



GUYANA POLICE FORCE ACADEMY SAFETY PROTOCOLS POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Guyana Police Force Academy stands as a beacon for the development of skilled and disciplined law enforcement professionals, adhering to both local and international standards for law enforcement officers. Central to the efficacy of its training programs is an unwavering commitment to safety protocols throughout the Academy, aligning with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Chapter 99:06. This holistic approach ensures that every aspect of the training process, from classroom instruction to practical exercises, is executed with the utmost consideration for the well-being of Academy members. By integrating the core principles of the Act into all facets of the training environment, the Academy fulfills its mission of nurturing outstanding officers dedicated to serving and protecting, with an unwavering emphasis on safety.

The Academy maintains a safe training environment through comprehensive protocols covering facility infrastructure, emergency preparedness, and health standards. Regular assessments identify and resolve safety hazards in the physical premises. Adequate lighting, clear signage, and well-maintained walkways promote security. Implementing and practicing emergency response plans, including fire drills, ensures the Academy can swiftly and effectively respond to crises. Clearly marked emergency exits and strategically placed first aid kits also boost emergency preparedness. Vigilant hygiene practices, especially in communal areas, help prevent illness transmission. Regular health screenings and vaccinations keep the training population healthy.

Safety is also a priority in the Academy's academic programs. Ergonomic classrooms reduce strain and injury risks during prolonged study. Proper maintenance of audio-visual equipment averts electrical or technical hazards. Strict enforcement of safety guidelines for instructional

materials use further promotes classroom security. Hazardous materials are stored and handled per relevant regulations.

Practical training exercises also incorporate rigorous safety protocols. Firearm training demands strict firearm safety, including safe weapons and ammunition storage. Range safety briefings and simulated exercises enhance live-fire training while minimizing risks. Physical fitness and defensive tactics sessions include structured warm-up/cool-downs to prevent injury as well as protective gear during controlled scenarios. Driver training stresses road safety rules and vehicle maintenance. Tactical training scenarios aim to simulate real-world situations as realistically as possible while prioritizing participant safety. Medical personnel and safety officers closely monitor scenario-based exercises to immediately address any concerns. The Academy's multi-layered safety protocols aim to provide effective training experiences while safeguarding members of the Academy's wellbeing.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of having a policy on Safety Protocols for the Guyana Police Force Academy are to ensure a secure and conducive training environment for members of the Academy, and to promote the overall well-being and effectiveness of the training programs. Here are some comprehensive objectives relevant to safety protocols for all aspects of the Academy's training environment:

- Ensure a safe training environment for members of the Academy. This includes safety protocols for training facilities, equipment, transport, housing, dining, recreation, etc.
- Minimize risk of injury, illness, or harm to anyone at the Academy. This requires protocols for medical care, emergency response, reporting of incidents, etc.
- Promote a culture of safety awareness and responsibility among all members of the Academy. Safety should be an integral part of training and operations.

- Establish clear procedures and guidelines for safe conduct of all training activities, whether classroom instruction, physical training, simulation exercises, field exercises, etc.
- Specify appropriate safety gear, supervision requirements, limitations, or restrictions for potentially hazardous training activities.
- Ensure facilities and equipment are properly maintained and in safe working condition through regular inspections and preventative maintenance.
- Provide training on safety protocols to all members of the Academy. Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities.
- Continuously review and update protocols to incorporate lessons learned and best practices. Aim for continuous improvement in safety over time.
- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to occupational safety and health and training institutions.
- Promote an organizational culture where safety is valued, and everyone feels empowered to speak up about unsafe conditions without fear of retaliation.

POLICY STATEMENT

At the Guyana Police Force Academy, our foremost commitment is to the safety, well-being, and professional development of the Academy's members. Recognizing the critical importance of providing a secure and conducive training environment, we steadfastly adhere to a comprehensive policy on safety protocols. This commitment extends across all aspects of our training programs, ensuring that members undergo rigorous training in a setting that prioritizes their physical, mental, and emotional safety.

The Academy's commitment to safety protocols is underpinned by the following principles:

- **RECRUIT-CENTRIC APPROACH**

- The safety and well-being of recruits is the top priority at our Academy. We diligently design all training components - modules, exercises, and scenarios - with great care and attention to safeguarding the welfare of those undergoing instruction. By prioritizing member's safety at every step, we strive to provide the most secure and supportive environment where they can develop their full capabilities without undue physical or mental distress. Our commitment is to shaping future police officers through training that challenges yet never compromises the health and safety of those entrusted to our responsibility.

- **PROACTIVE HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION**

- We conduct regular and thorough assessments of our training facilities, equipment, and procedures to identify potential hazards. Any identified risks are promptly addressed, and proactive measures are implemented to prevent accidents or injuries.

- **COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS**

- Recognizing the importance of physical and mental well-being, the Academy will incorporate comprehensive health and wellness programs into our training curriculum. This includes fitness regimes, stress management initiatives, and access to counseling services to ensure the holistic development of its members.

- **FIREARMS SAFETY EXCELLENCE**

- The Academy's commitment to safety extends to firearms training. Strict protocols govern the handling, storage, and use of firearms during training exercises, ensuring a responsible and secure environment for learning.

- **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

- The safety of our members is further enhanced through robust emergency response and evacuation procedures. Regular drills and training sessions equip our members to respond effectively to unforeseen circumstances, fostering a culture of preparedness and resilience.

- **INFECTION CONTROL MEASURE**

- Considering health concerns, the Academy is dedicated to implementing infection control measures to mitigate the spread of diseases. Hygiene practices are emphasized, and protocols are in place to address health crises promptly and efficiently.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- The Academy takes its duty to resolve issues related to environmental safety very seriously. There are safeguards in place to protect members from environmental dangers, whether they are connected to harsh weather or possible hazards in our geographic location.

- **PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENTS**

- Our commitment to safety extends beyond physical aspects to create an inclusive and respectful environment. Strict protocols address any form of harassment, discrimination, or bullying, ensuring a psychologically safe space for all members.

- **LEGAL COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- The Academy is committed to upholding local laws, regulations, and international standards regarding safety. Mechanisms are in place to monitor and enforce safety measures, with clear consequences for any non-compliance.
- **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**
 - The Academy's commitment is dynamic, reflecting a dedication to continuous improvement. Regular reviews, feedback mechanisms, and updates to our safety protocols ensure that we evolve with emerging best practices, maintaining the highest standards of safety for our members.

In embracing these principles, the Guyana Police Force Academy stands resolute in its commitment to fostering a training environment that is not only rigorous and effective but, above all, safe and secure for the next generation of law enforcement professionals.

SCOPE

It is crucial that the following procedures and guidelines are regularly reviewed and updated to adapt to changing circumstances, feedback, and emerging best practices. Involving members of the Academy in the development and improvement of safety protocols fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to maintaining a safe training environment.

- **SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT**
 - Conduct regular risk assessments of all training facilities, equipment, and activities.
 - Establish a Safety Committee responsible for overseeing risk assessments and implementing corrective actions.
 - Document and communicate findings, ensuring transparency with members of the Academy.
- **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**
 - Develop a comprehensive emergency response plan that covers various scenarios such as natural disasters, fires, medical emergencies, and security threats.

- Assign specific roles and responsibilities during emergencies.
- Conduct regular drills and simulations to ensure preparedness.

- **FACILITY MAINTENANCE**
 - Implement a preventive maintenance program for all training facilities and equipment.
 - Establish a system for reporting maintenance issues and ensuring timely resolution.
 - Conduct regular inspections to identify potential safety hazards.

- **FIREARMS SAFETY**
 - Develop strict protocols for the handling, storage, and use of firearms during training exercises.
 - Provide continuous and comprehensive training on firearms safety.
 - Enforce a zero-tolerance policy for violations and conduct regular assessments of individual firearm competence.

- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS**
 - Integrate physical fitness programs into the training curriculum.
 - Provide access to mental health resources, counseling services, and stress management programs.
 - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of health and wellness initiatives regularly.

- **INFECTION CONTROL**
 - Implement hygiene protocols, including handwashing stations, sanitation measures, and the use of personal protective equipment.
 - Develop contingency plans for addressing potential health crises, including infectious disease outbreaks.
 - Establish protocols for the isolation and care of members of the Academy with contagious illnesses.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY**

- Identify and address environmental concerns specific to the geographical location of the Academy.
- Provide appropriate training and equipment to mitigate environmental risks, such as extreme weather conditions.
- Establish procedures for handling environmental emergencies.

- **BEHAVIORAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**
 - Develop and communicate a code of conduct that prohibits harassment, discrimination, and bullying.
 - Establish procedures for reporting and addressing behavioral and psychological safety concerns.
 - Conduct regular training sessions to promote a respectful and inclusive environment.

- **LEGAL COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**
 - Ensure that safety protocols follow local laws, regulations, and international standards.
 - Establish a system for monitoring and enforcing safety measures, including consequences for non-compliance.
 - Conduct regular audits to assess compliance with safety regulations.

- **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**
 - Establish a feedback mechanism for recruits and staff to report safety concerns and provide suggestions for improvement.
 - Periodically review and update safety protocols based on incident reports, feedback, and emerging best practices.
 - Foster a culture of continuous improvement through regular training sessions and communication.

- **TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION**
 - Provide comprehensive safety training for members of the Academy at the beginning of their training.

- Conduct regular safety briefings and communications to reinforce safety protocols.
- Ensure that all members of the Academy have access to safety guidelines in written form and through training materials.
- **DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING**
 - Maintain detailed records of safety protocols, risk assessments, and emergency response plans.
 - Document all safety incidents, near misses, and corrective actions taken.
 - Establish a systematic approach for record-keeping and reporting.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- **Firearms Training Safety Protocol**
 - All firearms must be treated as loaded and handled with extreme caution at all times.
 - Firearms are only permitted in designated shooting ranges and training areas. Strict weapon handling rules apply.
 - Before any live-fire exercise, the range instructor must conduct a comprehensive safety briefing.
 - Eye and ear protection must be worn by all personnel on or near the firing line.
 - Range commands must be strictly followed, and no firearm handling is permitted without express instruction.
 - Firearms must be unloaded and cleared with actions open and chambers empty when not actively firing.
 - Muzzles must be pointed in a safe direction, preferably downrange, at all times.
 - Fingers must be kept off triggers and outside trigger guards until ready to fire.
 - A clearly marked and adequate backstop must be present to stop all rounds fired safely.
 - First aid kits and emergency medical personnel must be readily available on-site.
- **Defensive Tactics Safety Protocol**
 - All training areas must be properly matted or padded to reduce impact injuries.

- Participants must wear appropriate protective gear such as headgear, mouthguards, groin protection, etc.
- Warm-up exercises must be conducted before any physical training to prevent muscle strains.
- Training must be always conducted under qualified instructional supervision.
- Techniques must be practiced slowly and with control, gradually increasing intensity.
- Participants must be carefully paired based on size, skill level, and experience.
- Strict rules governing strikes holds, and other techniques must be enforced.
- Tapping out or using a designated safety word indicates an immediate stop.
- First aid kits and emergency medical personnel must be readily available on-site.
- An incident reporting system must be in place for any injuries sustained during training.

- **Riot Training Safety Protocol**

- **Pre-Training Preparation:**

- Conduct comprehensive briefings on training objectives, scenarios, and safety procedures.
 - Inspect all training protective equipment (TPE) and ensure proper fit for all participants.
 - Clearly establish and communicate rules of engagement and use of force guidelines.
 - Ensure adequate supplies of training munitions, safety gear, and medical supplies.

- **During Training:**

- Always maintain trainer oversight and control of all training evolutions.
 - Use clearly designated call signs, commands, and communication protocols.
 - Wear all required TPE, including helmets, padded suits, shields, and face protection.
 - Employ only approved defensive tactics, formations, and-escalation techniques.
 - Use only training munitions designed and approved for force-on-force exercises.
 - Clearly identify and separate any live weapons/munitions from training areas.
 - Establish safe zones, exclusion areas, and dedicated medical treatment areas.
 - Render immediate medical aid for any injuries sustained during training.

Post-Training:

- Account for all personnel, equipment, and training munitions.
- Properly inspect, clean, and store all TPE and equipment.
- Document and report any injuries or safety incidents.
- Conduct comprehensive debriefings and after-action reviews.
- Provide psychological support resources for personnel as needed.
- **Foot Drill Training Safety Protocol**
 - **Pre-Training Preparation:**
 - Inspect the drill area for hazards (holes, debris, slippery surfaces) and ensure it is clear.
 - Ensure all participants are wearing proper footwear with adequate traction.
 - Conduct warm-up exercises to prepare for physical activity.
 - Communicate training objectives, commands, and safety procedures.

During Training:

- Maintain proper spacing between individuals and ranks (3-4 feet).
- Call halts or pauses as needed to prevent excessive fatigue or strain.
- Prohibit unnecessary movements that increase the risk of collision or injury.
- Use clearly established drill commands and communication procedures.
- Require participants to follow all instructions from drill instructors.
- Have drill instructors actively monitor for signs of injury or exhaustion.
- Make water and hydration breaks available, especially in warm conditions.

Post-Training:

- Conduct cool-down exercises and stretches.
- Inspect for and treat any injuries sustained during training.
- Document and report all injuries or safety incidents.
- Debrief to identify any safety concerns or areas for improvement.
- **Pre-Training Preparation:**
 - Inspect all training weapons thoroughly for defects, cracks, or damage. Remove any unsafe equipment from use.
 - Ensure all training weapons are properly marked and easily distinguishable from live weapons.

- Designate and prepare a safe training area with adequate space, padding, and buffer zones.
- All participants must be equipped with appropriate protective gear (helmet, gloves, chest/groin protection).
- Conduct comprehensive safety briefings covering training objectives, techniques, commands, and protocols.

During Training:

- Only employ approved training techniques under qualified instructor supervision.
- Maintain mandated safe distances between participants based on weapon lengths and techniques.
- Use established "whoa/reset" commands to immediately pause training if potential hazards arise.
- Strictly control offensive strikes to pre-determined target areas using proper technique.
- Prohibit excessive force, unauthorized techniques, or unsupervised "free sparring" with weapons.
- Immediately stop training and render aid for any injuries sustained.
- Continuously monitor for signs of fatigue, loss of control, or lapses in concentration.

Post-Training:

- Properly inspect, clean, and securely store all training weapons and protective equipment.
- Document and report all injuries, safety incidents, or equipment issues that occurred.
- Conduct thorough debriefings to review safety concerns, lessons learned, and areas for improvement.
- Ensure proper medical assessment and care is provided for any injuries.

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 November 8, 2023.

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 February 2024.

APPROVAL OF POLICY

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