

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



TRAINING BULLETIN

Effective Date: February 8, 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rescinds – TB10-01(January 21, 2010) <input type="checkbox"/> Amends	Number: 10-01
SUBJECT: OFF-DUTY AWARENESS AND RESPONSE		Print Date:
Distribution: All Sworn Personnel	CALEA Standards: CFA Standards:	

This training bulletin consists of the following:

1. Purpose
2. Policy
3. Definitions
4. Procedures

1. Purpose

To adopt safety directives and guidelines for deputies dealing with the carrying of firearms while in an off-duty status. This directive will also address a deputy's duty and responsibility to take action in response to criminal activity while in an off-duty status.

2. Policy

- A. All sworn personnel, including Reserve Deputies, shall carry an approved firearm on or about their person while on-duty. While off-duty, all sworn personnel shall carry on or about their person a concealed, approved firearm unless it would be impractical to do so by the nature of their activities, sports, etc. (CURRENTLY IN POLICY)
- B. Sworn personnel who become aware of an incident which poses a threat of serious bodily harm or death to some individual shall take "action" to minimize the risk of serious bodily harm or death. "Action" under this provision is fulfilled by reporting the incident and shall not require the deputy to place him or herself in a position of peril. A deputy who is faced with such a circumstance should act in accordance with the guidelines as spelled out in this General Order.

3. Definitions

- A. Approved Off-Duty Weapon – a revolver or semi-automatic, in factory mechanical condition of .22 caliber, up to and including .45 caliber that has been inspected, tested and documented by an agency armorer assigned to Training.
- B. All weapons carried as an off-duty weapon shall be qualified with once a year on an approved course of fire. Qualification will be at 80%.

4. Procedures

- A. First, go to a safe location and call 911.
- B. Second, when you encounter a situation off-duty that seems to require law enforcement action, you must consciously evaluate whether your involvement is necessary or desirable, given the circumstances. How important and urgent is the need for your intervention? A number of circumstances may impact your decision to get involved in any situation; i.e., you may be alone, with family members or other non-police personnel.
- C. Third, it is unlikely that you will have all of the necessary agency issued equipment while off-duty, for example; pepper spray, ASP, ECW, handcuffs or radio. You may be faced with multiple suspects or be unaware of hidden suspects. There may also be environmental factors working against you such as: lack of cover, crowds of civilians, darkness, etc. Your intervention may actually spark an escalation of violence. Therefore, your best plan of action may be to:
 - 1. Gather accurate intelligence like a good witness until uniformed, on-duty officers arrive.
 - 2. Remember, you have no legal or departmental obligation to get involved, especially if such intervention places you in a position of peril or such intervention requires that you behave recklessly, carelessly or in a suicidal manner.
 - 3. "Taking action" when witnessing a serious crime, can be fulfilled by calling the police/sheriff department and monitoring the situation from a safe vantage point.
 - 4. Most survival-conscious deputies have trained themselves not to intervene off-duty unless their life or the life of another innocent party is imminently in danger. In other words, you should only consider intervention when deadly force would be justified. You should not intervene just to make an arrest while off-duty. The decision to take action, beyond simply reporting, is a personal one and is not a requirement of this agency.
 - 5. If you decide you must get involved, attempt to have someone call 911 advising the operator that an off-duty officer is on scene. Have the caller inform the operator if you are armed. If possible, have them describe you and your clothing. This will affect the mindset of the responding officers/deputies. When uniformed police officers/deputies arrive, have your badge out and visible. Do not rely on showing your identification as a means of providing any protection. At a distance, in dim light and under stress, your badge may not be seen. Or, the identification may not be given credibility if the responding officers do not recognize you personally.
 - 6. Responding police officers/deputies are most likely to go immediately to your drawn firearm. You're probably safer to RE-HOLSTER your gun when other officers arrive, unless doing so would put you and the responding officers or innocent civilians, in jeopardy. Until the responding officers sort out who is who, your gun is your greatest personal liability.
 - 7. If you have cover, maintain it. You can communicate verbally from there.

8. Make your hands visible. Having responding officers see that you are unarmed and non-threatening will work to calm them and protect you.
9. Verbally identify yourself as a police officer (more universal than deputy sheriff) repeatedly and very loud. Keep shouting out: "POLICE! DON'T SHOOT! OFF-DUTY OFFICER!" until you obtain acknowledgment and directions as to what you should do. Remember, the noise and excitement of the scene, combined with stress induced auditory blocking may prevent responding officers from hearing you and you hearing them.
10. When commands are issued by the responding officers, follow them promptly and completely. Expect to be treated like a suspect until your law enforcement status is verified.
11. When carrying a firearm off-duty, it shall be concealed from public view by an outer jacket, shirt, sweater etc. If an off-duty deputy's firearm is observed and prompts the response of police or security officials, the off-duty deputy should respond in a manner consistent with this policy.
12. Finally, the most important rule of all: If you have a gun in your hand, NEVER, EVER turn toward an on-duty officer.

D. Reporting / Compliance:

Whenever an officer becomes involved in an incident while in an off-duty capacity, he or she shall notify the Watch Commander as soon as possible. The Watch Commander shall require a written report on the incident that will be forwarded to the appropriate divisions. This report shall also be reviewed by the Training staff in order to evaluate and update training for "off-duty" response.


SHERIFF JERRY L. DEMINGS