

Basic Training Module Specifications

Functional Area: IV. Police Skills

Subject Area: B. Firearms

Module Title: 1. FIREARMS NOMENCLATURE, LAWS AND KNOWLEDGE

Hours: Not less than 8 hours

Notes to Instructor:

Module Objectives:

IV.B.1.1. Use Deadly Force Legally.

- a. Discharges a firearm only under the following conditions:
 - (1) in self-defense when the officer has reason to believe there is imminent danger of death or great bodily harm;
 - (2) in defense of another when the officer has reason to believe there is imminent danger of death or great bodily harm;
 - (3) to stop certain fleeing felons from escaping (after warning if feasible); and
 - (4) on other occasions covered by departmental policy (e.g., shoots injured animals).
- b. Discharging a firearm is not permitted under the following conditions:
 - (1) mere suspicion that a fleeing subject committed a life-threatening felony;
 - (2) in nonlife-threatening felonies and misdemeanor offenses; and
 - (3) when an arrest may be reasonably and safely affected using less than deadly force.

IV.B.1.2. Demonstrate a Working Knowledge of Firearms and Ammunition.

- a. Identifies various types of firearms commonly encountered:
 - (1) shotgun (bolt action, pump, semi-automatic, over-under);
 - (2) handgun (revolver, semi-automatic); and
 - (3) rifle (bolt action, pump, lever action, semi-automatic).
- b. Identifies firearms nomenclature.
 - (1) shotgun
 - (a) pump action
 - (b) semi-automatic
 - (2) handgun
 - (a) revolver; and
 - (b) semi-automatic:

IV.B.1.2. Demonstrate a Working Knowledge of Firearms and Ammunition (continued).

- (3) rifle
 - (a) bolt action
 - (b) semi-automatic

- c. Identifies nomenclature and functions of various ammunition.
 - (1) components of a round
 - (a) casing,
 - (b) primer,
 - (c) charge,
 - (d) projectile.
 - (2) size of ammunition
 - (a) caliber,
 - (b) gauge.
 - (3) types of rounds
 - (a) shotgun
 - (b) handgun
 - (c) rifle
 - (4) Identifies issues related to ballistics.
 - (a) range (i.e., how far the projectile will travel); and
 - (b) terminal effects (i.e., what occurs on impact, penetration, ricochet).

Notes to Instructor

Instructors shall use diagrams to illustrate the nomenclature described above.

The ATF has numerous guidebooks that contain nomenclature diagrams for various types of firearms and ammunition. One such publication is the ATF Guidebook-Importation & Verification of Firearms, Ammunitions, and Implements of War.

IV.B.1.3. Handle Firearms Safely.

- (4) Demonstrates compliance with general firearms safety rules (both on and off duty)
 - (1) points muzzle in a safe direction when handling a firearm;
 - (2) does not point a firearm at anyone without a legal justification to shoot them should it become necessary;
 - (3) inspects status each time the firearm is picked up;
 - (4) carries and transports the firearm safely;
 - (5) does not "play" with a firearm;
 - (6) inspects the firearm for obstructions before loading;
 - (7) secures the firearm safely when not in use;
 - (8) protects the firearm from inclement conditions;
 - (9) inspects ammunition for defects and presence of lubricants;
 - (10) inspects and properly uses safety devices; and
 - (11) prepares the firearm for duty carry in accordance with local policies.

- (5) Demonstrates compliance with general range safety rules:
 - (1) obeys all commands immediately;
 - (2) keeps the muzzle of a firearm oriented in a safe direction;
 - (3) points the firearm down range when loading or unloading;
 - (4) loads the firearm only when the command "load" is given (unless spontaneous combat reload is part of the course of fire);
 - (5) gives "cease fire" command when a life-threatening situation is observed;
 - (6) keeps a loaded firearm pointed down range;
 - (7) handles firearms on the firing range only at the direction of the instructor;
 - (8) speaks to no one on the firing line unless acting in the capacity of a coach or firearms instructor (unless giving suspect commands or proper communication is part of the course of fire);
 - (9) moves downrange from firing line only on command;
 - (10) secures a firearm properly before scoring target; and
 - (11) places finger in the trigger guard only when intending to pull the trigger to prevent an involuntary discharge caused by loss of balance, startle effect or sympathetic contractions, etc.

IV.B.1.4. Secure an Unfamiliar Firearm.

- a. Requests assistance with an unfamiliar firearm from an officer who is familiar with that type of firearm.
- b. Makes visual assessment of the type of firearm to be secured:
 - (1) inspects for mechanical safety device; and
 - (2) paying attention to evidentiary aspects such as location of live, empty and fired rounds.
- c. Takes physical control of a firearm with due regard to its potential as evidence:
 - (1) points the firearm in a safe direction;
 - (2) keeps finger off trigger; and
 - (3) engages the safety.
- d. Removes ammunition:
 - (1) removes clip/magazine;
 - (2) opens cylinder; and
 - (3) opens the action.
- e. Inspects the chamber visually.
- f. Secures the firearm physically (e.g., places the firearm in a locked container or other safe location, not in their waist band).

IV.B.1.5. Make Proper Decisions Regarding the Use of Force in Potentially Life-Threatening Situations.

- a. Assesses whether alternatives to shooting are appropriate by considering the following factors:
 - (1) the background (e.g., people and traffic);
 - (2) the potential for ricochets;
 - (3) the suspect's actions and reactions to commands;
 - (4) whether tactical retreat is appropriate, when:
 - (a) outgunned,
 - (b) outnumbered,
 - (c) retreating will lower the threat; and
 - (d) permitting the escape of the suspect if it is tactically appropriate.
- b. Reassesses the validity of the threat continuously.
- c. Considers issuing verbal commands.
- d. Scans field of fire for multiple adversaries.
- e. Assesses threat(s) to determine if it has been neutralized.

IV.B.1.5. Make Proper Decisions Regarding the Use of Force in Potentially Life-Threatening Situations (continued).

- f. Covers suspect until backup arrives.
- g. Secures the suspect:
 - (1) permits backup officer to secure suspect if possible; and
 - (2) secures the suspect alone if no backup is available.
- h. Secures the firearm with regard to safety and evidentiary value.
- i. Requests medical assistance for the suspect.
- j. Treats the location as a crime scene.
- k. Requests supervisory personnel.

IV.B.1.6. Comply with Post-Incident Policies and Procedures in Situations Involving Deadly Force.

- a. Recognizes that a formal post-incident review may consist of:
 - (1) criminal reviews,
 - (2) departmental debriefings
 - (3) policy reviews, and
 - (4) civil or citizen review panels.
- b. Articulates the facts of an officer-involved-shooting or other deadly force application, including:
 - (1) lawful authority;
 - (2) officer's state of mind;
 - (3) facts and circumstances surrounding the incident; and
 - (4) the justification for the use of deadly force.
- c. Considers the provisions of the department's internal investigation policies and procedures and how they may relate to a use of deadly force situation.
- d. Reviews MCL 15.391 - 15.395; Disclosures by Law Enforcement Officers Act. Also, *Garrity v New Jersey*, 385 US 93 (1967).

IV.B.1.7. Prepare to Testify in Court Related to a Shooting Incident.

- a. Refreshes knowledge regarding the shooting incident by reviewing state law and departmental policy.
- b. Reviews the incident report and field notes.
- c. Reviews firearms training record and training course content.
- d. Dresses appropriately for the type of case (e.g. civilian clothes).
- e. Articulates the facts which established the probable cause for the shooting based on law, policy, training and experience.
- f. Ensures that own attorney and/or the prosecutor is prepared for the case.

IV.B.1.8. Dispatch an Animal with a Firearm

- a. Determines whether to shoot an animal by considering:
 - (1) whether a reasonable level of threat exists;
 - (2) the legal authority to discharge the firearm;
 - (3) departmental policies and procedures; and
 - (4) the ability to place a safe shot.
- b. Manages canine encounters:
 - (1) recognizes that aggression in dogs can take many forms, but in general may include basic behaviors such as:
 - (a) fear aggression, where dogs feel they cannot escape a threat;
 - (b) prey aggression, in response to sudden, quick movements; or
 - (c) territorial aggression, which is a defensive response.
 - (2) considers canine body posture as:
 - (a) relaxed/friendly (ears up, body loose, tail level, head high);
 - (b) alert (ears forward, mouth closed, eyes wide, tail straight);
 - (c) aggressive (tail high, hair up, ears forward, hard stare); or
 - (d) fearful (body stiff, tail tucked, ears back, body lowered).
 - (3) determines proper response to canine encounters:
 - (a) considers non-lethal methods (fire extinguisher, Taser, spray, baton, etc.);
 - (b) stepping back and allowing owners to control their dogs;
 - (c) does not stare at the dog and remains still and calm;
 - (d) does not corner the dog and approaches from the side; and
 - (e) shoots only to protect self or others from physical harm.
- c. Recognizes that some dogs may pose a serious threat and deadly force is allowed but taking a few extra moments to fully assess an encounter can possibly prevent an attack or shooting.

IV.B.1.8. Dispatch an Animal with a Firearm (continued).

- d. Determines whether to euthanize an injured animal in accordance with local departmental policy.

Notes to Instructor:

In Michigan, 35% of homes have a dog and owners are increasingly demanding more training for law enforcement officers. Five states have legislation that require training in canine or companion animal encounters. Courts have noted that citizens have a Fourth Amendment right against the unreasonable seizure of their dogs. Some dogs can be a serious threat, but officers can evaluate such encounters more accurately if they understand canine behaviors or postures. Officers must make a quick decision to determine whether a dog is an imminent threat, but non-lethal methods that are reasonable and practicable should be considered.

IV.B.1.9. Make Appropriate Off Duty Firearms Decisions.

- a. Selects an appropriate off duty firearm:
 - (1) adheres to department policy;
 - (2) demands quality and reliability; and
 - (3) considers safety, concealment of the firearm, and training.
- b. Uses appropriate off duty procedures:
 - (1) carries identification;
 - (2) carries handcuffs and spare ammo; and
 - (3) determines if it is appropriate to get involved considering:
 - (a) use of alcohol;
 - (b) lack of identification; and
 - (c) lack of communication and backup.
- c. Stores firearms off duty in a safe manner (e.g., inaccessible to children and other unauthorized individuals).

IV.B.1.10. Demonstrates and Understanding of Controlling an Off-Duty Violent Confrontation.

- a. Demonstrates an understanding of strategies to avoid criminal attack and control violent confrontation (crime prevention tips).
 - (1) identifies the threat;
 - (2) avoids the confrontation;
 - (3) evades or escapes the confrontation; or
 - (4) controls the confrontation.

IV.B.1.10. Demonstrates and Understanding of Controlling an Off-Duty Violent Confrontation (continued).

- b. Demonstrates an understanding to prepare family and friends for off-duty violent events and the law enforcement response.
 - (1) advises civilians to take action during potentially violent situations such as:
 - (a) run, evacuate if there is an accessible path;
 - (b) hide, if evacuation is not possible
 - (c) fight, as a last resort and only when in imminent danger
 - (2) contact 911 as soon as safely possible;
 - (3) describe the incident to the dispatcher, including a description of the off-duty officer; and
 - (4) follow instructions given by dispatcher or on-scene law enforcement.

- c. Demonstrates an understanding of the potential civil liability actions that an individual may be subjected to after a defensive encounter.
 - (1) explains that there may be a lawsuit in deadly force situations;
 - (2) consults with an attorney regarding “what if” scenarios involving the use of deadly force; and
 - (3) consults with the insurance carrier regarding possible coverage.

Notes to Instructor:

Have the recruits watch the DVD entitled “Michigan’s Concealed Weapon Law - An Overview for Civilians,” revised in 2006.

Instructors shall emphasize that there is a substantial risk of being shot by responding uniformed officers when acting in an off-duty, or plain clothes capacity. Off-duty officers will not be immediately recognized by responding officers in the “fog of war” and most likely be viewed as an immediate threat.