Sections 3601.03.A.3 shall be directed to a Force-approved medical facility for an evaluation to determine if a medical or psychological problem is inhibiting the officer from successfully completing firearms qualification. If the medical or psychological evaluation

- indicates that there are no medical or psychological problems, then the officer shall be assigned an additional 40 hours of remedial firearms training.
5. has his/her law enforcement authority suspended shall be aware that the Shift Commander shall:
    - a. Make appropriate notifications to the officer's chain of command.
    - b. Contact the officer's supervisor and arrange for the officer and his/her (marked) police vehicle to be transported back to the officer's unit.
    - c. Have the officer's supervisor or the officer's Station Commander reschedule the officer and arrange to have him/her report to the range the next available range training date for up to an additional 40 hours of remedial firearms training.
  6. who successfully completes this required retraining shall have his/her authority restored.
- B. The revocation from duty process will be initiated when an officer fails to qualify with his/her primary firearm after two 40-hour remedial training sessions.
  - C. An officer who fails to qualify with a rifle, shotgun, off-duty firearm, or a special firearm in accordance with Sections 3601.03.A.1 and 3601.03.A.2 of this General Order shall have his/her authority to carry the rifle, shotgun, off-duty firearm, or special firearm suspended until such time as he/she qualifies with the firearm.
  - D. An officer who has taken an extended leave of absence (6 months or more) or is separated from service, or has suffered an illness or injury that could affect his/her ability to use a firearm, as determined by the Human Resources Officer or the officer's Unit Commander, shall be required to qualify before returning to law enforcement duties.
  - E. An officer shall qualify on the demand of their supervisor with any or all Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms, at any time.

- F. An officer who has his/her law enforcement authority suspended due to the recommendation of a range supervisor who has deemed the officer to be a danger to himself/herself or others shall be directed to a Force-approved medical facility for an evaluation to determine if a medical or psychological problem exists. If the medical or psychological evaluation indicates that there are no medical or psychological problems, then the officer shall be assigned to qualify with his/her firearm in accordance with Section 3601.03.A of this General Order.

#### 3601.04 Notification, Investigation, and Reporting the Use of Firearms

- A. The routine inspection, maintenance, and safekeeping/securing of a firearm or "surge patrol" as provided in Section .05.B.1 of this General Order does not require any notification, investigation, or reports by an officer unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.
- B. Notification, investigation, or reporting is not required during approved firearms training and qualifications unless the discharge results in an injury or property damage. Injuries or property damage shall be handled in accordance with General Order 3214 "Death, Injury, Illness, and Property Damage Reports." Accidental discharges while at a range that do not result in injury or property damage shall be handled according to firearms range procedures.
- C. During the execution of a warrant, the official in charge of the warrant team shall document the display only of firearms in the incident report and specify each officer who displayed a firearm and any unusual circumstances surrounding the display. The same requirement shall apply for the official in charge of the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team on a SWAT Team call-out. See [General Order 3604, § I.B., Procedures, Documenting Displays of Firearms or Less-lethal Weapons](#) for the revised procedures.
- D. If an officer draws/deploys (unracks, uncases, unholsters) a firearm without discharge and no public contact occurs (e.g., unsecured installation, abandoned stolen vehicle), the officer shall notify his/her supervisor of the situation in accordance with Section .02.D of this General Order and submit a report of the incident that precipitated the display of the firearm. ~~If the supervisor approves the officer's initial report of the incident, no~~

~~further reports from the supervisor or the officer are necessary.~~

See [General Order 3604, § I.B., Procedures, Documenting Displays of Firearms or Less-lethal Weapons](#) for the revised procedures.

- E. For any incident in which a firearm is displayed only (except for routine inspection, maintenance, safekeeping, or surge patrol), an officer shall immediately notify his/her supervisor by radio or other available means. If the radio is used, the officer shall state "Code 60, display only." ~~If public contact occurs during the display/deployment, the involved officer shall submit a detailed report of the incident that includes the circumstances concerning the display/deployment of the firearm.~~ See [General Order 3604, § I.B., Procedures, Documenting Displays of Firearms or Less-lethal Weapons](#) for the revised procedures.
- F. The supervisor shall investigate the incident and submit a supplemental report. If the incident involves display only of firearms by multiple officers, the supervisor who investigates the display/deployment of firearms shall submit a supplemental report specifying each officer who displayed/deployed a firearm and any unusual circumstances surrounding the display/deployment. See [General Order 3604, § I.B., Procedures, Documenting Displays of Firearms or Less-lethal Weapons](#) for the revised procedures.
- G. For all incidents that involve a display/deployment that requires reporting, the supervisor shall forward a copy of all reports within 72 hours through their chain of command to their Division Commander and to the Commander, Office of Professional Responsibility. See [General Order 3604, § I.B., Procedures, Documenting Displays of Firearms or Less-lethal Weapons](#) for the revised procedures.
- H. Animal/wildlife cases that involve a firearm discharge:  
  
The killing of an animal is justified to prevent harm to an officer, another person, a domestic animal, or when an animal is seriously injured or sick. If circumstances permit, attempts must be made to request assistance from the animal's owner or an animal control agency responsible for the care and/or disposal of the animal.



1. If possible, an officer shall receive supervisory approval before discharging a firearm to kill any animal; otherwise, the officer shall notify his/her supervisor as soon after as possible. Detailed information concerning the discharge of the firearm shall be included in the officer's report of the incident. See [General Order 3604, § I.A., Procedures, Documenting Uses of Force](#) for the revised procedures.
  2. ~~The supervisor shall investigate the incident and write a supplemental report.~~ See [General Order 3604, § I.C., Procedures, Supervisory Review of Incident Reports](#) for the revised procedures.
  3. The supervisors shall forward a copy of all reports within 72 hours through their chain of command to their Division Commander and to the Commander, Office of Professional Responsibility. See [General Order 3604, § I.C., Procedures, Supervisory Review of Incident Reports](#) for the revised procedures.
- I. The following procedures shall be used in any other incident in which an officer discharges a firearm:
1. The officer who discharges a firearm shall:
    - a. immediately notify the Communications Section by radio (or other means if a radio is unavailable) of the incident and location when feasible. The term "Code 60 discharge" or "Code 60 shots fired" shall be used when making this notification.
    - b. take appropriate measures to secure the scene, render immediate first aid, request medical assistance for any injured person, and provide lookouts, if available.
    - c. maintain his/her firearm(s) and ammunition and the suspect's firearm(s) and ammunition at the scene in exactly the same condition as they were once the scene is deemed secure, until inspected by or relinquished to the appropriate investigator.

- d. remain available during the hours of 0830-1630, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays for contact if placed on Administrative Leave.
  - e. limit any discussion of the incident to the appropriate U.S. Attorney or other prosecutor (State, county, etc.), a representative of the Solicitor's office, Force personnel assigned to the investigation, an investigator of another agency assigned the case if the Force does not have primary jurisdiction, and the officer's private attorney, medical personnel, clergy, and immediate family.
- 2. The Communications Section personnel notified of the discharge shall:
  - a. summon medical aid and dispatch other units as necessary.
  - b. notify the Shift Commander and other Force officials as directed by the Shift Commander as outlined in General Order 95.02 "Notification of Force Officials."
- 3. The Shift Commander shall:
  - a. proceed immediately to the scene of the discharge to provide command assistance and ensure that appropriate action has been taken.
  - b. when the incident occurs in an area of primary jurisdiction, immediately request an Incident Response Team (IRT) to respond and coordinate with the IRT supervisor to ensure that IRT member(s) are assigned to investigate the incident.
  - c. when the incident occurs outside the area of primary jurisdiction, ensure that an IRT member is assigned to act as a liaison and assist in the investigation of the incident.
  - d. in the event the discharge resulted in death or injury:

- i. ensure that the officer's firearm is taken as evidence and replace it with another firearm if applicable, or advise the officer that his/her firearm will be replaced at a later time, as appropriate.
    - ii. notify the Incident Support Service Commander (ISS).
    - iii. coordinate with the IRT to place the officer on a Relief of Duty Status (RoD) or other duty status as appropriate and, if necessary, relieve the officer of his/her law enforcement authority, Force-issued firearm(s), and badge.
  - e. in the event the discharge did not result in death or injury, determine if any of the provisions of Section 3601.04.H.3.d should be applied.
  - f. in consultation with the Commander, Office of Professional Responsibility, submit a brief report of the incident to the Chief of Police and make all appropriate notifications to the Department of the Interior (DOI) and National Park Service (NPS) prior to the end of his/her tour of duty.
4. When an officer's firearm is seized during the course of a law enforcement investigation, the USPP investigating official shall notify the Force Firearms Custodial Officer and provide the IMARS report number associated with the investigation and a copy of the investigating agency's property/evidence receipt in order to properly document the physical location of the involved Force firearm. Outside of normal business hours, the Shift Commander shall provide the Force Firearms Custodial Officer with the Receipt for Property (DI-105) Form if the affected officer is issued a temporary replacement for the purpose of duty carry.
5. If a Shift Commander discharges a firearm and another Shift Commander is on duty, that Shift Commander shall initiate the actions required in Section .04.H.3. If another Shift

Commander is unavailable, the Shift Supervisor responsible for the area in which the discharge occurred shall assume the Shift Commander's duties and responsibilities regarding the incident, unless otherwise directed by a higher ranking official.

6. After reviewing the incident, the Chief of Police or his/her designee may change the duty status of any officer involved and determine if an investigation (subordinate to any criminal investigation) should be conducted. The Chief of Police shall appoint an Incident Review Panel as outlined in General Order 32.06 "Incident Review Panel."
7. The Training Branch Commander shall ensure that an officer directly involved in a combat shooting incident that involves the potential loss of life qualifies with his/her Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearm(s) and receives additional necessary training prior to the officer's return to law enforcement duty.

## 3601.05 Shotguns and Special Firearms

### A. Shotguns

All sworn officers assigned or issued a shotgun shall be required to qualify with a shotgun semi-annually via a Force-approved firearms training course.

1. Each Division Commander shall ensure that written policies and procedures are established for the issuance of shotguns to officers under his/her command.
2. A shotgun shall be transported uncased and secured in the Force-installed/approved gun rack of a Force vehicle so equipped; otherwise, under normal conditions, the shotgun shall be carried cased in the locked trunk of the Force vehicle.
3. Under normal conditions, a shotgun shall be carried with the chamber empty and cocked (slide forward), "safety" on, and magazine fully loaded (at least 4 shells in the magazine).

4. A shotgun shall be removed from a Force vehicle and unloaded (in a safe direction, outside of a building or in a designated area) after each tour of duty. The shotgun shall then be returned to the issuing duty station.
5. A shotgun shall be assigned, returned, or transferred unloaded. Loading and unloading shall be done by the officer assigned to carry the shotgun and shall be done through the magazine and not the chamber.
6. A shotgun not assigned shall be stored unloaded in a secure area designated by the Station/Unit/Field Office Commander.

B. Rifles

Only officers that have successfully completed a Force-approved rifle course and attended the required quarterly training, to include biannual qualifications, shall carry rifles.

1. Procedures
  - a. Authorized United States Park Police firearms training instructors shall conduct Force rifle training.
  - b. An officer who successfully completes Force rifle training and is in compliance with training and qualification requirements shall be authorized to utilize the rifle while on duty.
  - c. No modifications may be made to the rifle without the concurrence of the Branch/Field Office Commander and the Force Training Branch Firearms Unit or their designee. The Force Training Branch Firearms Unit or their designee must perform all modifications made to the rifle.
  - d. While on duty, the assigned officer shall transport and/or carry the rifle in a "Duty Ready Condition." Duty Ready Condition is defined as:
    - i. bolt forward on an empty chamber.
    - ii. selector switch in the SAFE position.

- iii. fully loaded magazine inserted in the magazine well.
- e. The rifle shall be transported uncased and secured in the Force-installed/approved gun rack of a Force vehicle so equipped; otherwise, under normal conditions, the rifle shall be carried cased in the locked trunk of the Force vehicle.
- f. When deploying the rifle, the assigned officer shall carry the rifle with a fully loaded magazine inserted in the magazine well, a round in the chamber, the selector switch in the SAFE position, and his/her finger off the trigger. Deploying is defined as responding to an incident where a degree of imminent danger exists that necessitates the possible use of the rifle for the officer's safety or the safety of others or during a surge patrol.
- g. When going off duty, the officer shall store his/her firearm in a safe storage condition at his/her assigned Station or other location authorized by the Station Commander. The following shall be performed to ensure a safe storage condition:
  - i. pointing the firearm in a safe direction.
  - ii. placing the selector switch in the safe position.
  - iii. removing the magazine (source of ammunition).
  - iv. working the action.
  - v. locking the bolt to the rear.
  - vi. visually and physically checking the chamber and magazine well to ensure that the firearm is a safe and empty firearm.
  - vii. inserting the cable lock through the open ejection port and the empty magazine well.

- viii. allowing the bolt to travel forward, coming to rest on the cable lock.
  - ix. maintaining the firearm in a safe direction.
  - x. placing the selector switch in the semi mode.
  - xi. pulling the trigger to the rear (relieving the tension on the hammer spring).
  - xii. placing the selector switch in the safe position.
- h. The officer shall store his/her assigned rifle in an approved weapon locker at his/her assigned Station unless they are assigned a home-to-work (HTW) vehicle and prior approval has been obtained to store his/her rifle at their residence from their Division Commander.
- i. Force-issued rifles shall be transported only in Force vehicles unless otherwise approved by their District Commander.
- j. Only Force-issued ammunition shall be carried/used in a Force rifle.
- k. An officer may request approval to transport and store a rifle at their residence by submitting a signed USPP Form 139 through their chain of command to their Division Commander. The USPP Form 139 must include:
  - i. an approved Form 65 (with the address of the officer's current residence) confirming that the officer has been assigned a HTW vehicle.
  - ii. documentation that the rifle and ammunition shall be stored at the residence 1) in a manner that impedes theft and prevents access to the rifle and ammunition by unauthorized persons and 2) in a weapon-specific safe that is secured:

- (a) with a lock that, when activated, prevents access to or operation of the firearm by unauthorized persons.
  - (b) to the residence structure and located in an inconspicuous location.
  - (c) in accordance with General Order 40.01 Home-to-Work Vehicle Program.
- iii. photographs of the weapon-specific safe and copies of the manufacturer's specifications.
- l. If the Force Form 139 is approved, the officer must: retain a copy; provide copies of the approved Form to his/her immediate supervisor and station/unit commander; provide the original form to the Local Firearms Custodial Officer who will retain the original and will notify the Force Firearms Custodial Officer to ensure the official record in the Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) inventory is properly updated with the current storage location of the firearm.
- m. An officer shall return the rifle to his/her station or the Training Branch and notify his/her chain of command in the event their authority to use a HTW vehicle is suspended or rescinded for any reason (limited duty, change of position, etc.) or if the weapon-specific safe at the residence does not properly function or cannot be installed and meet the requirements stated in Section 3601.05.B.1.k of this General Order.
- n. An officer in any long-term non-duty status (medical leave, military deployment, extended leave of 40 hours or more, etc.) shall return the rifle to his/her station or the Training Branch and notify his/her chain of command. The Local Firearms Custodial Officer will be notified of any changes in the storage location of assigned rifles.



- o. An officer who is 1) rifle-trained and has maintained current qualifications and 2) assigned to patrol iconic park sites and other sensitive designated areas, shall be permitted to conduct patrols of these areas with his/her rifle. Such rifle patrols shall not require notification, documentation, and supervisory investigation as required by this General Order. However, a "Code 1" incident classification (721160), entitled "Surge Patrol," has been created for an activity in which the patrol rifle is deployed (publicly displayed) during routine patrol in order to support more effective tracking and measuring of the various security levels currently being utilized by the Force in the protection of its assets.
- i. The following conditions shall be adhered to during "Surge Patrols":
  - (a) The officer must be in a Class A or approved uniform that readily identifies him/her as a law enforcement officer.
  - (b) During a "Surge Patrol" function, the firearm shall be carried slung on a shoulder strap with the muzzle pointed toward the ground in a "safety circle" position.
  - (c) Ideally, when taking routine enforcement actions, a "contact" officer (without a rifle) will engage the subject. However, in exigent circumstances, the rifle officer shall be prepared tactically to take the appropriate action.
- ii. A "Code 1" number for "surge patrol" shall be requested from the Communications Section each time the patrol rifle is deployed as part of a "Surge Patrol" activity.

- p. Authorized patrol areas shall be iconic park sites or other sensitive designated areas as determined by Branch/Field Office Commanders and further identified and delineated by District Commanders.
- q. A round shall be maintained in the chamber of the rifle during the duration of the "Surge Patrol" activity. Unloading procedures, listed in Section .05.B.1.g, shall not commence until the officer is in a safe location, out of public view.
- r. When not being utilized, rifles must be secured and/or transported in accordance with Section .05.B.1.d.

C. Special Firearms

- 1. The use of a special firearm (e.g., a firearm other than a Force-issued 12-gauge shotgun, handgun, or rifle, and an approved off-duty firearm) is limited to the SWAT Team, Criminal Investigations Branch Detectives and Investigators, and other qualified personnel designated by the appropriate Division Commander.
  - a. Officers may carry a Force-approved, non-issued, non-government-owned handgun as their primary firearm while on duty if they have been authorized to do so by their Division Commander. A Force-approved non-issued handgun to be carried on-duty must conform to the provisions contained in all Sections of this General Order.
  - b. Officers involved in the execution of a search warrant, working special events, or performing special operations must wear their Force-issued handgun as their primary firearm.
  - c. A special firearm shall be used in a manner consistent with all Force policies, regulations, and guidelines.

### 3601.06 Armed While Off-Duty

- A. Consistent with applicable Federal and State law, a law enforcement officer may be armed while off duty within the confines of the United States and shall be responsible for taking reasonable action, whether armed or unarmed, in any matter coming to his/her attention that lies within the scope of legal authority. Public Law 108-277, the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004 (as amended by the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Improvements Act of 2010), conveys no new legal authority upon a law enforcement officer.
- B. Officers are reminded that, when acting outside of the scope of his/her legal authority, the only civil liability protection offered under Federal law is contained in the Federal Law Enforcement Officer's Good Samaritan Act of 1998, Public Law 105-277, Title VI § 627. When armed, only a Force-issued or Force-approved non-issued firearm and ammunition are authorized, and all applicable policies and procedures relating to the carrying and use of a firearm shall be in effect. Any suspension or revocation of an officer's authority to carry a firearm on duty shall automatically apply to his/her authority to be armed while off duty. Any off-duty display or use of a firearm by an officer shall, as soon as feasible, be reported to the Shift Commander or Field Office designee through the Communications Section. If the officer is not on Force primary jurisdiction, the officer shall also contact the local police agency or 911 as soon as practical. The officer shall then be guided by Section 3601.04 of this General Order.

### 3601.07 Approval of Non-Issued Firearms for Off-Duty Use

Consistent with Section 3601.06 of this General Order, Force-approved non-issued firearms must be approved for off-duty use, and approval shall be limited to either a semi-automatic firearm or a revolver.

- A. Semi-automatic firearms shall:
  - 1. have a firing pin block or similar drop safety, and either an external safety, de-cocking lever, or constant double action.
  - 2. be chambered for .380 ACP, 9mm Luger, .357 Sig., .40S&W,

.45GAP, or .45 ACP.

B. Revolvers shall:

1. be double-action only.
2. not be carried with the hammer in the cocked position ("single action").
3. possess a hammer block.
4. be chambered for .38 special or .357 magnum.
5. only be carried by an officer who has successfully completed an approved law enforcement revolver training program.

Note: Due to evolving technological advances and manufacturing preferences, it is impractical to publish a comprehensive and up-to-date list of acceptable firearms in this written directive. Any officer interested in acquiring a handgun for off-duty use shall consult with the Training Branch/Firearms Unit or Field Office equivalent for specific information regarding the acceptable firearms.

C. To obtain approval to carry a non-issued firearm, an officer shall:

1. complete the USPP Form 137 - Request for Approval of Non-Issued Off-duty/Secondary Firearm.
2. present the firearm to the Force Training Branch/Firearms Unit, or Field Office equivalent or their designee, for inspection and testing along with the completed USPP Form 137.
3. qualify with his/her approved non-issued firearm prior to receiving authorization to carry the firearm and, thereafter, in accordance with the Force firearms qualification/training program outlined in this General Order.
4. have his/her approved off-duty firearm and ammunition inspected by the Training Branch/Firearms Unit or Field Office equivalent during the firearms qualification/training program.

5. forward to the appropriate Division Commander the following information:
  - a. the USPP Form 137, noting whether the firearm will be used as a secondary firearm.
  - b. two copies of the bill of sale or two copies of a negative NCIC article check of the firearm's serial number.
  - c. two copies of the State or local registration, if applicable.
  - d. two copies of any other pertinent document.
  - e. a copy of the initial qualification record USPP Form 74.
- D. The Division Commander shall forward the completed USPP Form 137 to the Training Branch/Firearms Unit or Field Office equivalent and to the officer who made the request for approval.
- E. An officer, upon receipt of a copy of the USPP Form 137 approved and signed by his/her Division Commander, shall be authorized to carry his/her Force-approved non-issued firearm off-duty. The original shall be maintained by the Local Firearms Custodial Officer (WMA, NYFO, SFFO, or FLETC).
- F. An officer may be approved for no more than two non-issued off-duty firearms at a time.
- G. Any off-duty firearm approved for use prior to the publication of this General Order shall comply with all current Force requirements on carrying non-issued firearms.
- H. An officer who is authorized by his/her Division Commander to carry a special handgun for on-duty use:
  1. is authorized to carry the special handgun off-duty.
  2. may request to have a non-issued handgun of identical caliber and function approved for off-duty use.

### 3601.08 Approval of Non-Issued Secondary Firearms for On-Duty Use

A secondary firearm can serve as an immediate, available contingency resource, which mitigates risk to the officer and helps ensure visitor safety in the event that the Force-issued firearm is inaccessible or inoperative. A Force-approved non-issued secondary firearm may be used on-duty in compliance with the procedures outlined in this General Order.

- A. An officer is only permitted to have one secondary firearm approved for on-duty use on file.
- B. An officer who wants to carry a non-issued secondary firearm on-duty must submit a USPP Form 137 in order to request inspection and approval of the described firearm.
- C. An officer who receives a signed and approved copy of the USPP Form 137 from his/her Division Commander shall not be authorized to utilize the secondary firearm for on-duty use unless and until the officer:
  - 1. forwards a copy of the USPP Form 137 to his/her immediate supervisor and the Station/Section/Unit Commander, if applicable. The original shall be maintained by the Local Firearms Custodial Officer (WMA, NYFO, SFFO, FLETC, etc.).
  - 2. forwards a current copy of the USPP Form 74 - Firearms/Weapon Score Record to his/her immediate supervisor and continues to do so on a semiannual basis by the established date.
- D. All secondary firearms shall be carried on the officer's person and concealed from public view. The secondary firearm shall be secured in a holster designed for the specific make and model of the approved secondary firearm and shall cover the trigger guard. Holsters for secondary firearms shall be approved by the Force Training Branch Firearms Unit, Field Office equivalent, or their designee to ensure its durability for on-duty use. The Force Training Branch Firearms Unit, Field Office equivalent, or their designee shall document the brand and model of the holster the officer is authorized to carry on the USPP Form 137.
- E. The Force-issued firearm shall always be the officer's primary

option as a defensive weapon.

- F. An officer carrying a secondary firearm shall carry ammunition consistent with that of the Force. The ammunition shall be inspected and approved by the Force Training Branch/Firearms Unit, Field Office equivalent, or their designee, who shall document the manufacturer, caliber, and the weight of the round on the USPP Form 137.
- G. The caliber of a secondary firearm shall meet the requirements of Section 3601.07 of this General Order for off-duty approved firearms.
- H. An officer who had previously been approved for an off-duty firearm shall attach the previously approved USPP Form 137 to the new USPP Form 137 when requesting approval of that same firearm for use as a non-issued secondary firearm for on-duty use.

#### 3601.09 Firearm Care, Storage, And Inspection

- A. An officer shall ensure that Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearm(s) and ammunition are safeguarded at all times. An officer must take appropriate action to ensure that the Force-issued and/or Force-approved non-issued firearm(s) and ammunition are kept out of the reach of children and other unauthorized persons. When the Force-issued and/or Force-approved non-issued firearm and ammunition are not being carried on the officer's person or within their immediate control, the officer shall be responsible for securing both. An officer shall secure the firearm with the Force-issued locking device or in a storage box, case, or safe equipped with an operating lock that, when activated, prevents access to the firearm located within the storage box, case, or safe. The firearm and ammunition shall be stored in such a manner as to impede theft and prevent their access by unauthorized persons.
- B. An officer shall be responsible for maintaining Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms in a clean, serviceable, and safe condition.
- C. Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearm(s) shall not be modified beyond original factory specifications unless it has

been adapted by a Force armorer and authorized by the officer's Branch/Field Office Commander.

- D. All Sergeants shall inspect, at least weekly, Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms carried by his/her subordinates during his/her tour of duty. All such inspections shall be noted on the Shift Summary Report.
- E. All supervisors above the rank of Sergeant shall be responsible for periodic inspections of firearms carried by his/her immediate subordinates. Firearms approved for off-duty use shall be inspected by a designated Force armorer during the firearms qualifications/training program.
- F. All Station/Unit/Field Office Commanders shall ensure that shotguns, rifles, and special firearms are inspected at least monthly, and that an annual inspection is coordinated with a designated Force armorer.
- G. All Force-issued firearms (including magazines) will receive an armorer service inspection once every three years or sooner if recommended by the manufacturer or if subjected to harsh environments (e.g., Marine Unit) or subject to above-normal usage (e.g., training weapons). Armorer inspections will be conducted by personnel trained to service the specific firearm.
- H. If an officer's Force-issued firearm is defective, it shall be taken to the appropriate Force Training Branch/Firearms Unit, or Field Office equivalent, for repair or replacement, along with a memorandum that has been routed through the officer's supervisor. This memorandum shall include the badge number and name of the officer to whom the firearm is issued, the make and serial number of the firearm, and a description of the defect. If the defect was caused by negligence or carelessness, additional reporting, as outlined in General Order 3214 "Death, Injury, Illness, and Property Damage Reports," shall be initiated.
- I. If a firearm becomes defective during those hours when normal replacement procedures cannot be followed, a temporary replacement may be obtained from the Shift Commander or Field Office designee. The Commander, Technical Services Branch, and



the Field Office Commanders, working in conjunction with the Force Firearms Custodial Officer, shall ensure that an adequate number of replacement firearms are readily available and properly safeguarded.

1. The defective firearm shall be properly tagged by the officer's immediate supervisor and physically secured by the Shift Commander or Field Office designee.
2. The Shift Commander or Field Office designee shall complete a DI-105 - Receipt for Property Form for the replacement and forward a copy to the Local Firearms Custodial Officer.
3. The Local Firearms Custodial Officer shall take physical custody of the firearm.

#### 3601.10 Lost, Stolen, Or Missing Firearms

Officers shall be responsible for their Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms and for immediately notifying the Shift Commander or Field Office designee of all lost, stolen, or missing Force-issued and Force-approved non-issued firearms. For Force-issued firearms, the Shift Commander will make appropriate notifications and direct the Communications section to make the appropriate entry into NCIC. Officers shall be guided by General Order 3214 "Death, Injury, Illness, and Property Damage Reports" for reporting requirements. The Force Firearms Custodial Officer shall be immediately notified and provided the IMARS Report Number associated with the incident in order to ensure the official record in the Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) inventory is properly updated.

For Force-approved, non-issued firearms, the officer shall be guided by General Order 3214 "Death, Injury, Illness, and Property Damage Reports" for reporting requirements. If the officer is not on Force primary jurisdiction, the officer shall also contact the local police agency or 911 as soon as practical.

#### 3601.11 Conclusion

It should be recognized that criminal and civil cases may be initiated against officers and police departments years after a shooting incident has

taken place; therefore, it is essential that all officers understand their responsibilities regarding Force firearms and that Force investigations of the use of force, particularly those incidents that result in death or serious injury, be conducted as thoroughly as possible and in a timely manner.

### 3601.12 References

- A. 446 DM 10 – Firearms and Other Defensive Equipment
- B. D.O. #9: Law Enforcement Program
- C. G.O. 32.06 – Incident Review Panel
- D. G.O. 40.01 – Home-to-Work Vehicle Program
- E. G.O. 3214 – Death, Injury, Illness, and Property Damage Reports
- F. G.O. 3602 – Flying While Armed
- G. G.O. 3604 – Use of Force Reporting
- H. G.O. 3605 – Defensive Equipment
- I. G.O. 3615 – Use of Force
- J. USPP Form 65
- K. USPP Form 137
- L. USPP Form 138
- M. USPP Form 139
- N. DI-105

### 3601.13 Change Log

This General Order was republished on April 9, 2025 to reflect the changes made to procedures related to incident reporting by G.O. 3604 – Documenting Use of Force Incidents. The new sections have been provided below for convenience, but this does not remove the obligation to review the General Order in full.

**General Order 3604, § I.A., Procedures, Documenting Uses of Force.**

1. A LEO who uses force against a person shall complete a detailed incident report in the RMS by the end of their tour of duty unless a supervisor authorizes an extension.
2. These incident reports shall include the circumstances surrounding the use of force as well as the force option(s), less-lethal weapon(s) (including any specialized ammunition, if applicable), or firearm(s) used/discharged.
3. LEOs who were assisting a LEO involved in a use of force incident but did not use force shall complete supplementary reports documenting their observations and involvement.
4. Any use of force against an animal shall be documented in the same manner as above.
5. Specialized units such as Special Weapon and Tactics (SWAT) Unit or the Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU) shall follow the documenting requirements of this General Order unless a unit-specific general order, guideline manual, or other USPP policy specifies otherwise.

**General Order 3604, § I.B., Procedures, Documenting Displays of Firearms or Less-lethal Weapons**

1. A LEO who displays a firearm or less-lethal weapon shall complete a detailed incident report in the USPP RMS containing all circumstances related to the incident prior to the end of their tour of duty unless a supervisor authorizes an extension.
2. Exceptions
  - a. Surge Patrol

LEOs who carry a patrol rifle during a surge patrol with no incident are not required to write an incident report and no supervisory review or investigation is required.
  - b. Warrant Execution
    - i. LEOs involved in the execution of a search or arrest warrant are not required to submit an incident report for displays of firearms or less-lethal weapons that occurred during the execution of the warrant unless instructed to do so by a supervisor.

- ii. The official in charge of the warrant team shall document the displays in an incident report and specify each LEO who displayed a weapon and any unusual circumstances surrounding the display.
- c. SWAT Call-outs
  - i. LEOs assigned to SWAT are not required to submit an incident report for displays of firearms or less-lethal weapons that occurred during a call-out unless instructed to do so by a supervisor.
  - ii. The official in charge of a SWAT call-out shall document the display in the incident report and specify each LEO who displayed a weapon and any unusual circumstances surrounding the display.
- d. CDU Deployments
  - i. LEOs assigned to the CDU are not required to submit an incident report for displays of firearms or less-lethal weapons that occurred during a deployment unless instructed to do so by a supervisor.
  - ii. The official in charge of a CDU deployment shall document the display in the incident report and specify each LEO who displayed a weapon and any unusual circumstances surrounding the display.
- e. Displays Involving Multiple LEOs

If an incident involves the displays of firearms or less-lethal weapons by multiple LEOs, the supervisor who investigates the displays shall document the incident in a supplemental report specifying each LEO who displayed a weapon and any unusual circumstances surrounding the display.
- f. No Public Contact
  - i. If a LEO draws, deploys, unracks, uncases, or unholsters a firearm or less-lethal weapon and no public contact occurs (e.g., unsecured installation, abandoned stolen vehicle), the LEO shall complete an incident report for the initial call for service in the RMS.
  - ii. If the supervisor approves the officer's initial incident report, no further reports from the supervisor or the LEO are necessary.

#### **General Order 3604, § I.C., Procedures, Supervisory Review of Incident Reports**

1. A supervisor shall conduct a review and investigation for all uses of force and displays of firearms or less-lethal weapons.

2. This supervisor may direct subordinate to update their incident report or complete a supplemental report if they believe the report does not sufficiently detail the circumstances related to the display(s) and/or use(s) of force.
3. Supervisors shall complete the following procedures before the end of their tour of duty unless an extension is authorized by a superior official:
  - a. Review the incident report and related documentation.
  - b. Review the incident's body worn camera recording.
  - c. Investigate the incident.
  - d. Complete a supplemental report in the RMS.
  - e. Submit copies of all reports to the Commander, Office of Professional Responsibility, through the appropriate chain of command.
4. Supervisors who were involved in or directed a LEO to use force shall not be involved in the review or initial investigation of the incident. Their superior official or other supervisory official shall perform these responsibilities instead.