



BLUE PAPER

LAW ENFORCEMENT SAFETY ARTICLE

KLC INSURANCE SERVICES FIREARMS RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kentucky League of Cities Insurance Services' firearms recommendations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Weapons training/qualifications conducted at least two times annually.
- Training should include duty sidearm, shotgun, rifle, back-up, and off-duty weapon(s).
- Training sessions should be conducted in alternating seasons.
- Training should include night/low-light training.
- Training should include moving targets.
- Training should include moving officers.
- Training should include strong-hand/weak-hand firing.
- Training should reflect the environment that officers are likely to face.
- Qualifications should be conducted by a certified firearms instructor.
- Firearms training should utilize a training safety officer (TSO).
- Annual response to resistance firearms simulator/ decision-making training.
- Annual review of response to resistance policy.
- Annual written firearms/response to resistance exam.
- Training should be documented and maintained.
- When equipping weapons with any mounted lighting devices, training and qualifications should be conducted prior to use.
- When equipping any weapons (e.g., pistols, shotguns, or rifles) with any optics and/or lasers, training and qualification should be conducted prior to use.
- When new holsters are purchased, training should be done before issuing.
- Neither vertical nor horizontal shoulder holsters should be used.
- All shoulder weapons (rifles/shotguns) should be equipped with slings and lights.
- Any weapon an officer chooses to carry must be inspected, approved, test-fired, and registered with the department.
- Rifles that have barrels under 16 inches and are owned by individual officers must follow ATF guidelines.
- Officers should only use departmental-approved ammunition.
- Departmental policy on best storage practices of departmental weapons.

Jack Ryan, (LLRMI) one of the nation's leading legal and liability expert states, "In reviewing two court decisions, Popow and Zuchel, it is clearly established that law enforcement agencies must conduct firearms training on a regular basis; the firearms training must reflect the environment that officers are likely to face, moving targets, moving officers, low-light conditions and residential areas if applicable to the agency being trained; and finally agencies must conduct decision-making training with respect to when to use deadly force. Annual

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or semi-annual qualification courses are simply insufficient for purposes of assisting officers in making deadly force decisions and for purposes of avoiding liability.”

The International Association of Chiefs of Police Model Policy on Use of Force and the accompanying concept paper revised August 2001 recommends: “firearms training with respect to the use of deadly force cannot be limited to routine firearm qualifications and proficiency testing.”

“It is recommended that all officers authorized to carry firearms be required to qualify with each authorized firearm on at least a semiannual basis and preferably three times per 12-month period.

But, in addition to proficiency testing, it is strongly recommended that police agencies provide (1) routine instruction and periodic testing on the agency use of force policy and (2) instruction and practical exercises in making decisions regarding the use of deadly force.

In the latter instance, it is important that an element of firearms training include realistic use

of force simulation exercises. This includes night and/or reduced light shooting, shooting at moving targets, strong hand/weak hand firing, and combat simulation shooting.

Firearms training should attempt to simulate the actual environment and circumstances of foreseeable encounters in the community setting, whether urban, suburban, or rural. A variety of computer simulation training is available together with established and recognized tactical, exertion, and stress courses. In essence, acceptable firearms training and evaluation are no longer limited to target practice. Scrutiny of firearms training will normally include an evaluation of the relevance and utility of such instruction.”



Questions? KLC is here to help!

Please contact Mark Filburn (mfilburn@klc.org) or Brian Nunn (bnunn@klc.org) with KLC Loss Control Law Enforcement at 800.876.4552 or visit klc.org for more information.



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