



# GUYANA POLICE FORCE ACADEMY

## RULES FOR FIREARMS SAFETY

### BACKGROUND

The responsible handling and usage of firearms is paramount for police officers. Negligent discharges or unsafe firearm practices can result in severe injuries, death, and damage to property. The Guyana Police Force Academy has an obligation to ingrain comprehensive firearms safety behaviors from members of the Academy before they are ever issued a duty weapon or conduct live fire training.

As such, the Academy has instituted a defined policy stipulating mandatory Rules for Firearms Safety that must be reviewed with and acknowledged by members prior to their participation in any Academy firearms instruction. These rules will always establish strict expectations for the cautious handling of firearms by members when they are present on Academy grounds, including training sessions.

Members of the Academy will be required to demonstrate full understanding of and commitment to adhering to all firearms safety rules. Negligent disregard or violations of the rules will result in immediate disciplinary action, including potential removal from firearms training. The institutionalization of defined firearms safety rules aims to foster a culture of caution, respect, and discipline when members are around firearms, minimizing unnecessary risks and preventing avoidable errors or accidents. This policy will help the Academy fulfill its duty of properly training members in firearm competency and safety from day one.

## OBJECTIVES

- Establish clear, defined expectations and protocols for safe firearm handling by members during training. This provides consistency and accountability.
- Ensure all members receive and fully comprehend instruction on fundamental firearm safety principles prior to live weapons exercises. This builds a foundation of understanding.
- Require signed acknowledgement of rules from all members, confirming their commitment to adhering to protocols. This promotes personal responsibility.
- Institute mandatory safety briefings and rule reviews before every firearms training session. This continually reinforces the rules.
- Implement layered supervision, with multiple instructors monitoring members for negligent behaviors. This enhances enforcement.
- Outline clear disciplinary procedures for willful safety rule violations to stress accountability. Negligence carries consequences.
- Formalize guidelines for safe storage of firearms when not in use during training. This avoids unauthorized handling.
- Specify required protective equipment like eye/ear protection to mitigate health risks from discharges.
- Establish emergency response protocols for range accidents to ensure prompt care if needed. Preparedness is critical.
- Schedule regular policy reviews and updates to keep rules current as best practices evolve. Adaptability maintains relevance.

- Foster organizational culture where firearm safety is an unwavering priority from day one. This ingrains habits that last careers.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Guyana Police Force Academy recognizes that firearms bring immense responsibility. As an Academy we are dedicated to excellence and professionalism in law enforcement training, the Academy firmly affirms its commitment to prioritizing safety through a comprehensive “Rules for Firearms Safety” policy.

The Academy vows that safety will be the utmost priority guiding all aspects of firearms instruction. This commitment also encompasses instilling ethical conduct and legal compliance, with members thoroughly versed in national and international regulations related to appropriate firearms usage. Standardization of training will provide consistency, while rigorous protocols aim to mitigate inherent risks associated with firearms handling.

Throughout this process, the Academy will maintain its focus on building community trust and reassurance. The policy’s emphasis on responsible, ethical weapon deployment upholds our obligation to serve public wellbeing. Additionally, the Academy pledges continuous review and enhancements to keep pace with evolving best practices. Mental preparedness for the immense responsibilities of firearms carriage will also be stressed.

Seamless integration into the training curriculum will ingrain safety rules and principles prior to any live exercises. Above all, individual accountability and personal responsibility will be encouraged in members as vital elements of a culture where safety consciousness is collectively shared.

The Guyana Police Force Academy’s unwavering commitment to implementing comprehensive “Rules for Firearms Safety” stems from the Academy’s duty to produce highly skilled officers who embody integrity, responsibility, and the highest safety standards in their sworn obligation to uphold the law and serve our nation. The policy reflects our dedication to excellence in law enforcement.

## SCOPE

The following procedures and guidelines outline the systematic approach to implementing the "Rules for Firearms Safety" policy at the Guyana Police Force Academy. These measures are designed to ensure a standardized and thorough understanding of safety protocols before members engage in firearms training. The goal is to prioritize safety, professionalism, and ethical conduct in all firearm-related activities.

- **PRE-TRAINING ORIENTATION**

- Provide members of the Academy with an overview of the "Rules for Firearms Safety" policy.
- Conduct a comprehensive orientation session outlining the key principles and objectives of the policy.
- Emphasize the importance of safety, ethical conduct, and legal compliance in firearm handling.

- **WRITTEN EXAMINATION**

- Assess members' understanding of the "Rules for Firearms Safety."
- Administer a written examination covering policy details, safety protocols, and ethical considerations.
- Require members to achieve a passing grade before proceeding to practical training.

- **CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**

- Educate members on theoretical aspects of firearm safety.

- Treat every firearm as though it was loaded, until you have personally proven otherwise.
- Never point any firearm loaded or unloaded to anyone in jest.
- When handling or taking over a firearm, it must be proven.
- Always keep the muzzle of the firearm pointing in a safe direction.
- When a firearm is not in use the action must be left open.
- Whenever a firearm is being drawn from your holster it must be for a definite purpose.
- Discontinue firing if you hear a weak or peculiar sound, check the barrel for a stuck bullet.
- Alcohol, narcotic and gun powder do not mix in any proportion.
- Be sure of your back stop for a ricochet bullet is as fatal as any.
- Keep your finger off the trigger until you are actually aiming at the target and ready to shoot.
- Conduct classroom sessions covering policy specifics, including safe firearm handling, basic marksmanship principles, and legal considerations.
- Encourage active participation and address questions to ensure clarity.
- **PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATIONS**
  - Reinforce theoretical knowledge through practical demonstrations.
  - Facilitate hands-on sessions to demonstrate proper firearm handling, loading, unloading, and clearing procedures.

- Emphasize the importance of muzzle awareness, trigger discipline, and always maintaining control of firearms.
  
- **SIMULATED EXERCISES**
  - Provide realistic scenarios to test the application of safety rules.
  
  - Organize simulated exercises where members apply safety rules in dynamic, real-world scenarios.
  
  - Evaluate decision-making, communication, and adherence to safety protocols.
  
- **RANGE TRAINING**
  - Introduce members to live-fire exercises in a controlled environment.
  
  - Ensure that members are under direct supervision of qualified instructors during live-fire exercises.
  
  - Reinforce safety rules and marksmanship principles during range training.
  
- **CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT**
  - Monitor members' adherence to safety protocols throughout training.
  
  - Implement continuous assessment mechanisms, providing feedback and corrective guidance as needed.
  
  - Identify any emerging issues and address them promptly through additional training or counseling.

- **INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY**
  - Instill personal responsibility among members of the Academy.
  - Emphasize the individual accountability of each member for their actions and decisions involving firearms.
  - Encourage a culture where safety is a shared responsibility.
  - Staff and students to be empowered to call a halt to activities they deem to be unsafe regardless of protocols.
  
- **LEGAL BRIEFING**
  - Ensure members are well-versed in legal considerations.
  - Conduct a legal briefing on the specific laws and regulations governing firearms use in Guyana.
  - Emphasize the consequences of violating legal provisions related to firearm handling.
  
- **POLICY REVIEW SESSIONS**
  - Periodically review and reinforce the "Rules for Firearms Safety" policy.
  - Conduct regular policy review sessions to keep members updated on any changes or enhancements.
  - Encourage open communication and feedback regarding the effectiveness of safety measures.

By diligently following these procedures and guidelines, the Guyana Police Force Academy ensures a robust and thorough implementation of the "Rules for Firearms Safety" policy. This approach contributes to the development of highly trained, responsible, and safety-conscious law enforcement officers serving the Guyanese community.

### **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

The Guyana Police Force Academies are overseen by the Force Training Officer, Commandant, and Training Inspectors/Supervisors. Instructors are responsible for maintaining the correct instructor-to-student ratio in their classes and exercises. The Police Commissioner and senior administrators are responsible for ensuring the Force adheres to training standards, which may involve allocating resources for staffing and facilities.

### **REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION**

The Academy Commandant is responsible for communicating training regulations, including instructor-to-student ratios, to all personnel and stakeholders. Training Coordinators ensure proper student enrollment and report non-compliance. Instructors inform students about the appropriate ratio for their program and report any concerns. Training Inspectors/Supervisors verify compliance during training sessions and communicate discrepancies. The force Training Officer will communicate policy updates or clarifications regarding training regulations through official channels.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This policy came into effect on September 22, 2022.

### **REVIEW PERIOD**

A review of this policy will be conducted annually. The review will be conducted by the Training Board. The results of the review will be shared with the relevant stakeholders and necessary changes to the policy will be implemented based on the review.

### **REVISION DATE**



Revised in January 2024.

## **APPROVAL OF POLICY**

This Policy was approved by the Guyana Police Force Executive Leadership Team and the Guyana Police Force Academy Training Board.