



FIREARMS – TRAINING

Directive: 8 – 101.1

Date of Issue: October 2016 Amends: 8-101.1, March 2016

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to implement the Maryland Capitol Police (MCP) policies related to the training of those personnel authorized to utilize a firearm.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the MCP to set standards for training consistent with requirements set forth by the Maryland Police Training Commission (MPTC). MCP employees will also adhere to the policies and procedures set forth for the care, handling, and storage of firearms.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. COMAR: Title 12 Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Subtitle 4 Police Training Commission, Chapter 2 Firearms Training (COMAR 12.04.02) – Establishes the authority of the Maryland Police Training Commission (MPTC) to set the minimum requirements for law enforcement officers to be certified in Maryland to use or carry a firearm.
- B. Simunitions – A reduced energy training system designed to deploy a non-toxic, detergent based, water soluble, inert colored projectile onto paper, cardboard and live targets.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. RANGE MASTER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The range master will complete required documentation, when any one of the following occurs:
 - a. A police officer fails to qualify with a required firearm at annual or semi-annual firearms training after four unsuccessful attempts and remedial training;
 - b. A police officer fails to qualify with an off-duty handgun;
 - c. Police officers fire their weapons at annual or semi-annual range exercises;

- d. New weapons policies, directives, or memorandums are issued to officers;
2. The range master will be responsible for the training and qualification process. Duties of the range master include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Examination of all issued firearms and personally owned off duty handguns for operational safety before the officer is allowed to fire the weapon at the range. The range master or his designee will record the make, model, caliber and serial number of all off-duty weapons;
 - b. Documentation and maintenance of training records, including qualification scores, of sworn personnel;
 - c. Overseeing modifications/revisions of departmental firearms and use of force policies necessitated by changes in the law and/or changes in Maryland Police Corrections and Training Commission (MPTC) policies and regulations;
 - d. Submission of all documentation concerning courses of fire, standards, etc. to the MPTC for approval before the firearm certification process begins.

B. TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION – HANDGUNS

1. COMAR: 12.04.02.08; requires that law enforcement officers qualify with the weapon they carry, both on and off duty. The issuance of a Maryland Handgun Permit to a police officer does not eliminate or modify this requirement.
2. Class Room Instruction - Police officers will receive two hours of classroom instruction as part of the annual firearms qualification process. The classroom instruction can be included in the annual in-service instruction. The classroom instruction will cover the following areas:
 - a. Purpose of firearms instruction;
 - b. Care, cleaning, safe handling and storage of the service weapon;
 - c. Legal aspects in the use of firearms;
 - d. Fundamentals of shooting (sight alignment, proper grip and trigger control); and
 - e. Department use of force and deadly force policies.
3. Annual Qualifications Courses – Police officers will be required, at minimum, to complete the following MPCTC required courses of fire annually :
 - a. Judgmental/decision course;
 - b. Primary weapon day fire qualification; and
 - c. Primary weapon reduced light qualification.

4. Police officers will successfully complete the qualification process with their issued duty weapon and all approved off-duty firearms. The minimum required score for both the issued duty weapon and approved off duty weapon is 70 percent in both day fire qualification and reduced light qualification.
5. Failure of any portion of the mandated training, even if the officer later passes the training, will be justification for the officer to attend remedial training.
6. Shooting Badges - Police Officers who qualify with their duty weapon will be issued one of the following MCP shooting badges:
 - a. Marksman - 70 to 79 percent;
 - b. Sharp Shooter - 80 to 89 percent;
 - c. Expert - 90 to 100 percent; or
 - d. Master - 90 to 100 percent (3 consecutive years, current inclusive).

C. FAILURE TO QUALIFY WITH PRIMARY WEAPON

1. If a police officer fails to achieve a qualification score of 70% after two unsuccessful attempts, the officer will receive remedial instruction from a range master or his designee.
2. In the event a police officer cannot pass qualification with their primary weapon, the officer will be dismissed from the range and the Range Master will:
 - a. Immediately notify the Officer's Commander;
 - b. Suspend the officer's police powers pending remedial training; and
 - c. Submit a detailed report to the Chief of Police or his designee detailing the reasons for the failure.
3. The Officer's Commander will:
 - a. Place the officer on administrative duties; and
 - b. Schedule the officer for remedial firearms instruction, and requalification.
4. Under COMAR 12.04.02.08, the officer has 30 consecutive days within the same calendar year from date of the initial attempt to successfully complete the qualification.
5. An officer who failed to qualify within the 30 day period after the initial failure has until January 1 of the next calendar year to qualify. The officer's police powers will remain suspended until the officer meets the qualification requirements. The officer's duty weapon will remain in the custody of the department and will be transported to and from the range by the range master until such time as the officer passes qualification.

6. The suspension of police powers is not the same as an emergency suspension under LEOBR. A police officer whose police powers have been suspended for firearms qualifications failure is not entitled to a suspension hearing or other provisions of the Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights.

D. SHOTGUN QUALIFICATION

1. Police Sergeants and below must participate in annual department shotgun qualification. Any police officer that does not qualify with the shotgun annually will not be permitted to carry or use an agency issued shotgun.
2. The shotgun course of qualification for DGS-MCP personnel will be in compliance with the above referenced MPTC COMAR regulations.
3. Officers up to and including those at the rank of sergeant, will complete day and night fire qualification courses with a minimum of 70% on each course with the approved shotgun.

E. SIMUNITION WEAPONS TRAINING

1. Simunition is a realistic training option for law enforcement agencies, providing basic firearms familiarization and skill development, and static or reactive target practice without the need of a range or ballistic facility.
2. Only MCP Department sanctioned simunition weapons will be authorized.
3. Only factory-made simunition ammunition will be utilized in simunition weapons.
4. During training scenarios all officers will wear appropriate safety equipment as follows:
 - a. Full face and wrap around eye protection.
 - b. Throat protector.
 - c. Groin protection.
5. A certified simunition or certified force-on-force instructor must be present during any training where simunition weapons will be utilized to ensure safe firearm practices and proper deployment practices.
6. All forms of live weapons, all live ammunition and all auxiliary weapons are prohibited in areas where simunition training is being conducted.