



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Weapons and Officer Survival Skills

POLICY NO.: E-3.0

Revision Date: June 2025

POLICY STATEMENT

Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) enforcement employees will be authorized to carry and use weapons to protect themselves and others from injury or life-threatening aggression and to perform related wildlife management duties. Enforcement employees shall carry and use weapons in accordance with this policy and all related sections set forth in enforcement policy E-2.0 - Use of Force.

This policy identifies Department training requirements and authorized weapons and related equipment for Conservation Officers and Level 1 enforcement employees (as defined in policy E- 5.0), and the requirements for use of firearms by all classified employees for non-enforcement functions.

A. Definitions

1. Department: The Idaho Department of Fish and Game.
2. Department Issued: Any state purchased/owned property.
3. Enforcement Employee: All conservation officer classes and level I enforcement employees.
4. Defensive Intermediate Weapon: Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) chemical agent spray and the collapsible baton (or other blunt striking object such as a flashlight).
5. Firearm: Any type of handgun, rifle or shotgun.
6. Secondary/Backup Weapon: An additional handgun carried concealed and in conjunction with your primary duty weapon or alternate weapon.
7. Alternate Weapon: A weapon carried in place of a primary duty weapon.
8. Long-Gun: Any type of rifle or shotgun meeting policy specifications.

B. Requirements and Methods of Weapon Carry

1. During the conduct of planned overt enforcement contacts conservation officers (excluding conservation officer special investigators and regional investigators) and Level I enforcement employees in uniform or in plain clothes shall be armed with their duty or alternate weapon and shall carry at least one type of authorized defensive intermediate weapon upon their person and handcuffs or other authorized restraint device (i.e. flex, etc.).
2. All Department issued weapons, when not in use, shall be stored in a safe, secure place to prevent their unauthorized possession or use.



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3. The carry and use of firearms, defensive intermediate weapons (batons) or defensive chemical weapons for law enforcement purposes shall be in accordance with policy E-2.0 - Use of Force.
4. All enforcement personnel are authorized to carry Department firearms while off duty.

C. Firearms

1. Enforcement employees on enforcement field duty, working in uniform or in plain clothes, will carry at least one (1) enforcement duty handgun unless on special assignment and with supervisory approval.
2. Enforcement handguns carried on official duty must be fully charged (full magazine with round in the chamber) with a minimum of at least one (1) additional fully loaded magazine or speed loader carried on the employee's person.
3. Uniform enforcement handgun carry will be in the Department authorized duty-belt unless on special assignment or with supervisory approval.
4. Plain-clothes enforcement handgun carry will be in a Department authorized holster, accompanied with Department identification card and badge.
5. Department issued handguns carried off duty will be accompanied with a Department identification card and badge.
6. Alternate handguns meeting specifications may be carried in place of the Department issued duty handgun as a primary weapon with supervisor approval for special uniform and plain clothes assignments.
7. Secondary/backup handgun, upon supervisory approval, may be carried on the employee's person and will be carried fully concealed.
8. All long guns carried in Department vehicles will be carried in a secure and accessible manner with an empty chamber. Department issued duty rifles and shotguns will be locked and secured to the interior structure of marked vehicles. Duty rifles carried in unmarked vehicles may be stored out of view and reasonably accessible.
9. Department issued duty rifles and shotguns will be equipped with a sling approved by the Enforcement Bureau and Department Firearms instructor.

D. Chemical Weapons

1. The Department-approved defensive chemical weapon shall be Oleoresin Capsicum chemical agent spray utilizing a 5-10% solution of oleoresin capsicum in 1/2 ounce or larger container sizes. Product carrier/propellant bases should not contain HCFC Dymel-22.



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2. Replacement and Disposal Procedures

It shall be the employee's responsibility to ensure that all defensive chemical weapons are replaced prior to the listed manufacturer's expiration date, regardless of use.

3. Defensive Impact Weapons

The Department-approved defensive impact weapon shall be a collapsible baton constructed from metal in expanded lengths of 14-28 inches.

E. Enforcement-Duty Firearms

1. Employees will use only Department issued factory ammunition in Department issued firearms. Department issued handguns will be the Glock Model 45, Model 19, and Model 17. Enforcement employees on special assignments will be authorized, with supervisory approval, to carry personally owned or Department issued secondary or alternate firearms that meet these specifications:

- a. Alternate weapon: .32 --.45 caliber. Single/double action semi-automatics or double action revolvers with appropriate factory safety devices.
- b. Secondary/backup weapon: > .22 caliber. Single/double action semi-automatics or revolvers with appropriate factory safety devices.

2. Shotguns, either Department issued or personally owned, will be authorized as follows:

- a. 12 gauge.
- b. Semi-automatic; bolt or pump action.
- c. Possess a minimum barrel length of 18 inches and a maximum of 32 inches long overall.
- d. Possess fixed/adjustable standard or self-luminous iron sights.
- e. Capable of holding a minimum of three (3) rounds fully charged.

3. The Department issued rifle will be a Primary Weapon System (PWS) MK III Mod1-M equipped with the Odin Works LEX556 Suppressor.

4. Authorized Enforcement Equipment

- a. Uniform duty belt, holster and accessories will be Department issued.
- b. Alternate holsters for plain-clothes operations must be approved by a Department firearms instructor prior to use and must make the weapon safe secure and available.



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- c. Carry method for secondary/backup weapons must be approved by a Department firearms instructor. The carry method must make the weapon safe and available.
 - d. Body armor will be Department issued and will meet or exceed threat level II NIJ standards. Body armor replacement will be according to manufacturer warranty/recommendations. Employees are required to wear body armor when conducting any uniformed enforcement patrol.
5. Firearm Servicing, Repair, Mechanical Alteration, Maintenance
- a. All firearms will be inspected/repaired/certified operational by original manufacturer, certified civilian gunsmith, or Department armorer before the firearm is issued.
 - b. Employees will be responsible for the routine care and maintenance of Department issued firearms, or any firearm used for Department purposes.
 - c. Firearms authorized for duty carry will be inspected upon malfunction, or when damaged.
 - d. ONLY Certified Armorers are authorized to disassemble Department issued firearms beyond the basic field strip.
 - e. All firearms in need of repair will be immediately taken out of service and scheduled for repair.
 - f. All firearm servicing and repairs performed on authorized enforcement firearms will be performed by a certified Department armorer or certified civilian gunsmith (excluding field emergencies).
 - g. Under no circumstances will any Department issued firearm be mechanically altered in any manner.

F. Training and Certification Requirements

- 1. In compliance with IDAPA 11.11.01.131 To retain POST certification, a peace officer must complete a minimum of forty (40) hours of continuing law enforcement training as directed by the POST Council every two (2) calendar years beginning January 1 following the date the officer was certified. This training must include a combined minimum twenty-four (24) hours of continuing law enforcement training in the following topics: a. Firearms: Eight (8) hours and an annual proficiency test (qualification); b. Arrest Techniques/Defensive Tactics (ARCON): Eight (8) hours; c. Emergency Vehicle Operation: Four (4) hours; d. Legal Update(s): Four (4) hours.



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2. Employees authorized to carry and use defensive chemical weapons or defensive impact weapons for law enforcement purposes shall:
 - a. Successfully complete the Department's Officer Survival Skills training program.
 - b. Annually pass the Officer Survival Skills practical test.
 - c. Annually pass the use of force and weapons written examination with a minimum score of 80%.
 - d. Complete training related to defensive tactics annually to include the use of defensive intermediate weapons.
3. Enforcement employees, before being authorized to carry any firearm for enforcement purposes, will successfully complete the following training and qualification courses:
 - a. Initial Firearms Qualification Course.
 - b. Department handgun course semi-annually.
 - c. Department rifle course annually.
 - d. Department secondary/alternate handgun qualification course annually (if applicable).
 - e. Department weapons and use of force written examination annually with a minimum passing score of 80%.

G. Training & Qualification Reporting and Records

All training and qualifications will be submitted to the Enforcement Bureau on the appropriate Department or POST training form(s). Instructors will complete, submit, and record/file training/qualification reports as follows:

1. Qualification/Examination scores will be recorded on the CE-92 Firearms Qualification report and Officer Survival Skills (OSS) form as pass or fail.
2. Related law enforcement training courses will be recorded on the CE-91 "in-service" Training Report form.
3. Statewide Training/Qualification records are maintained by the Enforcement Bureau for all enforcement employees.



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H. Certification

1. Armorer Training and Certification

Department armorers will successfully complete an armorer school as appropriate prior to performing firearm inspections and/or servicing or repairing any Department issued firearms Instructor Training and Certification

All Department firearms instructors and OSS instructors will be POST certified. Department instructor's will maintain their POST certification and will submit substantiating documentation to the Enforcement Bureau annually.

I. Failure to Pass Qualifications, Training, Written Examinations

1. Enforcement employees are required to successfully complete the OSS practical test, the weapons qualification courses, and the weapons and use of force written test. Failing any of these examinations will result in a re-take of that particular written, practical or qualification test.

2. Enforcement employees failing to pass any mandatory written or practical proficiency test, use of force or policy examination or POST/Department qualification course will be required to re-take the written/practical examination/qualification.

3. If enforcement employees fail the reassessment within thirty (30) days following the initial qualification and training date, the Regional Supervisor or Bureau Chief will take the following mandatory actions. The change in duty status will remain in effect until the employee has successfully passed the failed qualification or test.

a. Employee will turn in all Department owned firearms, intermediate weapons and handcuffs to the Regional Conservation Officer, and will not be allowed to carry any firearms or intermediate weapons for enforcement purposes.

b. Employee will not be allowed to participate in the following activities:

1. Non-Title 36 enforcement work

2. Search warrants

3. Arrest warrants

4. Physical arrests

5. Pursuits

4. The Regional Supervisor or Bureau Chief and Regional Conservation Officer will discuss this list of items with the employee to make certain he/she understands that he/she cannot participate in these kinds of work. The Regional Supervisor or Bureau Chief will have the option of making these work assignments more restrictive if he/she deems necessary in



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order to gain compliance with the policy and/or to protect the employee from risk of injury. The Regional Supervisor or Bureau Chief will assign the employee to enforcement and/or non-enforcement work within the above mandates.

5. The Regional Supervisor or Bureau Chief will decide if the employee will be allowed to use a Department vehicle.
6. The Human Resource Officer will prepare a Notice of Contemplated Action (NOCA) clearly stating that dismissal or possible reassignment to a non-enforcement position for which the employee is qualified within the Department will be recommended if the employee is unable to pass the qualification or test after two (2) more qualification/testing attempts within the following six (6) month period. The Regional Supervisor or Bureau Chief will personally review the NOCA with the employee.
7. Because the employee's skill level is not adequate enough to defend himself/herself or others, or to effectively perform during a public safety emergency, the employee will continue on change-of-duty status and will remain on change-of-duty status until all qualification/testing requirements are met. The Enforcement Bureau Chief will be advised of any testing failures requiring change-of-duty status for an employee.
8. During the six (6) month period, supervisors and a Department Post Certified instructor will coordinate remedial training to help the employee meet qualification and testing standards. This assistance will include the preparation of a written training program to assist the employee. The written training program will be prepared by the employee's immediate supervisor with assistance from the Regional Conservation Officer and Department POST Certified Instructor and will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file.

J. Non-Enforcement Employee use, Transport and Carry of Firearms/Chemical Weapons

Firearms – Classified employees, non-classified employees, temporary employees, reservists, and volunteers, who successfully complete a hunter education course, have a concealed weapons permit, or hold a current valid hunting license, are authorized to use, carry and transport personal and/or state-owned firearms in state/private vehicles for non-enforcement purposes when in compliance with local, state, and federal law.

Non-enforcement employees and volunteers that choose to carry a handgun while working in any department capacity must keep the handgun concealed. Limited exceptions to this portion of the policy will be considered for personnel safety during wildlife management activities (e.g., grizzly bear trapping, WHART). Exceptions will be reviewed and considered by the Regional Supervisor.

Any Classified non-enforcement employee that wishes to open-carry while wearing a standard uniform must comply with level one training requirements outlined in Policy E-5.0.

Range Safety Officers, clearly identifiable (e.g., wearing an official vest) and acting in an official capacity on Department owned and managed shooting ranges may open carry.



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For employees and volunteers who choose to carry a firearm as a personal choice as allowed by this policy (i.e., carrying a firearm where it is not required as a responsibility for law enforcement or wildlife management purposes), this policy should not be interpreted as a directive or authorization to carry or use a firearm in any particular manner. In such cases, an employee's personal decision to carry a firearm is outside the course and scope of the employee's employment or volunteer work, and the Department is not liable for any outcomes of the employee or volunteer choosing to carry a firearm. Idaho Code Section 5-341 provides immunity to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game as an employer relative to liability for injuries from an employee or volunteer's personal choice to carry a firearm. This policy should also not be considered as authorization for a person who is prohibited by law or order from firearm possession.

K. Chemical Weapons

Classified employees, non-classified employees, temporary employees, reservists, and volunteers may carry OC for personal defense with Regional Supervisor approval.