

IN-SERVICE USE OF FORCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR PEACE OFFICERS AND PART-TIME PEACE OFFICERS

INTRODUCTION

The authority to use deadly force, conferred on peace officers by statute, is a critical responsibility that shall be exercised judiciously and with respect for human rights and dignity and for the sanctity of every human life. Further, every person has a right to be free from excessive use of force by officers acting under color of law.

The following learning objectives have been developed to assist law enforcement agencies in providing use of force continuing education to officers. Pursuant to MN STAT 626.8452 this training must be provided to all peace officers and part-time peace officers annually and each officer is required to receive instruction relative only to weapons and equipment the officer is issued or authorized to use. The term annually has been defined by the POST Board to mean at least once per calendar year.

There are many formats for delivering continuing education. Agencies are encouraged to explore creative and co-operative means of providing this education. Each law enforcement agency must determine minimum competency levels appropriate for agency personnel and nothing in these objectives prohibits an agency from developing additional objectives, or setting higher standards. Agencies are also encouraged to submit suggestions for revisions to these objectives to the POST Board.

A. USE OF FORCE

General learning goal: The officer will explain the criteria that are used to determine when force may be employed, the circumstances that justify the use of deadly force, and the liabilities attached to the use of force.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will identify the four instances in which MN STAT 609.06 subd. 1(a)-(d) authorizes a public officer to use reasonable force.
2. The officer will demonstrate familiarity with the agency's policies concerning the use of deadly force.
3. The officer will explain why MN STATS 629.32 and 629.33 are relevant to use of force.
4. The officer will explain the concept of objectively reasonable use of force by peace officers and factors that influence the tool, technique or tactic an officer may choose to use in a situation. The following concepts will be discussed:
 - a) Verbal skills.
 - b) Empty hand techniques.
 - c) Intermediate weapons.
 - d) Deadly Force.
 - e) Totality of the circumstances.

5. The officer will demonstrate knowledge of how an individual's physical, mental health, developmental or intellectual disabilities may affect the individual's ability to understand or comply with commands from peace officers.
6. The officer will explain how, normally less lethal techniques and weapons may become lethal.
7. The officer will demonstrate knowledge of the circumstances under which a peace officer may use deadly force under MN STAT 609.066.
8. The officer will demonstrate familiarity with the agency's policies concerning the use of force.
9. The officer will explain the civil, criminal, licensing, and employment consequences of unlawful or unreasonable use of force.
10. The officer will demonstrate knowledge of the duty to intercede and duty to report when observing another officer using force in violation of section 609.066 subd. 2 or otherwise beyond that which is reasonable under the circumstances.

B. READINESS ASPECTS OF USE OF FORCE

General learning goal: The officer will explain the importance of mental and physical readiness, and emotional trauma.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will explain how extremely stressful situations will affect physical and mental functioning. The explanation must cover the following.
 - a) Breathing and circulation.
 - b) Changes in sensory perception.
 - c) Changes in motor skills.
 - d) Physical trauma
2. The officer will identify the symptoms of emotional trauma that may arise from critical incidents and discuss the need for evaluating and treating their effects, to include:
 - a) Sleep disturbances.
 - b) Emotional distancing.
 - c) Hyper-alertness or exaggerated startle response.
 - d) Memory impairment or trouble concentrating.
 - e) Inability to express feelings.
3. The officer will explain the agency's response to officers involved in deadly force and other critical incidents.
4. The officer will explain the concept of "post-shooting trauma" that people can have varying responses when force, including deadly force, is applied.

C. VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

General Learning Goal: The officer will explain the importance of and demonstrate proficiency in integrating communication skills where safe and feasible along with tactical de-escalation strategies in volatile situations.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will understand the importance of the following areas:
 - a) Active listening and verbalization/command skills
 - b) Use of volume, pitch and pace.
 - c) Contextual or non-verbal communication: body language.
 - d) Lack of compliance considerations: Medical conditions, mental impairment, physical limitations, language barrier, behavior crisis, drugs or alcohol use.
 - e) De-escalation/conflict management strategies: when safe and feasible, barriers, containment, communication, limiting exposure, distance, and other tactics to reduce the need for force.

D. PROFICIENCY WITH UNARMED CONTROL MEASURES

General learning goal: The officer will demonstrate proficiency and explain the importance of unarmed control measures which are authorized by the officer's agency.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will demonstrate proficiency in the following areas:
 - a) Handcuffing techniques (and other restraining devices) from positions: prone, standing, kneeling.
 - b) Weapon retention-authorized firearms (in and out of holster) and other agency approved equipment including electronic control weapons.
 - c) Empty hand techniques
 - d) Integration of empty hand techniques and weapons systems to include weapon transitioning and weapon retention.
2. Identify limitations on the use of certain restraints by a peace officer as described in Minn. Stat. 609.06, including limitations on chokeholds, tying all of a person's limbs together behind a person's back, and securing a person in any way that results in transporting the person face down in a vehicle.
 - a) Describe and demonstrate protocols and procedures designed to safely transport a person in custody.

E. PROFICIENCY WITH INTERMEDIATE FORCE WEAPONS

General learning goal: The officer will discuss and demonstrate proficiency with the various intermediate weapons used by the agency.

Performance Objectives:

1. If the officer is issued or authorized to carry or use chemical aerosols, impact weapons, specialty impact munitions, electronic weapons, or other intermediate weapons, the officer will demonstrate proficiency in the use of these weapons consistent with agency policy (or policies).
2. Discuss the impact of low light and adverse weather conditions on the use of intermediate weapons.

F. PRINCIPLES OF FIREARMS USE

General learning goal: During the course of practical firearms training, (sections F and G) the officer will demonstrate knowledge of firearms safety, firearms maintenance, handgun shooting principles and familiarization with authorized firearms. This training will be consistent with agency policies and individual officer assignments.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will demonstrate safe handling of all firearms used during training. This will include:
 - a) Safely and correctly loading and unloading the firearms.
 - b) Safely and correctly holstering and drawing the firearms.
 - c) Safely and correctly clearing malfunctions.
 - d) Safely and correctly maintaining authorized firearms.
2. The officer will describe the various methods of handling and storing firearms while off-duty in compliance with MN STAT 609.666. The need for security of firearms kept in the officer's home will also be explained.
3. The officer will identify authorized firearms categories and corresponding ammunition utilized by the agency.
4. The officer will explain situations in which use of the weak hand may be required.
5. The officer will explain the circumstances that justify the use of deadly force by peace officers.

G. HANDGUN RANGE EXERCISES

General learning goal: Any officer who is issued or is authorized to carry a handgun, will effectively and safely utilize the authorized handgun(s) on a qualification course of fire.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will demonstrate effective techniques in the following areas:
 - a) Close encounter shooting.
 - b) Shooting from cover.
 - c) Reloading Techniques.
 - d) Weapon/reaction hand shooting.

2. The officer will fire a qualification course consisting of no less than 50 rounds. The course of fire may be conducted with duty ammunition, or with lead free, frangible, or non-toxic ammunition that has ballistic performance similar to the issued service ammunition.
3. During the course of fire, the officer will fire from close, medium and long range. Close range means less than 7 yards; medium range means 7 to 14 yards; and long range means 15 to 25 yards (Suggested use of ammunition allotment: 50% at close range; 40% at medium range and 10% at long range.)
4. The agency will determine the minimum proficiency to be obtained for successful completion of the exercise.

H. OTHER FIREARMS RANGE EXERCISES

General learning goal: Any officer who is authorized to use other firearms (shotgun, rifle, etc.) will effectively and safely utilize these firearms in a qualification course of fire.

Performance Objectives: Shotgun

1. Given a qualification course of fire, the officer will successfully complete the following:
 - a) The officer will fire the weapon at various distances, using various shooting positions.
 - b) The officer shall consider the projectile spread and background beyond the area of the immediate threat when making the decision to select the shotgun or other authorized firearm.
 - c) During this exercise, the officer may use duty ammunition, or ammunition that has ballistic performance similar to the issued service ammunition. It is recommended that officers' duty ammunition, if not expended during the yearly course of fire, be replaced at least every two years.
 - d) The agency will determine the minimum proficiency to be obtained for successful completion of the exercise.
 - e) The officer will fire a minimum of 10 rounds during this exercise.

Performance Objectives: Rifle

- a) The officer will fire the weapon at various distances, using various shooting positions.
- b) The officer shall consider distance and shot accuracy when selecting the rifle or other authorized firearm.
- c) During this exercise, the officer may use duty ammunition or ammunition that has ballistic performance similar to the issued duty ammunition. It is recommended that the officer's duty ammunition be replaced every two years.
- d) The agency will determine the minimum proficiency to be obtained for successful completion of the exercise.
- e) The officer will fire a minimum of 20 rounds during this exercise.

I. FIREARM SELECTION

General learning goal: The officer will identify the situations and considerations involved in determining which firearm (handgun or other firearm) is appropriate in various tactical situations.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will identify important considerations when deciding which firearm should be used in a tactical situation, to include:
 - a) The physical environment.
 - b) The number of suspect(s).
 - c) The weapons available to suspect(s).
 - d) The presence of bystanders, hostages, or other innocent persons.
 - e) The presence and deployment of assisting officers.
 - f) The officer's level of training with authorized weapons.
 - g) The firearms policy of the agency.
 - h) The potential for ricochet, projectile pattern and projectile penetration.

2. The officer will describe and compare the recognized or effective range of various firearms authorized by the agency.

J. USE OF FIREARMS IN LOW LIGHT AND IN ADVERSE WEATHER

General learning goal: The officer will demonstrate the ability to effectively fire their authorized weapons to include handgun, rifle and shotgun in low light and in adverse weather conditions.

Performance Objectives:

1. The officer will demonstrate the ability to effectively use weapon light systems or other illumination devices in low light conditions.
 - a) Muzzle flash.
 - b) Target identification.
 - c) Target accuracy.

2. The officer will demonstrate the ability to respond to the tactical considerations associated with adverse weather conditions:
 - a) Firearm malfunction.
 - b) Firearm control.
 - c) Use of gloves.
 - d) Reduced mobility in drawing and firing the weapon wearing heavy clothing.
 - f) Impact of cold weather in reducing motor function of the extremities.