


<p>RABUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</p>  <p>General Order Number: 4.07</p>	<p>Date of Issue</p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p>Effective Date</p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p>Revision Date</p>
<p>Subject: AUTHORIZED WEAPONS</p>	<p>Amends:</p>	<p>Rescinds:</p>	
<p>Index as:</p> <p>Authorized Weapons General Policies and Procedures</p>	<p>State Certification Standards: 1.16, 1.17, 1.18, 1.20, 1.21</p>		

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to prescribe the Rabun County Sheriff's Office policies and procedures regarding the authorized weapons that an employee may carry or use when in an on-duty or extra-duty assignment.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office that employees who are allowed by statute or policy to carry a weapon while working on duty or extra duty shall only carry or use a weapon that has been authorized by the Rabun County Sheriff's Office.

DISCUSSION

Employees of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office who are allowed by statute or policy to carry a weapon should only carry a weapon that has been authorized by the Rabun County Sheriff's Office. The purpose of this is to establish a strict control over all firearms, weapons, and ammunition that the Sheriff's Office allows employees to carry and use in the performance of their official duties, both on duty and working extra duty. When an employee of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office performs any law enforcement activity on or off duty, that employee could be considered to be "acting under the color of law" and the Rabun County Sheriff's Office could be held responsible and liable for the actions of the employee.

As a matter of policy for the Rabun County Sheriff's Office, civilian employees of the department do not have a law enforcement function for the Sheriff's Office and do not have the powers of arrest that a sworn, certified deputy would have. Therefore, if any civilian employee of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office wishes to carry a weapon that is regulated by statute, that employee shall contact the Probate Court of the county in which they reside to fulfill the statute requirements.

DEFINITIONS

ALTERNATE SERVICE HANDGUNS — Any firearm that has been authorized for use by a deputy of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office and that firearm has met the requirements of Sheriff's Office specifications in regards to type and caliber and has been approved by the Training Unit. Normally, the Rabun County Sheriff's Office will equip sworn law enforcement deputies with a Sheriff's Office approved and issued weapon.

BACK-UP HANDGUN — Any authorized handgun other than the primary service handgun that is carried in an on-duty or extra-duty status.

EXTRA-DUTY EMPLOYMENT — A secondary employment wherein the actual or potential use of law enforcement powers is anticipated and the employee is functioning in the capacity of a law enforcement employee of a department, although not on duty and being paid from the Sheriff's Office payroll. In such an instance, the employee is considered to be working as an employee of the secondary employer, or as an independent contractor, although his law enforcement authority arises out of his or her position within his law enforcement jurisdiction.

HANDGUN — A weapon primarily intended to be fired from the hand. In this General Order, the term handgun will refer to both the revolver and semi-automatic pistol.

OFF DUTY EMPLOYMENT — A secondary employment entirely independent of the authority arising as a law enforcement agent of the Sheriff's Office. Employment is considered to be an employment of the secondary employer or an independent contractor and is not functioning nominally in the capacity of a law enforcement employment of his agency. (Note: To be distinguished from "extra-duty" employment).

O.C. PEPPER SPRAY — A type of chemical agent with the active ingredient being Oleoresin Capsicum.

PRIMARY SERVICE HANDGUN — The firearm(s) authorized by the Sheriff's Office to be carried as part of the service uniform and related equipment for uniformed deputies, investigators (plain-clothes deputies).

REVOLVER — A weapon characterized by having a rotating cylinder and having the ammunition in this rotating cylinder.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL — A self-loading handgun which loads the ammunition from a magazine normally located in the handgrip of the weapon.

SHOTGUN — A weapon characterized by normally being fired from a shoulder mount and firing either pellets or slugs from a shell.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. Any weapon carried by a deputy when on duty must be an authorized weapon.
- B. Only ammunition that has been approved by this Sheriff's Office on a general or individual basis may be used in an authorized firearm.

- C. Only sworn deputies who have successfully completed firearms qualification and the use of force training course prescribed by this Sheriff's Office are authorized to carry a firearm. The exception to this policy is civilian employees or non-sworn deputies who are off duty and have completed the statute requirements with the Probate Court in the county in which they reside and who wish to carry a firearm under statute law.
- D. The primary service handgun shall be carried in accordance with uniform and related requirements and as otherwise specified in these policies.
- E. Deputies shall be issued fresh duty ammunition when appropriate and when needed due to usage or qualifications.
- F. Generally, deputies may carry only one primary service handgun. However, deputies on special assignment and other deputies with an articulable need may request to carry alternate primary service firearms, backup firearms, and/or alternate ammunition on a case-by-case basis.
- G. Deputies may, but are not required to carry an authorized firearm while off duty. However, deputies **MUST** be armed when in uniform and/or operating a marked vehicle whether on or off duty.
- H. Backup or off duty firearms shall be carried concealed when the officer is in plain clothes or in uniform **unless**:
 - 1. The deputy is in the workplace;
 - 2. The deputy is engaged in law enforcement actions that may reasonably require quick access to the firearm, and the deputies badge is prominently displayed near the weapon; or
 - 3. The deputy is engaged in activities where it would be permissible for a citizen to carry an exposed firearm, such as in hunting or target practice.
- I. When armed, whether on or off duty, deputies are required to carry their badge and departmental identification.
- J. When a deputy is working an extra duty employment, the deputy must be in the proper uniform of the day and must be carrying the primary service handgun, unless prior approval has been obtained in writing from the Sheriff of Rabun County or his designee(s).

II. REVIEW, INSPECTION AND APPROVAL

All weapons, prior to being carried in the performance of duty, will be inspected and approved by a qualified weapons instructor or armorer assigned to the Training Unit.

A. Sheriff's Office Issued Weapons

- 1. During scheduled weapons qualifications and training all Sheriff's Office issued firearms will be checked by Sheriff's Office Firearms Training Staff for the following: Cleanliness, Safety, Weapon Condition, and Functions Check.
- 2. This information will be recorded on the Weapons Evaluation form and kept in the individual deputies training file.

3. Any Sheriff's Office weapon found to be unsafe or malfunctioning will be taken and another weapon issued to that deputy, if available, until the weapon can be repaired or replaced.
- B. Personally Owned Weapons
1. All personally owned weapons must be of a caliber approved by the Sheriff's Office Firearms Training Staff.
 2. All personally owned weapons, prior to carrying, must be checked by Sheriff's Office Firearms Training Staff for the following: Cleanliness, Safety, Weapon Condition, and Functions Check.
 3. Any deputy with a personally owned weapon found to be unsafe or malfunctioning will be advised that the weapon is no longer authorized until repaired and re-inspected and the deputy completes a qualifying course of fire with a passing score.

III. PRIMARY SERVICE HANDGUN

- A. The primary service handgun of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office is the GLOCK Model 22 Semi-Automatic Pistol .40 caliber or the GLOCK Model 35 .40 caliber Semi-Automatic Pistol. These are the only service weapons authorized for carry by Sheriff's Office personnel. Some deputies have been issued a government model 1911, 45. Caliber pistol to carry as an alternate service pistol. All deputies that are issued this pistol have been trained on the proper use and care.
- B. The ammunition required to be carried in the Primary Service Handgun is the Federal Premium 40cal. 165 grain HST. For the Government issued 1911 the issued ammunition is the Federal Premium .45 cal. 230 grain HST. No other ammunition is authorized to be carried in the primary service handgun. In the event that an officer wishes to practice with their primary service handgun, the officer is allowed to use factory loaded hardball ammunition of the proper caliber while on the range or while practicing.
- C. Uniformed deputies who carry the GLOCK Model 22 as their duty weapon shall use the SAFARILAND RAPTOR Level II as their duty holster. No modifications shall be made to this holster as this may decrease the level of security of the holster.
- D. Uniformed deputies who carry the GLOCK Model 35 as their duty weapon shall use the SAFARILAND RAPTOR Level II as the duty holster. No modifications shall be made to this holster as this may decrease the level of security of the holster.
- E. Uniformed officers who wish to carry the primary service handgun in a holster other than the SAFARILAND RAPTOR III holster must obtain approval from their appropriate Division Commander.
- F. Plain clothes or Investigative officers may carry their primary service handgun in a holster approved by their appropriate Division Commander.
- G. Each uniformed deputy will carry three (3) magazines fully loaded when reporting for duty. This is to include the magazine in the weapon. The appropriate Division Commander will determine plain clothes or investigative assignment ammunition requirements.

IV. BACK UP WEAPON / OFF DUTY WEAPON

- A. A deputy that elects to carry a back up weapon or off duty weapon may carry a personal weapon of their choice provided however that the weapon meets departmental guidelines and the deputy has qualified with the weapon.
- B. Investigators of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office are issued a Ruger LCP .380 cal. for use as a backup weapon. The ammunition issued for this pistol is the Federal Premium 380cal, 90 grain Hydra Shock.
- C. All back up of off duty weapons must be of the following calibers:
 - 1. .40 caliber;
 - 2. .38 special;
 - 3. .380
 - 4. .357; or
 - 5. 9 millimeter.
- D. Deputies who wish to carry a back-up or off-duty weapon will be required to furnish their own ammunition. Ammunition authorized for back-up or off-duty weapons must be factory loaded with a hollow point configuration.
- E. Authorized back-up or off-duty weapons must meet the following criteria:
 - 1. Revolvers must be of a double action mode;
 - 2. Semi-automatic pistols must be capable of firing the first round in either a double action or safe action mode;
 - 3. The Training Unit must inspect the weapon for both quality and condition;
 - 4. Familiarity, handling proficiency and safety considerations for the particular weapon must be displayed to the Training Unit;
 - 5. The deputy has successfully passed the back up/off duty handgun qualification course; and
 - 6. The Training Unit will make the final determination in respect to safety and quality for a weapon to be authorized.
- F. Back-up or off-duty weapons must be secured in an appropriate holster or carrier while the weapon is being carried by the deputy. Back-up or off-duty weapons are not to be carried "stuffed" into the deputy's belt or waistband without a holster, as this is not a secure mode of carry.

V. SHOTGUNS

- A. Sworn deputies are permitted to carry a shotgun while on duty if the following criteria have been met:
 - 1. The deputy has successfully passed the shotgun qualification course;
 - 2. The shotgun is a departmental issued shotgun or
 - 3. The shotgun is a personal weapon that meets the Training Unit's and departmental requirements to be used while the deputy is on duty.

- B. The departmental requirements for a personal shotgun to be carried on duty are as follows:
 - 1. The shotgun is of a 12-gauge caliber and carries a 2 ¾ inch shell;
 - 2. The shotgun is a pump action type shotgun; and
 - 3. No modifications have been made to the shotgun with the exception of having sights installed on the weapon.
 - 4. The ammunition type to be carried in the shotgun is OO Buck or Rifled Slugs. All ammunition must be factory loaded.
 - 5. Shotguns will be carried in the following manner when not in actual use:
 - a. Secured in the passenger area of the vehicle or in the trunk of the vehicle;
 - b. Magazine loaded to full capacity;
 - c. No shell in the chamber; and
 - d. Action loose with the safety in the "On" position.
 - 6. A Supervisor will inspect the departmental issued shotguns to determine the weapon's serviceability. If the weapon is in need of repair, the supervisor will arrange to have the weapon taken out of service and advise the proper individual of the status of the weapon. If the weapon is in need of cleaning, the officer responsible for the weapon will be responsible for the proper cleaning of the weapon.
 - 7. All shotguns are to be taken out of the vehicle when taken out of service for repairs. It will be the responsibility of the officer taking the vehicle out of service to make sure all weapons are removed.

VI. O.C. PEPPER SPRAY

- A. The following are the only types of O.C. Pepper Spray authorized for use by the personnel of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office:
 - 1. The Sabre Red O.C. Pepper Spray is the type of O.C. Pepper Spray that is authorized for use by officers of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office assigned to the Rabun County Detention Center or the Court Services Division; and

2. The Cap-Stun O.C. Pepper Spray is the type of O.C. Pepper Spray that is authorized for use by deputies assigned to the Uniform Patrol Division and the Inmate Services Unit of the Rabun County Detention Center.
- B. Deputies of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office who are authorized to carry O.C. Pepper Spray will only carry their authorized O.C. Pepper Spray whether they are in an on-duty or off-duty assignment. No other types of O.C. Pepper Spray are authorized for use by the deputies of this department.
- C. The Rabun County Sheriff's Office will make adjustments in the types of O.C. Pepper Spray utilized by the deputies of this department on an on-going basis as needed.
- D. Officers need not be sworn, certified officers to carry the OC Pepper Spray, but will need to have attended the departmental training in the use of the pepper spray before the officer can be issued the pepper spray.

VII. EXPANDABLE BATON

- A. The Expandable Baton to be carried by sworn deputies of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office is the MONADONOCK "Auto Lock w/ the Power Safety Tip". This is a collapsible baton 22 inches in length when fully expanded.
- B. Deputies who carry the MONADONOCK Expandable Baton are required to attend a certification class on the baton before they carry it while on duty or while working an extra duty employment.

VIII. KNIVES

Deputies are allowed to carry a knife while on duty with the following limitations:

- A. All knives are to be the "folding" type that are readily concealed on the deputy so as not to distract from the officer's professional appearance;
- B. All knives are to be used in an appropriate manner such as for cutting safety belts in an emergency;
- C. All knives should only be taken out when there is a need to use them. There should be no "horseplay" with knives; and
- D. Deputies should be aware that in a last resort, a knife could be used to protect the officer. One circumstance is that the officer could have lost possession of his firearm and the usage of a knife is the only way the officer could protect him or herself in the emergency. However, an deputy should be aware that the use of a knife as a defensive weapon is only in the last resort and should not be attempted if there is another way to defend him or her self.

IX. SPECIAL RESPONSE TEAM

The special response team does not issue below mentioned weapons on a continual basis other than their county issued weapon. All SRT weapons are maintained in the SRT storage room, which is secured at all times (double locked).

A. Weapons

1. 9m/m Colt SMG
2. Ruger Mini 14's (223)
3. Springfield M-14's (308)
4. Remington 12 gauge pump shotguns
5. 37m/m gas guns
6. Colt H-bar rifle (223)
7. Remington 40XB bolt action rifle (300 win. Mag)
8. Remington 700 bolt action rifles (308)
9. Glock model 35 pistols (40 cal.)
10. Jaycor model 200 pepperball guns

B. Ammunition

1. 147 grain 9m/m Winchester hollow point
2. 180 grain 40 cal. Winchester hollow point
3. 168 grain .308 Federal match grade
4. 69 grain .223 Federal match grade
5. 55 grain Remington hollow point
6. 190 grain 300 mag. Federal match grade
7. 12-gauge Hollow point slugs
8. 12 gauge 00 buckshot
9. Less Lethal
 - a. 12 gauge rounds
 - b. Sock / bean bag rounds
 - c. Fin stabilized rubber bullet rounds
 - d. TKO lock buster
 - e. Rubber pellet

- f. Wood baton
- g. Shotgun diversionary devices
- h. 37 m/m rounds
- i. Bean bag
- j. Rubber pellet
- k. Foam baton
- l. Wood baton

C. Diversionary Devices

- 1. Def-Tec model 25
- 2. CTS model 7290
- 3. Omni blast
- 4. Def-Tec stinger grenades

D. Chemical Munitions

- 1. 12 ga. CS / CN rounds
- 2. 37 m/m barricade projectiles CS / CN / OC (powder & liquid)
- 3. 37 m/m blast dispersion CS / OC
- 4. CS /CN /OC Canisters
- 5. Smoke canisters
- 6. Crowd Control OC spray (liquid & powder) aerosol

X. WEAPON MODIFICATIONS

- A. Modifications to any departmental issued weapon will require the written approval of the Training Unit.
- B. The only "modification" that shall normally be allowed to a departmental issued GLOCK handgun is the adding of a slip on rubber sleeve to the grip to better fit the officer's hand.
- C. Defective, unsafe, or dangerous weapons should be reported to the Training Unit.
- D. Repairs or alterations to departmental weapons may only be made by a departmental armorer or an armorer authorized by the department to repair or work on the weapon.

- E. Authorized weapons shall be maintained in a clean and safe operating condition and shall be inspected appropriately by the officer's supervisor.

XI. WEAPON SAFETY AND CARE

Deputies are responsible for the safety and security of all issued weapons and ammunition at all times to include keeping them safe from loss, theft, or accidents. When left unattended, on or off duty, weapons should be secured in such a manner as to prevent the accidental or intentional discharge of the firearm by an unauthorized person. Employees should be especially aware of the potential hazards of storing firearms in their place of residence, taking into account access to the firearm by other occupants or visitors to the residence, including minors. The use of a trigger lock, cable lock, gun safe or other locked container for storage is recommended.

- A. It is important that each individual exercise extreme care in the handling of a weapon, whether on duty or off duty.
- B. Employees shall not store or leave any weapon in any place within the reach or access of a minor child. The use of issued or purchased trigger locks is encouraged when appropriate.
- C. All authorized weapons shall be carried in a safe and secure manner as authorized by this department.
- D. Employees shall not carry a weapon on or off duty when they are legally impaired by either drugs or alcohol.
- E. Deputies shall report to their immediate supervisor any use of prescription drugs or other medication that they reasonably believe to impair their ability or judgment to carry a weapon.
- F. Removal of a weapon from the holster or other carrying devices for other than authorized purposes- such as tactical use, securing in a vehicle or arms locker, training and qualification, inspection, or cleaning and maintenance is prohibited. Any careless, flippant, or casual use or display of a weapon will constitute grounds for disciplinary procedures.
- G. All deputies shall keep their issued weapons clean and in serviceable operating condition.
- H. Deputy's weapons are subject to inspection at any time by supervisory personnel or members of the Training Unit.
- I. It shall be each officer's responsibility to maintain his or her personally owned back up/off duty weapons and shotguns. Maintenance of these weapons will be at the owner's expense.
- J. If a departmental issued weapon is found to be in need of repair, a replacement will be provided until such time at the officer's weapon is repaired and the weapon turned into the Property Officer.
- K. Departmental weapons will be issued by the Property Officer after the Training Unit has advised the Property Officer that the officer in question is in fact authorized to be issued the weapon.
- L. The Training Unit will issue ammunition to individual officers on an as needed basis.

XII. CARRYING DUTY WEAPONS OFF-DUTY

- A. Deputies are not required to carry their duty weapon, expandable baton, or O.C. Pepper spray while off-duty, but peace officers are authorized and encouraged to do so in order to respond to emergency situations that may require the use of force.
- B. When duty weapons are carried while off-duty, they will be concealed from plain view and the deputy will possess appropriate departmental identification.
- C. Under no circumstances will weapons be carried or used either during or immediately following the use of alcohol or medication that causes impairment.
- D. Deputies are responsible for the safety and security of all issued weapons and ammunition at all times to include keeping them safe from loss, theft, or accidents.

XIII. WEAPON RECORDS (PROPERTY OFFICER)

- A. The Property Officer will maintain a complete record of all weapons issued by the department.
- B. The record(s) will list the following:
 - 1. The type of weapon;
 - 2. The model of the weapon;
 - 3. The serial number of the weapon;
 - 4. Name of the officer issued the weapon;
 - 5. Date the weapon is issued to the deputy; and
 - 6. Name of the Property Officer issued the weapon.

XIV. WEAPON RECORDS (TRAINING UNIT)

- A. The Training Unit will be responsible for maintaining all records of qualifications and certifications for all deputies.
- B. For firearms the record(s) will list the following:
 - 1. The type of weapon;
 - 2. The model of the weapon;
 - 3. The serial number of the weapon;
 - 4. Name of the deputy issued the weapon;
 - 5. Type of qualification;
 - 6. Date of qualification;
 - 7. Any scores used to qualify the deputy with the weapon to include any proficiency tests given the officer; and
 - 8. Name of the instructor conducting the training.

XV. CERTIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- A. All certifications and qualifications are the responsibility of the Training Unit.
- B. All requirements for certifications and qualifications on the weapons in the General Order are included in Chapter 11 (TRAINING).
- C. All procedures for handling failure to maintain certifications or current qualifications are included in Chapter 11 (Training).
- D. Deputies assigned to special units, such as the Special Response Team (SRT) are required to qualify using proficiency standards established by the Unit Commander and the Training Unit. These can include but are not limited to proficiency testing with weapons unique to the Special Response Team (SRT). Deputies assigned to the Special Response Team (SRT) shall be guided by and subjected to weapons training promulgated by the Unit Commander and the Training Unit.



By Order of the Sheriff: **Chad K. Nichols**
Sheriff, Rabun County