

7.01
CRAIG POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of Chief of Police
General Order

Date Issued: June 22, 1998
Subject: **Firearms**
To: All Officers

Revision Date: September 21, 2006
Reference: CACP STD.20.6,8,10,12

I. POLICY:

Craig Police Department Officers are required to carry firearms to protect themselves and the general public in the performance of their duties. To insure the safety of the public and themselves, officers are required to be equipped with firearms that have been determined to be adequate for law enforcement purposes. In addition, officers will be proficient in the handling and use of firearms to insure safe and efficient deployment. To reach these goals, the department's Chief Firearms Instructor will implement and oversee a training and review process that covers every aspect of firearms, related equipment, and use. Any use of a firearm will conform to [General Order 7.02](#) governing Use of Force, and this order.

II. PROCEDURE:

The Department's commissioned officers, whether on or off-duty, shall carry only those weapons and ammunition authorized by this order, and any addendums thereto, and shall abide by all limitations and prohibitions contained herein and applicable Colorado Revised Statutes. Weapons for off-duty recreational use are exempt from these procedures.

A. Chief Firearms Instructor:

The Chief Firearms Instructor (CFI) is responsible for the establishment and maintaining of effective and safe procedures in the area of police firearms usage. The CFI shall make recommendations and, upon approval by the Chief of Police, develop doctrine and procedures for accomplishment of the following areas:

1. Establish standards for firearms, ammunition, leather gear and related equipment that may be used by department personnel.
2. Establish minimum qualification standards, both in number of qualifications and proficiency, for all weapons used by department personnel.
3. Develop realistic training and qualification courses that accurately measure the effectiveness and proficiency of officers with the weapons they use.
4. Establish and maintain procedures for the safe operation of any range used and supervised by department personnel.
5. Establish and maintain procedures for the safe and secure storage of department weapons, ammunition and related equipment.

6. Continually evaluate, and if necessary, up-date the department's doctrine and procedures in regards to police firearms usage.

Note: Any sworn personnel that bring or carry any firearms into the department shall keep them under their immediate control or, lock the items in a secure key-controlled area that prevents access by unauthorized personnel. Key-controlled areas include: locking desks, file cabinets, private offices, armory, vehicles, gun lockers, etc.

The Chief Firearms Instructor will be responsible for overseeing the following duties:

1. Schedule and supervise firearms qualifications and maintain documentation of individual firearms and qualifications. Ensure proper documentation of non-qualifying officers, including remedial training, re-qualification and notification of the Chief of Police.
2. Budget preparation and purchasing equipment/supplies.
3. Inventory.
4. Range Maintenance.
5. Determine qualification courses.
6. Ensure that the range is operated in a safe manner, immediately correcting any safety issues needing attention.
7. Ensure department weapons, ammunition and related equipment are secure.
8. Inspect firearms, leather gear, ammunition and any other firearms related equipment for safety, quality and effectiveness. The CFI may test fire any ammunition or firearm to insure their reliability and safety.
9. Train and assist those personnel that need improvement in the area of firearms usage; including marksmanship, safety, maintenance, related equipment usage and officer survival techniques.

B. On-Duty Sidearm for Uniformed Officers:

1. All sworn personnel shall furnish their own sidearm.
2. On-duty uniformed officers may carry any approved semi-automatic 9mm, .40 caliber or .45 caliber double action pistol (with a barrel length of a minimum of 3 1/2 inches and a maximum of 6 1/2 inches). The semi-automatic must also be capable of firing the first round double action, have a firing pin safety, side magazine release button, and a rolling block decocker and safety (on double action only weapons the decocker is not needed). The weapon must also have the capacity to carry a minimum of 8 rounds of ammunition. No magnesium frame weapons will be allowed. The CFI, and the Chief of Police must approve all weapons. The list of approved weapons is attached hereto as an addendum.

3. All officers must keep their firearms clean and in workable condition at all times. All officers are also responsible for the safe handling of their firearms at all times and must properly secure their firearms when they are not under their direct control, whether on duty or off duty.

C. On-Duty Sidearm for Plain Clothes Officers:

1. Plain clothes officers may carry any double action, five shot steel framed revolver (chambered for .357 or .38 caliber) or any of the approved automatic pistols (.380 caliber or larger) approved by the CFI and the Chief of Police, and must be capable of holding at least five (5) rounds of ammunition.

2. A plain-clothes officer is any officer on duty, not in uniform.

D. Off-Duty Sidearm for All Sworn Personnel:

1. Off-duty officers may find it necessary to respond as police officers in emergency situations. Nevertheless, off-duty officers are not required to carry a firearm, however they are encouraged to do so; they are permitted to do so at their own discretion, taking into consideration such factors as the activity in which they are engaged, their location, their mode of dress and means of travel.

2. Approved off-duty weapons include those approved for on-duty use for both plain clothes and uniformed officers.

3. Commissioned officers must successfully complete the FTO (Field Training Officer) program before he/she is authorized to carry a concealed weapon off-duty.

4. Reserve officers shall not carry a concealed firearm on their person by any means while off-duty without the written authorization of the Chief of Police. The written approval will be filed with the CFI.

5. Officers may purchase their own off-duty firearm ammunition, or use issued ammunition. Any ammunition purchased must be factory loaded. Magnum load ammunition, excluding .357 magnum, is prohibited.

6. Purchase of off-duty firearms should be discussed with the CFI to avoid obtaining unacceptable firearms. All firearms must be approved by the CFI with final approval by the Chief of Police if necessary.

7. All off-duty firearms and their ammunition may be test fired by the CFI to insure their reliability and safety.

8. Officers shall carry their badges and identification cards on their person whenever they are carrying a concealed firearm.

9. An officer may carry an approved off-duty firearm, other than the primary service weapon, only after that officer has passed the Department firearms qualification course with that weapon and any approved off-duty holster.

10. Officers, who by their own option, carry a weapon while off-duty, shall be held accountable for their actions with such weapon.

11. Officers will not be armed when attending social activities that involve the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

12. The firearm must be concealed at all times when the officer is out in the public.

E. Officers Firearm and Holster Information Form:

1. A form that lists an officer's firearms, to include duty, and all off-duty weapons will be maintained for each individual officer. This form will be updated at each qualification. The form will also include firearms inspection for each firearm the officer carries. The inspection will consist of checking for a properly functioning firearm (i.e. firearm functions as it was originally designed, the safety features are all operable, no loose or missing parts, proper sights and grips and the firearm is suitable for the job the officer is expected to perform). A firearms instructor will do this inspection at least once a year.

2. The above-mentioned form will also include all information on all officers on-duty holsters which shall be inspected once a year during a qualification shoot. The inspection will consist of, checking the holster to ensure that it is capable of retaining a firearm if an officer becomes involved in a struggle or has to run, allows for easy access of the firearm by the officer, retaining devices (i.e.: snaps, straps and or friction devices) are all in proper working order, the looks and quality of the holster fall within department guidelines and finally the holster is not worn or falling apart, which would hinder in its function to retain a firearm. This inspection is to be conducted by a firearms instructor. Any holster that an officer carries for a duty or off duty firearm will be inspected. All new duty holsters will be inspected by a firearms instructor and listed on the officer's form prior to duty use.

F. Holster Requirements:

1. Uniform Officers

a. The holster will be made of a high quality leather or laminate reinforced material, and will be black in color with a basket weave design.

b. The holster will cover the trigger of the handgun.

c. The holster must be designed to fasten the handgun in the holster by a snap, spring, elastic strap or other similar means. The holster must be designed to securely retain the handgun if the officer should become involved in any physical activity where the handgun could inadvertently fall out of the holster.

d. Holsters for all semi-automatic handguns will be purchased by each individual officer with no expense to the City.

2. Plain Clothes Officers shall carry his/her handgun in a holster that is approved by the CFI, Captain or Chief of Police

a. The holster must be fastened to the person by a belt, belt snap, leather harness or shoulder rig, or ankle holster. Some "clip-on" holsters may be acceptable.

b. The holster will cover the trigger of the handgun.

c. The holster must be designed to fasten the handgun in the holster by a snap, spring, elastic strap, internal retention device or other similar means. The holster must be designed to securely retain the handgun if the officer should become involved in any physical activity where the handgun could inadvertently fall out of the holster.

3. Off-duty holsters not matching the Department criteria for plain-clothes officers shall be approved by the CFI. This does not include holsters for recreational use.

a. Officers shall not make any holster modifications that would increase the potential for discharge of the weapon when holstering or unholstering the weapon.

G. On-Duty Backup Firearms May Be Carried Under the Following Guidelines:

1. The firearm is limited to the following calibers: .38, .380, 9mm, .40 or .45 with a barrel length of less than 4 inches.

2. The firearm is registered with the CFI.

3. The officer is currently qualified with the firearm.

4. The firearm is concealed from public view.

5. An on-duty backup firearm will only be drawn as a secondary firearm when the officer's primary weapon is:

a. Malfunctioning

b. Inoperative

c. Inaccessible

H. On-Duty Special Firearms:

1. Shotguns: All shotguns will be departmentally issued 12 gauge pump, have a maximum barrel length of 20 inches, and will have smooth bore. All ammunition will be department issued. No other ammunition will be allowed. All shotguns carried in patrol

vehicles will be loaded with 4 less-lethal beanbag rounds in the magazine and no rounds in the chamber.

a. The officer will show proficiency in the use of the shotgun, including maintaining qualification standards determined by the CFI, and has completed a training class in the use and handling of a shotgun.

2. Police Rifles: A police rifle is a special firearm designed to replace or supplement a shotgun. Acceptable police rifles will be determined by the CFI with approval of the Chief of Police. The department will approve and provide all patrol rifles and ammunition.

An officer will carry a police rifle only after.

a. The officer has shown proficiency in the use of the firearm and has completed the required training class on the handling and use of special firearms.

b. The firearm has been examined and approved by the CFI .

c. The officer maintains qualification standards for the police rifle as determined by the CFI.

I. Use of On-Duty Special Firearms:

1. The use of on-duty special firearms will conform to existing orders on the use of firearms.

2. Special firearms, carried in the passenger compartment, will be secured in a locking device to prevent its removal by unauthorized persons. If locked in the passenger compartment the locking device will be designed to prevent a round of ammunition from being chambered while in the device. No rounds will be in the chamber during transportation in a vehicle.

3. The tactical use of shotguns and rifles is discretionary. It is dependent upon the totality of the circumstances at any given place and time; and is subject to the consideration of all other Department policies and procedures, as well as State laws that may come to bear upon such circumstances.

a. As a general rule, on-duty special firearms will not be removed from vehicles on routine calls such as family fights, loud parties and disturbance calls. On-duty special firearms can be removed from vehicles on any call involving firearms, open buildings, burglaries in progress, robberies in progress, and felony NCIC hits.

4. If an on-duty special firearm is to be left at the Department, it will be unloaded and secured in the armory.

5. Any weapon that cannot be securely holstered must be equipped with a sling.

J. Modifications of Firearms:

Any modification to the primary or off-duty firearm shall be approved prior to modification. The modification shall only be made by a qualified gunsmith and/or armorer, and approved, prior to carrying, by the CFI and the Captain.

K. Firearms Maintenance, Repair and Inspection:

1. Routine maintenance of any approved handgun is the responsibility of the individual officer that is carrying that handgun.
2. The cost of repair for City owned weapons is the responsibility of the department.
3. The cost of repair for officer owned handguns is the responsibility of the individual officer; unless the weapon was damaged as a direct result of actions taken in the line of duty. A certified gunsmith and/or armorer must complete all repairs.
4. Any weapon carried by an officer is subject to inspection at any time by a supervisor, the CFI or acting Range Officer.
5. The officers and the Firearms Training staff will complete routine maintenance of the shotguns.

L. Magazine Pouches/Magazines:

1. Uniformed Officers:

- a. Magazine pouches will be a double-pouch, worn horizontally or vertically, with either a snap or Velcro closure, or an open topped pouch with a internal retention device with a basket weave design.
- b. Officers will carry two (2) fully loaded magazines.
- c. Officers carrying semi-automatic handguns will purchase their own magazine pouches and magazines at no expense to the City.

M. Handling of Weapons - Methods of Carry/Use:

1. Weapons shall not be displayed, exhibited, handled, or placed in such a manner or position that would initiate valid criticism of the officer or the Department, or violate public safety. In addition, weapons shall not be placed or handled in a manner that endangers persons near the weapon.
2. All semi-automatic handguns will be carried with a fully loaded magazine with a round in the chamber and the safety off.
3. All handguns will be carried holstered at all times with the exception of the following:

- a. needed in the line of duty
- b. weapon security - lock boxes
- c. training
- d. maintenance/repair

N. Surrendering of Firearms:

An Officer of this Department should not voluntarily surrender his/her weapon to anyone who may be holding a hostage or is a suspect of criminal activity. However, the ultimate decision must be made by each individual sworn member involved based upon the circumstances that surround the incident.

O. Firearms Qualifications:

1. All newly hired sworn officers will attend a Basic Firearms Course, which will cover [General Order 7.02](#), governing Use of Force, and this General Order. The course will consist of firearm safety, firearm maintenance, basic marksmanship and range practice. The course will conclude with the new officer qualifying on an approved course of fire.

2. All sworn officers are required to attend and qualify with all weapons they may use in the performance of their duty.

a. Excused Absence: Definition: Any previously scheduled, non-emergency leave or schedule conflict, or an emergency situation that arises which precludes an officer from reporting for mandatory training/qualification. (i.e. vacation, court appearance, scheduled holiday, sick day - day off not included).

* Officers must notify the CFI, or their designee, of their intended absence at least 48 hours prior to the intended absence, if possible.

* Officers not attending a mandatory qualification are responsible for contacting the CFI to reschedule the qualification shoot. This must be done in the same quarter as the missed qualification.

3. Failure to attend and participate in required qualifications and training with a firearm; failure to notify the CFI of intended absence within 48 hours prior to a mandatory shoot/training; failure to reschedule a qualification shoot; or any unexcused absence is considered a violation of this order and subject to the following disciplinary action(s):

- a. Notice of Corrective Action (1st offense)
- b. Notice of Disciplinary Action
- c. Administrative suspension - without pay
- d. Possible termination

4. The number of qualifications required per year, for each type of firearm, is as follows:

Weapon	Number
On-duty sidearm	2
Off-duty/back-up sidearm	2
Police Rifle	2
Shotgun	1

5. Firearms requiring qualification twice a year shall be done in the periods of January - June and July - December.

6. As a general rule, there will be 7 firearms training sessions every year. Officers assigned to the patrol division must attend 5 out of the 7 sessions, including all required qualification shoots. Non-uniformed personnel are encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible, but at a minimum must attend 4 out of the 7 sessions including all required qualification shoots.

P. Failure to Qualify (Handgun):

1. At each qualification shoot, each officer will be given one opportunity to qualify with their duty firearm. If the officer is unable to achieve the required minimum score, he/she will be given another opportunity. Prior to the second attempt the officer will receive immediate remedial training by the acting Range Officer. If the officer fails to qualify on the second, he/she will be informed in writing by a firearms instructor that he/she is not authorized to use that weapon and the Chief of Police will be immediately notified. Further, the officer will also be temporarily placed in an administrative position that does not require being armed.

2. The CFI will, as soon as practical (but no later than three (3) days), schedule remedial training, to include requalification at the range. The CFI will determine the nature of the remedial training, and will make every attempt to assist the officer in improving his/her shooting ability. The department will supply ammunition for remedial training and re-shoots.

3. If the officer is unable to achieve the required minimum score after remedial training and 2 (two) more qualification attempts, he/she will be placed on suspension without pay. The suspension period can last up to 30 (thirty) days. During this time period the non-qualifying officer is required to qualify or termination proceedings will begin at the end of the suspension period.

4. Once the officer successfully qualifies with the firearm, he/she will be informed in writing by a firearms instructor that he/she is now again authorized to use that firearm, and the Chief of Police will be notified. All documentation of remedial training and requalification will be placed in the officer's training file.

Q. Failure to Qualify (Off-Duty and Backup Handguns):

1. If the officer is unable to achieve the required minimum score, he/she will be given another opportunity prior to the second attempt the officer will receive immediate remedial training by the acting Range Officer. If the officer fails to qualify on the second, he/she will be informed in writing by a firearms instructor that his/her authority to use, or carry, that weapon has been revoked, and the Chief of Police will be immediately notified.

- a. The revocation will continue until the officer qualifies with that weapon.
- b. The officer will provide their own ammunition for non-department practice.

R. Failure to Qualify (On-Duty Special Firearms):

At each on-duty special firearm qualification, an officer will be given one opportunity to qualify. If the officer is unable to achieve a passing score, he/she will be given another opportunity. If the officer fails to qualify on the second, he/she will be informed in writing that he/she is not authorized to use or carry the on-duty special firearm, a copy of which will be sent to the Chief of Police. The instructor will also take custody of any departmentally owned special firearms and return them to the proper custodian. The non-qualifying officer may requalify during the next assigned qualification date, or other re-scheduled dates. All documentation of remedial training and requalification will be placed in the officer's training file.

S. Firearms Records:

1. The CFI or his/her designee shall maintain permanent records of the following:
 - a. Officer attendance at the range and firearms training sessions.
 - b. Qualification scores.
 - c. Remedial training.
 - d. Weapons registration.

T. Ammunition:

1. The department will provide all ammunition for on-duty use. Non-approved ammunition is not allowed to be carried by any officer while on-duty. Ammunition must be approved by the CFI and the Chief of Police. Approved ammunition will be as listed by addendum to this order. The department will provide all ammunition for scheduled shoots and planned remedial training. The ammunition shall not be altered by any officer in any way from factory condition.
2. Officers shall load duty weapons with and carry on their person, only ammunition issued by the department.

3. Ammunition for off-duty carry must be within the approved safety range for the weapon and may not be magnum (excluding .357 magnum), explosive or Teflon load. The ammunition must be approved by the CFI.

U. Discharge of Firearms - Procedures for Reporting:

1. The procedure to be followed when firearms are discharged is as follows:

a. When an officer discharges his/her firearm, either accidentally or in the performance of his duties, he shall verbally notify the Captain, or their designee, as soon as time and circumstances permit, but in no event later than the end of his/her current tour of duty, if on-duty.

b. The officer who discharged his/her firearm shall file a written report of the incident with the Chief of Police.

c. If the officer who discharged the firearm is hospitalized or fatally injured and incapable of filing the report as required in this section, his/her immediate supervisor is responsible for filing as complete a report as possible pending further departmental investigation.

d. Promptly reported accidental discharges not resulting in injury will not generally be subject to disciplinary action, but failure to report such accidents will result in disciplinary action.

V. Investigation

1. Investigation of all firearm discharges shall be headed by the Captain, or their designee. In questionable situations a review board, which will include at least one firearms instructor, may be appointed by the Chief of Police to evaluate and review the incident and make recommendations for any action.

2. Upon completion of the investigation, written results will be submitted to the Chief of Police and to the officer(s) involved in the investigation.

Approved By:

Walter K. Vanatta
Chief of Police