

DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

	<i>Effective Date</i>	<i>Number</i> GO88-2.12
<i>Subject</i> Firearms		
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I. Policy

It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department that Officers be equipped with approved firearms and ammunition and only carry firearms and ammunition authorized by the Department. Before issuance of such equipment, Officers shall be properly instructed and certified, as appropriate, and complete the Basic Law Enforcement Training Course (BLETC).

II. Definitions

- A. *Department firearms instructor* – A Georgia P.O.S.T. certified instructor that has attended and successfully completed a certified firearms instructor course, such as those offered by the National Rifle Association. Department firearms instructors are authorized to review, inspect, and approve firearms to be carried on duty and off duty, as well as conduct annual and remedial firearms training.
- B. *On-duty* – An Officer is on-duty while working his / her regular tour of duty, while working overtime, or when going to and from work, he / she performs any type of law enforcement function for the City of Dalton. Additionally, while off duty, if an Officer observes an illegal act in the City and responds to it, he / she is considered to be on-duty.

III. Authorized Firearms and Ammunition

- A. Prior to an Officer carrying a firearm, it shall be reviewed, inspected, and approved by a Department firearms instructor. The Officer shall also be issued a copy (**paper or electronic**) of, and instructed on, the policies that pertain to that firearm. This shall be documented and forwarded to the Training Coordinator.
- B. Officers shall demonstrate proficiency in the use of a firearm prior to being approved to carry it.
- C. The ~~Department's Training Coordinator~~ **Support Services Division** shall maintain a list of the types and specifications of ammunition approved for use in all Department-approved firearms. The Chief of Police or his / her designee shall approve the list annually.

<p>RESTRICTED LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA</p> <p>The data contained in this manual is confidential for internal department use only and shall not be divulged outside the department without the written approval of the Chief of Police.</p>

D. Handguns

1. The Department-issued handgun is a 9mm caliber double-action semi-automatic and shall be loaded with Department-issued ammunition.
2. Issued handguns shall be registered with the Department by make, model, and serial number.
3. Officers shall demonstrate safe and proficient use of their handgun during regular firearms qualification sessions. This training shall be conducted by a Department firearms instructor and documented in the Officers' training files. Officers ~~must~~ shall also demonstrate the ability to disassemble and reassemble the handgun, ~~and~~ perform standard cleaning procedures, and show how to clear the handgun in the event of a malfunction, all to the satisfaction of a Department firearms instructor
4. The handgun shall be inspected and certified as safe by a Department firearms instructor, either by observing the Officer fire the handgun or by firing it ~~themselves~~ himself / herself.
5. Officers shall ~~qualify with the same handgun caliber and weight range of ammunition issued for duty~~ use ammunition provided by the Department for qualifications.
6. Handguns shall be carried in Department-approved holsters, which ~~will~~ are designed to properly retain and secure the handgun.
7. Safety precautions for handguns:
 - a. Officers shall keep their handguns loaded and holstered while on duty, ~~unless engaging a threat or otherwise specified by policy~~. Dry firing, cleaning, or casual comparison with other Officers' handguns while on duty is prohibited.
 - b. Officers may transfer their handgun from one holster to another at the beginning or ending of their tour of duty, as long as it is done safely.
 - c. ~~Officers are permitted to un-holster their handgun and place it in the lock boxes prior to entry into the booking area of the Whitfield County Jail or in any situation in which there could be a threat to the Officer's life; e.g., interview room.~~ Officers shall secure their handgun in a mounted storage device (designed for firearms security) inside the vehicle or in the provided lock boxes prior to entry into the booking area of the WCSO Jail or at any other law enforcement, criminal justice, or judicial facility that requires the removal of firearms by Officers prior to entry.

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- d. Officers should never hand a loaded handgun to another Officer, unless in a life and death situation.
- e. Officers shall keep their handguns clean and in a constant state of readiness. Each Officer is responsible for field stripping and cleaning his / her handgun every thirty (30) days and immediately after use during firearms training and qualification. Supervisors shall make periodic checks to ensure handguns carried by their personnel are being properly maintained.

E. Secondary or Backup Handgun

- 1. A secondary or backup handgun is authorized to be carried on-duty as long as it meets the following criteria:
 - a.1. .38 special or .357 magnum double-action revolver
 - b.2. .380 ACP, 9mm, or .40 caliber double action semi-automatic
 - c.3. Personally-owned or Department-issued
 - d.4. Shall be loaded with Department-approved or Department-issued ammunition
 - e.5. Shall be carried concealed
 - f.6. Shall be registered with the Department by make, model, and serial number
- 2.7. Officers shall demonstrate safe and proficient use of their backup handgun during regular firearms qualification. This training shall be conducted by a Department firearms instructor and documented in the Officers' training files.
- 3.8. Backup handguns shall be inspected and certified by a Department firearms instructor, either by observing the Officer fire the weapon or by personally firing it themselves-himself / herself.

F. On-duty Shotgun

- 1. ~~Authorized Types, Ammunition, and Training (see Appendix A)~~ A shotgun is authorized to be carried on-duty as long as it meets the following criteria:
 - a. Shotguns shall be 12-gauge pump or semi-automatic, either personally-owned or Department-issued. Personally-owned shotguns shall meet the specifications outlined in Appendix A to be considered an "on-duty shotgun."
 - b. Shall be loaded with Department-issued ammunition

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- c. Shall be registered with the Department by make, model, and serial number
2. All Officers that wish to carry a shotgun on-duty shall first successfully complete an approved shotgun training course.
- 3.d. Officers shall demonstrate safe and proficient use of the shotgun during regular firearms qualification. This training shall be conducted by a Department firearms instructor and documented in the Officers' training files.
4. Officers approved to carry a shotgun shall also demonstrate the ability to disassemble and reassemble the shotgun, perform standard cleaning procedures, and show how to clear the shotgun in the event of a malfunction, all to the satisfaction of a Department firearms instructor.
- 5.e. Shotguns shall be inspected and certified by a Department firearms instructor, either by observing the Officer fire the shotgun or by personally firing it ~~themselves~~ himself / herself.
- 6.f. For all shotguns purchased by the Department, the Department shall maintain all applicable paperwork, as outlined by the National Firearms Act. For all shotguns purchased by the Officer, the Officer shall be responsible for the maintenance of all applicable paperwork, as outlined by the National Firearms Act.
- 7.2. Procedures and Safety Precautions
 - a. The muzzle of the shotgun shall always be pointed in a safe direction ~~when not engaging a threat~~.
 - b. ~~All~~ Administrative loading and unloading of the shotgun shall be accomplished outside ~~the~~ of buildings and ~~outside the~~ vehicles, ~~except when absolutely necessary. before positioning the shotgun in the vehicle.~~
 - c. ~~When carried on-duty~~, the shotgun ~~may~~ shall be ~~carried~~ secured in the vehicle in a ~~vertical~~ mounted shotgun rack ~~a rack underneath the front seat, a carrying case in the trunk of the vehicle,~~ or other Department-approved ~~shotgun rack storage device while the Officer is on duty~~. The shotgun shall ~~not be left in an exposed area~~ be removed from the vehicle when the Officer is off duty ~~The shotgun shall be removed from the rack and placed in the trunk or~~ and stored in a safe manner inside the ~~Department~~ Police Services Center or ~~the~~ Officer's residence.
 - d. Shotguns shall not have a shell in the chamber while ~~in a rack or in the trunk of~~ being carried in the vehicle.

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- e. The safety shall be ~~"on"~~ engaged while ~~in a rack or in the trunk of being carried in~~ the vehicle.
- f. The shotgun shall be unloaded with the bolt open and the safety engaged prior to entry into ~~a police facility with the bolt open and the safety on.~~ the Police Services Center.
- g. Officers shall keep their shotguns clean and in a constant state of readiness. Each Officer is responsible for field stripping and cleaning his / her shotgun every thirty (30) days and immediately after use during firearms training and qualification. ~~It is the Officer's responsibility to see that the shotgun is kept clean and in good working order.~~ Supervisors shall make periodic checks to ensure shotguns carried by their personnel are ~~clean and in good working order~~ being properly maintained.

G. Department-Authorized Rifles

- 1. The on-duty approved rifle is an AR-15 style rifle chambered for the 5.56 NATO cartridge, either personally-owned or Department-issued. The rifle barrel shall reliably stabilize Department-issued ammunition.
- 2. Officers approved by the Chief of Police or his / her designee may be armed with rifles (Appendix A) and such other weaponry as may be approved by the Chief of Police.
- 3. All Officers approved by the Chief of Police or his / her designee to carry a rifle shall first attend an approved rifle training course. All rifles shall be registered with the Department by make, model, and serial number.
- 4. Officers approved to carry a rifle shall also demonstrate the ability to disassemble and reassemble the rifle, perform standard cleaning procedures, and show how to clear the rifle in the event of a malfunction, all to the satisfaction of a Department firearms instructor.
- 5. The rifle shall be inspected and certified as safe by a Department firearms instructor, either by observing the Officer fire the rifle or by firing it ~~themselves~~ himself / herself.
- 6. Any modifications or additions made to a rifle shall be approved by a Department firearms instructor.
- 7. The rifle shall be loaded with Department-issued ammunition.
- 8. Each Officer approved to carry a rifle shall qualify annually and show proficiency with his / her approved rifle and ammunition on a course prescribed by a Department firearms instructor. This training shall be conducted by a Department firearms instructor and documented in the Officer's training file.

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9. For all rifles purchased by the Department, the Department shall maintain all applicable paperwork, as outlined by the National Firearms Act. For all rifles purchased by the Officer, the Officer shall be responsible for the maintenance of all applicable paperwork, as outlined by the National Firearms Act.
10. Procedures and Safety Precautions
 - a. Rifles are issued to Officers that have been approved to carry them. Officers desiring to carry a personally-owned rifle shall receive request approval from the Chief of Police or his / her designee. Personally-owned rifles shall meet the specifications of an authorized rifle, as outlined in Appendix A, to be considered as an on-duty rifle.
 - b. When carried on-duty, the rifle may shall be carried secured in the vehicle in a ~~locked gun rack in the driver's compartment~~ mounted rifle rack or other Department-approved storage device ~~a gun case designed for the rifle in the trunk of the vehicle while the Officer is on duty~~. The rifle shall ~~not be left in an exposed area~~ be removed from the vehicle when the Officer is off duty ~~The rifle shall be removed from the rack and placed in the trunk or~~ and stored in a safe manner inside the Department Police Services Center or the Officer's residence.
 - c. The rifle shall not have a shell in the chamber while ~~in a rack or the trunk of~~ being carried in the vehicle. A loaded magazine may be inserted in the rifle.
 - d. The safety shall be engaged while the rifle is being carried in the vehicle.
 - e.d. The rifle shall be unloaded with the bolt open and the safety engaged prior to entry into ~~a law enforcement facility~~ the Police Services Center ~~with the bolt open and the safety on~~.
 - f.e. Officers shall keep their rifles clean and in a constant state of readiness. Each Officer is responsible for field stripping and cleaning his / her rifle every thirty (30) days and immediately after use during firearms training and qualification. ~~It is the Officer's responsibility to see that the rifle is kept clean and in good working order~~. Supervisors shall make periodic checks to ensure rifles ~~are clean and in good working order~~ carried by their personnel are being properly maintained.
 - g.f. All Administrative loading and unloading shall be accomplished outside ~~the~~ of buildings and ~~outside the~~ vehicles, except when absolutely necessary. ~~before positioning the rifle in the vehicle~~.

H. Off-Duty Firearms

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1. Officers may, but are not mandated to, carry a handgun while off duty. An Officer who elects not to carry a handgun while off duty shall not be subjected to disciplinary action if an occasion should arise where he / she could have taken action if he / she were armed. (Exception: Off-duty Officers, while operating a Department vehicle, shall be armed with an approved handgun.) Off-duty handguns shall be carried concealed.
2. Officers shall not have a firearm and ammunition on their person when under the influence of alcohol or upon entering a jurisdiction other than the City of Dalton, unless permitted to do so by state or federal statute.

I. **Additional Safety Considerations**

1. Officers are prohibited from the loaning of a Department firearm or ammunition to another person.
2. Officers, to whom Department firearms are issued, are responsible for the safety and security of the firearms while in the Officers' possession.
3. Officers shall secure all Department-authorized firearms out of the reach of children and others not familiar with the use and danger of firearms to prevent possible injury to family members and others.
4. Officers should be aware that a great burden of responsibility and liability accompanies the issuance of a Department firearm and ammunition.

IV. **Firearms Training**

- A. All Officers shall be certified, at least annually, with all approved lethal weapons that the employee is authorized to use.
- B. All firearms training shall be conducted by a Department firearms instructor.
- C. All newly-hired sworn personnel shall be certified with their departmentally-approved firearms prior to reporting for their first day of duty.
- D. Firearms certification shall be an approved firearms course and any other course(s) the Chief of Police deems necessary.
- E. In the event of an accidental firearms discharge or the use of deadly force by a firearm, other than to destroy an animal that represents a danger to public safety, as outlined in policy GO88-5.1, the Officer shall undergo an ~~immediate~~ recertification prior to returning to full duty. Supervisors shall be notified of an accidental firearms discharge immediately, and a report of the incident shall be made within twenty-four (24) hours.

V. **Firearms Range**

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- A. The Department utilizes the Whitfield County Sheriff's Office's (WCSO's) training facility for annual firearms qualifications and other firearms training.
- B. The Training Coordinator shall maintain a documented list of range safety rules, which conform to WCSO's range safety rules. These rules shall be ~~provided to~~ ~~and~~ reviewed with all range students prior to every Department firearms training event held at the range.
- C. Department firearms instructors shall be designated as Range Supervisors for all Department firearms training events held at the range. Range Supervisors shall be easily identified as such while firearms training is being conducted.
- D. The type of weapons, ammunition, targets, and equipment to be used on the range shall be determined by Range Supervisors, in compliance with this policy and WCSO's range safety rules.
- E. All personnel participating in firearms training shall wear personal safety equipment, including eye protection, ear protection, and a hat / cap with a bill. All students and firearms instructors shall wear protective body armor while actively engaged in firearms training.
- F. Department firearms instructors shall be trained in emergency medical response and shall have access to a first-aid / trauma kit during all Department training events held at the range. Range supervisors shall have access to a radio or cell phone at all times during firearms training in order to summon EMS personnel, if needed.
- G. While firearms training is being conducted, all **issued** duty ammunition shall be stored in the student's vehicle. All firearms brought to the range for training, but not actively being used on the range, shall be unloaded and stored in the student's vehicle, in the classroom, or at a designated area on the range.

VI. **Firearms Qualification**

- A. All sworn personnel are required to complete firearms training annually and qualify annually with **each of their issued and authorized-to-carry** duty weapons, in accordance with Departmental standards.
- B. During the annual qualification, the Officer shall be given no more than four (4) attempts to achieve one (1) qualification score of 80% or greater.
- C. If, after four (4) attempts, an Officer fails to achieve a qualifying score, the Department firearms instructor shall notify the Officer's Supervisor and the Training Coordinator.
 - 1. Officers who fail to meet the minimum qualifications **with their issued handgun** shall turn over ~~their issued duty weapon~~ **the firearm** and ammunition and not return to normal duty or extra duty until they successfully qualify with their ~~duty~~ weapon.

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2. Officers who fail to meet the minimum qualifications with their issued shotgun, rifle, or other firearm shall turn over the firearm(s) and ammunition but may return to normal duty or extra duty. The weapon will not be able to be carried on-duty until qualification has been achieved.
 3. Officers who fail to meet the minimum qualifications with their personally-owned shotgun, rifle, or other firearm shall turn over any Department-issued ammunition for the weapon but may return to normal duty or extra duty. The weapon will not be able to be carried on-duty until qualification has been achieved.
- D. After failing to qualify **with any firearm**, the Officer shall contact the Training Coordinator in writing to arrange for remedial training with a Department firearms instructor. The Department firearms instructor conducting the remedial training shall document all aspects of the remedial training and submit a written report to the Training Coordinator.
- E. Any Officer who fails an annual firearms qualification **with a Department-issued firearm** shall be retested within fourteen (14) days of the initial attempt. The Officer shall be given no more than four (4) attempts to achieve one (1) qualification score of 80% or greater.
- F. If the Officer fails to achieve a qualifying score on the second attempt, the Department firearms instructor conducting the retest shall notify the Training Coordinator and the Support Services Division Commander.
- G. The Support Services Division Commander shall compile the information from the qualification sessions and remedial training and submit a written report, in accordance with policy GO88-2.10, Complaint Review Policy, to the Chief of Police for administrative action.

VII. **Unsafe Firearms**

If a firearm is determined to be unsafe or unserviceable, the Officer shall notify his / her Supervisor of the deficiency. If another firearm is available, the Officer shall be issued a replacement firearm after it has been reviewed, inspected, and approved by a Department firearms instructor. If there is not a replacement available, the Supervisor shall make a determination if the Officer can continue to work in a sworn capacity without the firearm. The Officer shall be issued a replacement firearm as soon as a qualified firearm becomes available.

This policy supersedes any previous policies issued.

BY ORDER OF

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CHIEF OF POLICE

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Appendix A

Dalton Police Department Specifications for Authorized Firearms

Firearm Type:	Handgun
Make:	Glock
Model:	45
Caliber:	9mm Luger
Action Type:	Semi-automatic double action
Weight:	24.48 ounces, with empty magazine
Barrel length:	4.02 inches
Magazine capacity:	17 rounds
Firearm Type:	Rifle
Make:	Department Approved
Model:	AR-15 Style
Caliber:	5.56mm (.223 Remington)
Action Type:	Semi-automatic
Barrel length:	10-20 inches
Magazine capacity:	20 or 30 rounds
Firearm Type:	Shotgun
Make:	Department Approved
Model:	Department Approved
Caliber:	12 gauge
Action Type:	Pump action or semi-automatic
Barrel length:	14-22 inches
Magazine capacity:	3-10 rounds

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