



Office with Primary Responsibility:	COP	Effective Date:	March 29, 2019
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Office(s) with Secondary Responsibilities:	Firearms Proficiency Officer	Number of Pages:	6
Forms Referenced in Procedure:	None	Related Procedures:	ALL

.01 INTRODUCTION

The VIA Metropolitan Transit Police Department provides and issues equipment utilized by officers with the exception of firearms. Officers are responsible for the purchase of their own firearms used while on duty, off duty or as a back-up. Handguns or long guns carried must be approved through the departmental process described herein and officers must demonstrate proficiency in accordance with this procedure. When selecting a firearm, officers should take into account that personally owned firearms used for duty are subject to exposure to weather conditions, possible damage or temporary confiscation during an investigation of a shooting incident. Any damages sustained to personally owned firearms are the responsibility of the officer.

.02 PRIMARY DUTY HANDGUN

- A. Primary duty Handguns for Transit Police are provided by the officer. Officers may carry their personal choice of firearm as approved by the Chief of Transit Police as per this procedure. Handguns must be [REDACTED]. All Handguns carried by an officer must be approved by the Chief of Transit Police and the Firearms Proficiency Officer and the officer must qualify with the handgun per TCOLE standards. The Firearms Proficiency Officer maintains a current list of approved on-duty handguns.
1. The list of approved on-duty handguns will be available to members in the policy section of the Police commons drive on the VIA network.
 2. A member may petition the Chief of Transit Police, through the Firearms Proficiency Officer, to have a specific handgun added to the list of approved on-duty handguns. The Firearms Proficiency Officer will make a recommendation to the Chief of Transit Police. The final decision to approve the member's petition will be made by the Chief of Transit Police.
- B. At least [REDACTED] spare magazines must be carried while on normal patrol.
- C. Officers who have handguns with light rails are allowed to install a light or light/laser unit on the handgun for duty.

.03 CARRYING WEAPONS WHILE OFF DUTY

- A. Officers are not required to be armed off duty.
- B. Officers may carry an approved handgun off duty provided the handgun is carried in a concealed manner at all times. An approved off-duty Handgun shall be a [REDACTED]. All Handguns carried by an officer must be approved by the Chief of Transit Police and the Firearms Proficiency Officer and the officer must qualify with the handgun per TCOLE standards.
- C. Officers must carry their credentials when armed off duty.
- D. Officers should carry a set of handcuffs and extra magazine/speed loader if armed off duty.



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.04 BACK-UP WEAPONS

- A. Officers may carry an approved back-up handgun while on-duty. An approved Back-up Handgun shall be [REDACTED]. All Handguns carried by an officer must be approved by the Chief of Transit Police and the Firearms Proficiency Officer and the officer must qualify with the handgun per TCOLE standards.

.05 DUTY SHOTGUN

- A. Officers may be authorized to carry shotguns in an on-duty capacity upon successful completion of a patrol/tactical shotgun course. All authorized shotguns shall be owned by the carrying officer and shall be [REDACTED] (except for approved, licensed NFA weapons). Some examples of approved shotguns are:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. Other firearms may be approved

- B. Shotguns shall have slings and can be in one, two or three point configurations. Officers shall carry shotguns [REDACTED] For patrol use, the shotgun shall:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]

- C. To deploy the shotgun, officers will:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. After deployment, if the shotgun is no longer needed for use, the safety shall be on and the shotgun slung on the officer until it is secured back in the patrol vehicle or released for investigation

- D. Officers should consider having [REDACTED]

- E. All officers must qualify per TCOLE standards and the shotgun must be approved by the Chief of Transit Police and the Firearms Proficiency Officer.

.06 PATROL RIFLES

- A. Officers may be authorized to carry a patrol rifle upon successful completion of a patrol rifle or SWAT certification course. All rifles shall be [REDACTED] (except for approved, licensed NFA weapons). Patrol rifles may be [REDACTED] operation. Some examples of approved rifles are:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]



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4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]
7. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]
9. Other firearms may be approved

- B. Patrol rifles may have fixed or flip-up sights, and/or Red-Dot type optics. Any rifles with optics shall have fixed or back up flip-up sights in case the optic fails. Rifles shall have slings and can be in one, two or three point configurations. Officers shall carry rifles [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] For patrol use, the rifle shall:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]

- C. To deploy the rifle, officers will:

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. After deployment, if the rifle is no longer needed for use, the safety shall be on and the rifle slung on the officer until it is secured back in the patrol vehicle or released for investigation

- D. Officers should have a stock mounted magazine carrier to have an additional magazine on the weapon. All officers must qualify per TCOLE standards and the rifle must be approved by the Chief of Transit Police and the Firearms Proficiency Officer.

.07 DEPLOYING RIFLES OR SHOTGUNS: The deployment of rifles and shotguns by Transit Police Officers is intended to furnish officers with an immediate capability to defend themselves and citizens against suspects who:

- A. Present an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury;
- B. Have created a circumstance where containment of the situation is not an option;
- C. Are showing a complete disregard for the safety of others;
- D. May be heavily armored or in possession of sophisticated weaponry; or where the use of a handgun would be tactically impractical, ineffective, or unsafe due to distance or other unusual conditions.

.08 AMMUNITION

- A. Handgun Ammunition: Authorized duty ammunition will be issued by the VIA Metropolitan Transit Police Department. Officer-furnished ammunition may be authorized by the Chief of Transit Police and the Firearms Proficiency Officer.



- B. Ammunition for off duty/back up weapons will be provided by the officer and must be factory made to Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) specifications, from a reputable manufacturer, and consistent with the issue ammunition.
- C. Shotgun Ammunition: Shotgun ammunition will be provided by the officer and must be factory made to Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) specifications and from a reputable manufacturer. [REDACTED]
- D. Patrol Rifle Ammunition: Duty Rifle Ammunition will be provided by the officer and must be factory made to Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) specifications and from a reputable manufacturer. [REDACTED]
- E. NOTE: Use only [REDACTED] only rifles. Do not use [REDACTED] only rifle. Caliber size will be labeled on the rifle and barrel. [REDACTED] rifles can use either ammunition. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Other types of ammunition may be authorized or prohibited by the Chief of Transit Police.

.09 HOLSTERS

Officers will purchase an approved holster (through their uniform allowance) for their primary duty weapon. Officers may use a personal holster provided the holster is approved by the Firearms Proficiency Officer and the Officer qualifies using the holster. The [REDACTED] are standard.

.10 QUALIFICATION

- A. Officers must qualify in accordance with the rules of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, exceeding the minimum standards for annual firearms proficiency. This proficiency includes:
 - 1. Safety Briefing
 - 2. Use of any target capable of being scored
 - 3. A minimum passing score of 70% of the total possible score
 - 4. A minimum of 50 rounds fired at distances from point-blank range to at least 15 yards with at least 20 rounds at or beyond seven yards, including at least one timed reload.
 - 5. Demonstration of proficiency in the care and cleaning of the weapon use.
 - 6. An external inspection by the Firearms Proficiency Officer to determine the safety functioning of the weapon.
- B. The VIA Metropolitan Transit Police Department will exceed TCOLE standards by requiring officers to demonstrate firearms proficiency with their duty weapon at least twice each calendar year firing 50 rounds of ammunition. The course of fire will be determined by the Transit Police Firearms Proficiency Officer and approved by the Chief of Transit Police. Officers will qualify once a year with duty ammunition with their duty handgun. Officers who carry a back-up or off duty handgun shall qualify at least once a year for each handgun.
- C. Those authorized to carry a shotgun shall qualify as per TCOLE standards, including [REDACTED] [REDACTED] ammunition the officer carries, at least once a year.
- D. Those authorized to carry a rifle shall qualify as per TCOLE standards, including [REDACTED] the officer carries, at least once a year.
- E. Annual training on the Use of Deadly Force
- F. Any additional Firearms Proficiency Officer designed training

.11 FAILURE TO QUALIFY: Any officer who fails to qualify under the VIA Metropolitan Transit Police Department course of fire will undergo up to 40 hours of remedial training as needed and be rescheduled to demonstrate firearms proficiency with a passing score. An officer who fails to qualify after remedial training will be subject to corrective/disciplinary action.



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- .12 **UNAUTHORIZED WEAPONS:** Officers are only authorized to carry the firearms with which they have qualified. Officers are prohibited from carrying any other unauthorized firearms.
- .13 **FIREARMS CLEARING BARREL:** Handguns are to be holstered at all times, with the exception of the rare occasion when exigent work is needed to correct a problem with a handgun. The work will be performed by an authorized armorer and the handgun will be cleared at the weapons clearing barrel. Officers shall not display their firearms, or handle weapons in an unsafe manner. Any loading of weapons will be made at the weapons clearing barrel.
- .14 **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:** Officers shall never use their weapon in an unsafe manner. The officer shall never leave their weapon unattended where someone may handle it.
- .15 **AUTHORIZED NUMBER OF FIREARMS:** Officers will be authorized no more than three approved handguns: one primary duty weapon and up to two off-duty/back-up weapons. Officers may also be approved one patrol rifle and/or one shotgun. Any additional types or quantity of firearms must be approved by the Chief of Transit Police and Firearms Proficiency Officer.
- .16 **DELIVERIES OF FIREARMS / AMMUNITION TO DEPARTMENT PROHIBITED:** Officers shall not have personal purchases of firearms and/or ammunition delivered directly to any VIA property.
- .17 **REPORTS:** Any officer pointing their weapon at a person and/or discharging their weapon, shall promptly notify their supervisor and write a Use of Force Report. Officers shall only fire their weapons as outlined in Code of Conduct Section 3.31 D. Officer-involved shootings will be investigated by the San Antonio Police Department Shooting Team inside the city limits and by Bexar County Sheriff's Department outside the city limits. Officers will be placed on administrative duty or leave until the investigation is completed or as authorized by the Chief of Transit Police.



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APPROVED DUTY HANDGUNS

MANUFACTURER	MODEL	CALIBER	

This list reflects the handguns currently accepted and used in qualifications effective March 2019. To request that a specific duty handgun be added to this list, you must follow the procedure listed in SOP 304 Weapons section .02 A. 2. which states: A member may petition the Chief of Transit Police, through the Firearms Proficiency Officer, to have a specific handgun added to the list of approved on-duty handguns. The Firearms Proficiency Officer will make a recommendation to the Chief of Transit Police. The final decision to approve the member’s petition will be made by the Chief of Transit Police.