



# HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE OPERATIONS POLICY

Jeffrey R. Gahler,  
Sheriff

## Accidental Discharge of a Firearm

<b>Distribution:</b>	<b>All Sworn Employees</b>	<b>Index:</b>	<b>OPS 0601</b>
<b>Responsible Unit:</b>	<b>Rangemaster</b>	<b>Rescinds:</b>	
		<b>MD Code:</b>	

<b>Issued:</b>	<b>11/19/21</b>	<b>Reviewed:</b>	<b>11/19/21</b>	<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>11/19/24</b>
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### 1. Purpose

To provide guidelines regarding the accidental discharge of a firearm by a deputy.

### 2. Policy

This policy establishes an internal process for the documentation, review, and disposition of any incident wherein a deputy accidentally discharges a firearm.

### 3. Procedures

- A. All accidental discharge(s) of a firearm by an Agency member will be immediately reported as described in the following manner, except for occurrences which occur at the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Broadcreek Firearms Range:
  1. All accidental discharges of a firearm will be immediately reported to an on-duty Watch Commander/Duty Officer at the respective precinct. All accidental discharges occurring at the HCSO Broadcreek Firearms Range facility will be reported to the on-duty senior range officer/supervisor.
    - a. Upon being advised of an accidental discharge, the Watch Commander/Duty Officer will immediately notify the respective precinct Division Commander, who will in turn make necessary command notifications.
    - b. If occurring in-county, a Police Operations Bureau supervisor must respond to the scene of the incident.
  2. In cases involving property damage or personal injury the Division Commander will also ensure that an Incident Report is completed documenting the incident, a Supervisor's Incident Report ([SIR](#)) is completed, and a First Report of Injury ([SO-016](#)) is completed (if necessary).
  3. The Division Commander will forward all documents regarding the accidental discharge, with a copy to the Rangemaster, to the Bureau Chief for his recommendation on whether the discharge was due to negligence or an accident, who will then forward them to the Chief Deputy for his determination.
  4. The Division Commander of the member having the accidental discharge or his designee will also personally meet with the member who had the accidental discharge to determine if he is capable of

continuing regular duty status and will document this interview in a Memorandum (SO-212) and forward same to the Bureau Chief for his recommendation, and finally to the Chief Deputy for this determination.

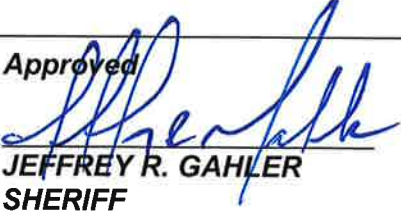
5. If the Division Commander determines that the member having the accidental discharge is not capable of returning to duty, he will decide the member's duty status after consultation with the respective Bureau Chief.
6. The Division Commander, after consultation with the Investigative Services Bureau Chief, and upon receipt of all documentation, will determine if there is cause to conduct an administrative investigation via the Office of Professional Standards (OPS).

B. Accidental Discharge at the HCSO Broadcreek Firearms Range

1. If an accidental discharge occurs at the Broadcreek firearms range, all range activity will cease immediately, and the Rangemaster or designee and Training Director will be immediately notified of the incident.
2. The Rangemaster or designee will determine if instruction will continue or if it will be concluded for the day.
3. Upon being advised of an accidental discharge, the Training Director will immediately notify the Planning and Research (P&R) Division Commander, who will in turn make necessary command notifications.
4. The Rangemaster or his designee will ensure that an Incident Report, Supervisor's Incident Report (SIR), and a First Report of Injury (SO-016) are completed (if necessary).
5. In cases involving property damage or personal injury the P&R Division Commander or his designee will also ensure that an Incident Report is completed documenting the incident.
6. The P&R Division Commander will forward all documents regarding the accidental discharge to the Chief Deputy with a copy to the Rangemaster.
7. The Division Commander of the member having the accidental discharge or his designee will personally meet with the member who had the accidental discharge to determine their duty status, and will document the details of the interview in a memorandum and forward same to the respective Bureau Chief.
8. If the member's Division Commander determines that the member having the accidental discharge is not capable of returning to duty, he will determine the member's duty status after consultation with the respective Bureau Chief.
7. The Division Commander, after consultation with the Investigative Services Bureau Chief, and upon receipt of all documentation, will determine if there is cause to conduct an administrative investigation via the Office of Professional Standards (OPS).

C. Review Procedures

1. In cases involving the accidental discharge of a firearm, before returning to full duty status, the member will be required to attend a firearms safety lecture and will be required to requalify with their issued Agency weapon(s).

Approved  
  
JEFFREY R. GAHLER  
SHERIFF  
DATE 11/23/2021