

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURE**

**DATE:** JUNE 11, 2019

**NUMBER:** 1.41 – ADMINISTRATION

**SUBJECT:** RIFLE CALIBER CARBINE

**RELATED POLICY:** 1.04, 1.05

**ORIGINATING DIVISION:** TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

**NEW PROCEDURE:**

**PROCEDURAL CHANGE:**  **EXTENSIVE CHANGES**

**SUPERSEDES:** DP 1.41 – 06/20/2017

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**I. PURPOSE**

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for the use of rifle caliber carbines.

**II. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all sworn members of the Department.

**III. BACKGROUND**

The rifle caliber carbine provides officers the ability to engage hostile suspects at distances generally greater than the effective distance of their handguns. The use of the rifle caliber carbine in response to a deadly force situation shall be governed by this procedure and Department Procedures 1.04, Use of Force, and 1.05, Firearms Procedures. The use of this weapon will also be evaluated and reviewed in accordance with criteria contained in the law.

**IV. DEFINITION**

- A. Rifle Caliber Carbine – A semi-automatic shoulder-fired long gun that fires a rifle caliber cartridge. The Department-approved carbine is the AR15 style weapon system designed to fire a .223/5.56 caliber projectile.

## V. PROCEDURES

### A. Authorized Uses

1. Only those officers who have successfully completed the “Two-Day Basic Rifle” class, or the SWAT equivalent, and pass the rifle qualification shoot are authorized to carry the rifle.
2. Rifles offer advantages over handguns, such as increased accuracy potential and the ability to defeat soft body armor but are not appropriate for every situation. Officers and supervisors must use good judgment in deciding whether to deploy a rifle. Officers may deploy the rifle when the officer can articulate why the rifle is the most reasonable force option for the situation.
3. Factors to consider before deployment include but are not limited to:
  - a. Active Shooter situation.
  - b. The officer reasonably believes the suspect is wearing body armor.
  - c. Armed/multiple suspects.
  - d. Suspect’s weapon system is superior to what officers normally carry on-duty.
  - e. The situation requires accurate gunfire at distances greater than the officer’s effective range with a handgun.

### B. Rifle Storage

1. The rifle may be carried in marked vehicles equipped with an interior dual gun mount only if the mount is specifically designed for the AR-15 and prevents disassembling the weapon and removing it from the mount. If carried in the interior dual gun mount, the weapon must be locked in when not in use. The rifle shall be stored or transported in the patrol vehicle’s trunk if an AR-15 specific interior mount is not available.
2. Rifles shall be carried in the vehicle with a loaded magazine in the weapon, hammer down on an empty chamber, with the bolt forward and with the safety in the “Fire” position. This condition is known as “Patrol Ready.” The rifle shall not be stored or carried in a vehicle with a cartridge in the chamber.
3. The rifle shall be loaded only with Department-approved ammunition.

C. Rifle Loading and Unloading Procedures / Patrol Ready

1. Patrol Ready

a. Inspect with the rifle pointed in a safe direction. Ensure there is no ammunition and no magazines in your possession while making the rifle patrol ready.

(1) Place the safety in the “SAFE” position.

(2) Ensure the magazine is removed from the rifle.

(3) Lock the bolt open and inspect the chamber and magazine area.

(4) Verify the weapon is empty.

(5) While watching and ensuring the chamber is empty, close the bolt.

(6) Place the safety in the “FIRE” position. With the rifle pointed in a safe direction, pull the trigger.

(7) Insert a loaded magazine.

b. Chambering a Cartridge

Pull the charging handle rearward and release it. The rifle is now ready to fire. If not on target and ready to fire, the safety must immediately go to the “SAFE” position.

2. Unloading a rifle once chambered.

a. Ensure the rifle is pointed in a safe direction. Place the safety in the “SAFE” position.

b. Remove the magazine.

c. With the finger off the trigger, point the muzzle of the rifle in a safe direction.

d. Pull the charging handle rearward, releasing the chambered cartridge (if one exists).

e. Lock the bolt “OPEN.”

f. Inspect the chamber area to verify that the weapon is empty.

3. To reduce the danger of injury associated with an unintentional discharge, the rifle shall not be loaded or unloaded in a vehicle, in a police facility, under any overhead structure, or close to multi-storied buildings (e.g., Headquarters E Street parking lot).

D. Rifle Caliber Carbine Cleaning, Maintenance and Repairs

- NEW
1. Officers approved to carry a rifle are responsible for its care and routine maintenance. If the rifle needs servicing or repair beyond routine maintenance, the rifle shall be brought to the Range. Only Range personnel are authorized to service and/or repair Department-issued rifles. SWAT weapons are maintained by the SWAT Armorer.

- NEW
2. Patrol Rifles shall be sighted-in with iron sights and powered optical sights (if equipped) every shift.

E. Rifle Qualification Requirements

- NEW
1. Officers who are certified to carry a personally-owned, or Department-issued, patrol rifle must attend two mandatory Rifle Training Shoots and attend, and successfully pass, one Rifle Qualification Shoot every year. SWAT personnel qualify with AR-15 style rifles annually through SWAT. Current members of SWAT are exempt from the above requirements.

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2. A mandatory Rifle Training Shoot will be conducted in each of the first two shifts of the calendar year (normally January-May and May-September).

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3. A mandatory Rifle Qualification-only shoot will be conducted during the third shift of the year (normally September-January).

- NEW
4. Prior to every mandatory Training Shoot and Qualification Shoot, each rifle will be inspected by Range staff for unauthorized accessories or modifications. If a rifle has unauthorized accessories or modifications which may affect the performance of the weapon, the officer will not be allowed to shoot and is not authorized to carry the rifle on duty until it is in compliance. The list of approved accessories is available from Range staff. A notice of any violation will be sent to the officer's supervisor, indicating the offense and the corrective action needed.

- NEW
5. Failure to attend and complete any one of the mandatory Rifle Training Shoots listed above will be grounds for the suspension of a Department member's certification with their Patrol Rifle. Department-issued rifles will be returned to the Firearms Training Unit and stored until the officer

attends the “Two-Hour Rifle Refresher” course, and successfully passes the rifle qualification during the course. Officers with personal rifles will not be allowed to carry the rifle on duty until the officer attends the “Two-Hour Rifle Refresher” course, and successfully passes the rifle qualification during the course. The “Two-Hour Rifle Refresher” course will generally be held during the month following each of the first two shifts of the year, normally May and September. **Failure to attend and complete two mandatory Training Shoots in succession will permanently revoke the Department member’s patrol rifle status.**

NEW

6. If, during the annual Rifle Qualification shoot, an officer fails to qualify on the first attempt, he or she will be immediately provided another opportunity to successfully complete the qualification shoot. If the officer does not qualify after two attempts, he or she will be directed to secure the rifle. The officer’s rifle status will be suspended. Department-owned rifles will be held at the Firearms Training Unit. The officer will be permitted to check out the rifle to practice on their own, or with an instructor. The officer will be scheduled to attend the next “Two-Day Basic Rifle” class. To re-certify with their rifle the officer must successfully complete the class and pass the rifle qualification during the course. Ammunition will be provided by the Firearms Training Unit.

NEW

7. Personnel who own their rifle and fail the rifle qualification shoot will have their rifle status suspended. The officer will be directed not to take their rifle on patrol. The officer will be permitted to take their rifle to the Police Range to practice on their own, or with an instructor, in preparation to re-certify. The officer will be scheduled to attend the next “Two-Day Basic Rifle” class. To re-certify with their rifle the officer must successfully complete the class and pass the rifle qualification during the course. Ammunition will be provided by the Firearms Training Unit.

NEW

8. If due to negligence, or without authorized excusal from the Rangemaster (i.e.: Military Leave, Industrial Leave, etc.), an officer fails to attend the mandatory Rifle **Training** shoots, the officer will be notified they are out of compliance and their rifle certification will be **revoked**. Department-owned rifles will be immediately returned to the Range Staff for re-issue. Officers with personally-owned rifles will be told to secure them at the officer’s residence and the rifle is not to be carried, or practiced with, at any San Diego Police Department facility.

NEW

9. If due to negligence, or without authorized excusal from the Rangemaster (i.e.: Military Leave, Industrial Leave, etc.), an officer fails to attend the annual Rifle **Qualification**, the officer will be notified they are out of compliance and their rifle certification will be **revoked**. Department-owned rifles will be immediately returned to the Range Staff for re-issue. Officers with personally-owned rifles will be told to secure them at the

officer's residence and the rifle is not to be carried, or practiced with, at any San Diego Police Department facility.

10. Personnel returning from Military leave or long-term disability should contact the Rangemaster for re-qualification procedures.
11. The Department will provide ammunition for the mandatory training and qualification shoots. Sixty rounds of practice ammunition per month will be provided for officers who are current with their rifles.

F. Personal Weapons

1. The Department authorizes the personal purchase and carrying of the rifle.
2. Officers are restricted to the AR15 style weapon system chambered in caliber .223/5.56 Remington. The AR15 style rifles will be as follows:
  - a. Semi-automatic
  - b. An overall barrel length of 16 inches
  - c. A-2 or A-3 style upper and lower receivers
  - d. Fixed or adjustable stocks are authorized
  - e. Direct impingement operating system only, no gas piston systems
  - f. Black in finish
3. Officers who desire to purchase and carry a personal rifle shall first complete the Department authorization and inspection process. The original copy of the PD-899TR, Authorization to Carry a Personal Weapon form, shall be placed in the officer's personnel file that is maintained in the Human Resources Division at Headquarters. A copy of the form is provided to the officer.
4. The personal rifle is not included in the five-gun limit that officers are restricted to for personally-owned weapons.
5. Officers who carry their personal rifle shall be responsible for the condition, cleaning and maintenance of their weapon. Department-owned rifles requiring beyond normal maintenance or repairs shall be brought to the Range.
6. The Rangemaster shall develop and maintain a list of authorized rifles, accessories, and equipment that may be used on the rifles. The list is

posted at the Range and will be available from the Range staff. Equipment, accessories, and modifications not on the list are not authorized for carry. As time permits, Range staff is available to install authorized accessories and equipment.