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Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PERSONNEL CENTER POLICY

Training Safety

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1. Purpose

To establish standardized training safety guidelines.

2. Policy

The Harford County Sheriff's Office strives to provide quality and realistic training for Agency members without compromising safety.

3. Procedure

A. General Safety Procedures

1. Safety during a training exercise is paramount. Realistic training is essential to successful operations; however, the safety of participants cannot be compromised for realism.
2. The Training **Director** will be notified of all training exercises.
3. The Training **Director** may assign a Safety Officer to attend the training exercise to insure safety procedures are followed.
4. In advance of scenario training, the Training Academy and the Department of Emergency Services will be notified and given the exact location of the training.
5. If the training is within one of the municipalities of Harford County, or out of county, the appropriate communications center will also be notified of the training.
6. Whenever possible, the "Sheriff's Office Training Exercise" signs will be placed on access roads at scenario sites.
7. During scenario training, a Safety Officer will be assigned by the Lead Instructor.
 - a. The Safety Officer may not participate in the scenario.
 - b. The Safety Officer's sole responsibility will be to oversee the safety of the training.
 - c. The Safety Officer(s) will be readily identifiable by wearing a vest with "SAFETY OFFICER" emblazoned on the front and back.
 - d. The Safety Officer must be in possession of an Agency radio in order to call for assistance if needed.


8. Cellular phone numbers for the Safety Officer and Lead Instructor will be provided to the Training Academy and dispatch communications centers.
9. The Training Academy may provide safety vests for use by instructors.
10. Large training exercises will utilize multiple Safety Officers.
11. The Safety Officer(s) and Lead Instructor will have overlapping responsibilities, and both will be required to conduct separate weapons and ammunition checks of all participants.
12. The Safety Officer(s) and another participant will conduct a check of the Lead Instructor.
13. A line style check will be the preferred method to ensure that a weapons check has been conducted on all participants.
14. Prior to training, all participants must present ALL WEAPONS to the Safety Officer(s) and Lead Instructor for visual and physical inspection.
15. Unless a live fire exercise is to be conducted, NO LIVE AMMUNITION will be present in any weapon, pocket, bag, gear pouch, or other equipment used by the participants.
16. All participants will receive a safety brief prior to the start of the training exercise. The brief will remind participants of the following:
 - a. Keep finger out of the trigger guard unless on target and they have decided to fire; and
 - b. Be cognizant of target identification and backdrop.
17. Any unsafe act will be reported to the Safety Officer immediately.
18. Any participant in the training has the authority to halt the training exercise to address any safety concern.
19. Participants in the training exercise should be carrying all operational gear necessary to complete the training evolution.
20. Participants will not be allowed to obtain missing gear from their vehicles once the safety brief has begun.
21. If a break is taken during the training, the inspection process will be conducted again in its entirety.
22. Any visitors to the training site must report to the Safety Officer/designee.
23. Law Enforcement and Correctional Officers visiting the training ground will secure their firearms and ammunition prior to entering and report to the Safety Officer or designee.
24. When using vehicles as part of a training exercise, they must be checked for live ammunition as well.
25. Efforts must be made to restrict access to any area where live ammunition could be present.

26. If blank rounds are to be used, participants will be instructed to ensure that their weapons are not pointed directly at anyone within 20 feet.
27. For stalking exercises where blank rounds are to be used, deputies/trainees will not “sight-in” instructors acting as spotters/suspects down range.
28. Targets with safe back drops will be posted in the area where the spotters/suspects are located for deputies/trainees to sight-in and engage.
29. Anyone observed “sighting in” a spotter/suspect will be removed from the training.
30. When simulated ammunition is to be utilized, participants are instructed to only fire sufficient rounds to stop the threat.
31. Anyone participating in horseplay or misuse of simulated ammunition will be told to leave the training and will be subject to disciplinary action.
32. When simulated ammunition is to be utilized, participants and Safety Officer(s) must wear eye protection, long sleeve shirts, and full-length pants. In addition, groin protection such as an athletic cup or thick towel must be used for males as well as females.
33. When simulated ammunition is to be utilized, NO INTENTIONAL groin or headshots will be allowed.
34. Shots within two feet of a role-player or participant are not allowed.

B. Range Training

1. During range training, Range Officers will assume the responsibilities of the Safety Officer.
2. The designated loading/unloading station is clearly marked at the range area gate.
3. All firearms will be unloaded prior to entering the range area. Unloaded is defined as no ammunition in the chamber, no magazine in the firearm, and bolt or slide locked to the rear.
4. No loaded weapons are allowed in the classroom or pavilion area.
5. No ammunition is allowed in the cleaning area.
6. All participants and instructors will adhere to the primary rules of firearms safety.
 - a. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
 - b. Never point a firearm at anything or anybody that you do not intend to shoot, or in a direction where an unintentional discharge may do harm.
 - c. Never place your finger into the trigger guard until ready to fire.
 - d. Be sure of your target, backstop, and beyond.
7. All participants must perform a condition check on any weapon that has been out of their direct control, even for an instant.

8. Unless otherwise designated by the Range Officers, all range exercises will be conducted under hot range rules.
9. During all firearms training exercises, eye protection, hearing protection and ballistic vests will be mandatory for all participants, including Range Officers and observers.
10. Any visitors to the range must adhere to the unloading rules at the range gate and must report immediately to a Range Officer.
11. All live shoot-house exercises must be conducted by a Shoot-House instructor, trained by the HCSO.
 - a. Shoot-house participants will be instructed that strict muzzle discipline must be maintained at all times.
 - b. Once an area has been passed, any targets missed and subsequently observed may not be engaged.
12. At the conclusion of the training day, deputies will reload their duty handguns in the designated loading/unloading area prior to leaving the training ground. As a check and balance system, deputies are encouraged to verbally ask other members if weapons are loaded.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 2-7-2023