

**COUNTY OF ORANGE, VIRGINIA  
PERSONNEL POLICIES MANUAL**

**WEAPONS POLICY**

**POLICY NO.: 3.10**

**ADOPTED:** 03/24/98

**EFFECTIVE:** 04/01/98

**REVISED:** 08/12/98

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**OVERVIEW:** The County has employed, and may in the future employ, individuals appointed by the Board of Supervisors as Animal Control Officers. Such individuals may be authorized to carry a weapon when acting in his/her official capacity. This policy is intended to provide such individuals guidelines and limitations on the use of such firearm.

**SCOPE:** This policy is for internal use only, and does not enlarge such individual=s civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violation of this policy, if proven, can only provide a basis for employee disciplinary action.

**DEFINITIONS:**

1. Reasonable Belief: When facts or circumstances the Officer knows, or should know, are such as to cause an ordinary or prudent person to act or think in a similar way under similar circumstances.
2. Reasonably Necessary: Those actions, based upon the known facts or circumstances, which would normally be expected from an ordinary or prudent person under similar circumstances.
3. Serious Physical Injury: Any injury that could result in disfigurement, disability, or death.

**PROVISIONS:**

- A. The type of weapon and munitions carried shall be approved by the County Administrator, who shall consult with the Sheriff or other law enforcement personnel.
- B. All Officers are responsible for the care, cleaning, and readiness of the weapon approved.

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- C. All Officers shall only remove his/her firearm from its holster when circumstances cause the Officer to reasonably believe that it may be necessary to use the weapon.
- D. All Officers who encounter a situation where the possibility of violence is present should, if possible, attempt to diffuse the situation through advice, warning, and/or verbal persuasion.
- E. By definition, any use of a firearm has the potential of causing either a serious physical injury or death. Such weapon may be drawn against another person only to protect the Officer from what is reasonably believed by the Officer to be an immediate threat of death or serious bodily harm.
- F. No Officer will discharge a firearm if it appears that an innocent person may be injured.
- G. Warning shots are prohibited.
- H. Any Officer who discharges a firearm, either deliberately or accidentally when acting in his/her capacity as a Officer shall report the discharge to the County Administrator.
- I. All Officers must complete a weapons training course approved by the County before being issued a firearm or carrying a firearm on duty.