

# PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

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## CONSTABLES' TRAINING BULLETIN

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### Level 2 Holsters

On May 29, 2013, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court published a series of requirements that impact the operations of constables and their deputies. Among these is the following requirement regarding firearms and holsters.

IV d.1.e. "a constable shall, when carrying a firearm, secure the weapon in a Level 2 or higher security holster."

Unfortunately, there is no universal standard definition of a Level 2 holster. These designations can be traced back to manufacturers marketing holsters and attempting to define the level of security that their holsters offered. Currently, the U.S. National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is completing an assessment of the various security and retention holsters available. This study will address physical tests of the holsters to determine a set of standards and definitions. Until that time we are faced with two sets of definitions developed by manufacturers.

These definitions result in differences in the characteristics of a Level 2 holster. Until the NIJ study is completed, we are presenting the differences between the two standards in an effort to provide constables and their deputies with additional information that may aid them in the selection of a holster meeting the intent of the Supreme Court guidelines. The table that follows briefly highlights how holsters are rated within the two systems of definitions.

<b>Definition A</b>	<b>Definition B</b>
Level 1 – Friction Fit. No retaining device. Weapon held in by Gravity and fit of holster to weapon.	Level 0 – Friction Fit. No retaining device. Weapon Held in by Gravity and fit of holster to weapon.
Level 2 – Friction Fit. Plus Thumb break.	Level 1 – Friction Fit, Plus Thumb break.
Level 3 - Friction Fit, Plus Thumb break. Plus a trigger retention device.	Level 2 - Friction Fit, Plus Thumb break. Plus a trigger retention device.
Level 4 - Friction Fit, Plus Thumb break. Plus a trigger retention device. Plus a third retention device (e.g. a second strap/break, a twist of the holster, etc.).	Level 3 - Friction Fit, Plus Thumb break. Plus a trigger retention device. Plus a third retention device (e.g. a second strap/break, a twist of the holster, etc.).

You will note that within the two systems of definitions, a Level 2 designation under Definition A is rated a Level 1 under Definition B. When choosing a holster check the manufacturer's specifications and what type of retention features the particular holster offers. Since the definition of a Level 2 holster may be interpreted differently by your County's President Judge, please contact their office or your County Court Administrator's Office for further clarification on what your County may require.

The Level 2 Holster is currently not a Board requirement for training but it is strongly recommended that constables and deputy constables utilize a Level 2 Holster while performing constable duties and when attending constable firearms training courses.

### Recent Demographic Survey

During 2012, constables were asked to complete a survey when attending Continuing Education. This survey asked some basic demographic information regarding constables and the work they perform. Here are some of the results of that survey.

#### Gender

- 1. **Male 1011 95%**
  - 2. Female 58 5%
- Total Responses: 1069

#### Age Category

- 1. 18 to 25 20 2%
  - 2. 26 to 35 87 8%
  - 3. 36 to 45 226 21%
  - 4. **46 to 55 299 28%**
  - 5. 56 to 65 273 25%
  - 6. 66+ 176 16%
- Total Responses: 1081

#### Years as Active Constable/Deputy Constable

- 1. **0-5 years 384 35%**
  - 2. 6-10 years 194 18%
  - 3. 11-15 years 182 17%
  - 4. 16-20 years 107 10%
  - 5. 21-25 years 88 8%
  - 6. 26-30 years 60 6%
  - 7. 31-35 years 37 3%
  - 8. 36-40 years 21 2%
  - 9. 41-45 years 6 1%
  - 10. 46+ years 6 1%
- Total Responses: 1085

#### Hours worked per week as a Constable

- 1. 1-10 hours 275 26%
  - 2. **11-20 hours 222 21%**
  - 3. 21-30 hours 185 17%
  - 4. 31-40 hours 168 16%
  - 5. **40+ hours 222 21%**
- Total Responses: 1072

#### Law Enforcement Background

- 1. Yes 386 36%
  - 2. **No 693 64%**
- Total Responses: 1079

#### Which background field was yours?

- 1. **Act 120-Municipal Police Officer 149 36%**
  - 2. Act 2 - Deputy Sheriff 27 7%
  - 3. PA State Police 8 2%
  - 4. Military Police 40 10%
  - 5. Other 189 46%
- Total Responses: 413

#### Do you serve civil complaints?

- 1. **Yes 880 81%**
  - 2. No 203 19%
- Total Responses: 1083

#### Do you serve levy goods?

- 1. Yes 454 42%
  - 2. **No 622 58%**
- Total Responses: 1076

Does civil work make up at least 50% of your duties?

1. Yes 366 34%

2. No 709 66%

Total Responses: 1075

Do you provide courtroom security?

1. Yes 543 50%

2. No 533 50%

Total Responses: 1076

Do you transport prisoners?

1. Yes 857 79%

2. No 225 21%

Total Responses: 1082

Does criminal work make up at least 50% of your duties?

1. Yes 701 65%

2. No 380 35%

Total Responses: 1081

## **Electronics Usage**

There have been several complaints from constables and deputy constables concerning constables and deputy constables using cell phones, Ipads, or other electronic devices during the Constables Training Courses. Please be reminded that per the PA Constables Classroom Code of Conduct, Section III, Unprofessional Conduct, subparagraph A, Unprofessional Conduct is defined as conduct that reflects poorly upon the image of the Constables' Education and Training Board (Board) and the Constables of the Commonwealth. Examples include, but are not limited to: disruptive talking in the classroom, disrespect to instructors, sleeping, eating or smoking in class, disrupting other activities occurring on the training site; false fire alarm, vandalism, illegal parking, lying to training delivery or Board staff or any other person; refusal to cooperate with staff investigations; and other criminal offenses committed at the training site. Cell phone usage during training courses would be deemed disruptive and disrespectful to instructors. Utilizing any other electronic device could also be disruptive and disrespectful to the class environment.

In addition, it has been reported that photographs and videotaping has been attempted by constables and deputy constables during Constables Training Courses. Please be reminded that the Constables' Education and Training Board's curriculum is not to be disseminated in any fashion, including photographs or videotaping. The training delivery contractors also have rules and regulations governing the use of photographs or videotaping taken during training courses at their schools.

Please refrain from using electronic devices and taking photographs or videos during the Constables Training Courses.

## **No Show Policy**

A person who registers for basic training, continuing education, or firearms training and does not attend all or part of the training, without providing proper notice of withdrawal to the training delivery contractor, will receive a failing grade of zero for any and all courses missed and will have to repeat that training. A notification shall be deemed timely if it is delivered to the director of the school or his or her designee no later than seven calendar days prior to the class start date. The school may assess a failing grade for all or part of the training course, if the constable fails to provide timely notification or to show good cause. The school director or his or her designee may use discretion regarding emergencies and extenuating circumstances when deciding whether to sanction non-attendance by submitting zero grades.

A constable or deputy constable who is a deemed a "No Show" shall bear the financial responsibility for the additional training course.

## 2014 ID Cards

In December 2013, PCCD will mail new certification cards to all constables who have maintained their certifications by successfully completing continuing education during 2013 and by filing current professional liability insurance information with their county clerks of courts. Ample allowance will be made for normal mailing time, so constables should receive their new cards before the old ones expire on December 31, 2013. To ensure that cards are mailed to the correct address, any constable who has recently changed his address should report that change to PCCD immediately.

**Title 37 §431.11 Registration:** A person shall register with the Board for certification by submitting information such as mailing address and telephone number, Social Security number, date of birth and office held or sought. A constable shall set forth the beginning date and expiration date of the term of office held, and provide documentary evidence of election or appointment. A registrant shall inform the Board of a change to registration information within 15 days of the change.

## Training Cycle

Constables are reminded that the current training cycle ends in October 2013.

It is expected that the 2014 training schedule will be available around the beginning of December 2013. **ALL TRAINING COURSES ARE ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED BASIS.** Courses are also limited in size. Those course limits are strictly enforced, so it is important to register early. In order to ensure uninterrupted certification, constables should enroll in training courses as soon as possible. **Enroll early. Online enrollment is best.**

Enroll for 2014 training online through the PCCD website at: [www.pccd.state.pa.us](http://www.pccd.state.pa.us). Online enrollment should be available around the beginning of December 2013.

Online enrollment is secure and fast, and is confirmed immediately. Enrollment can also be accomplished by mailing or faxing a completed standard registration form directly to the training delivery contractor. **Do not mail or fax training forms to PCCD.** Registration questions should be referred to the appropriate regional training delivery contractor. Constables cannot register for training courses by calling or mailing PCCD.

Training Delivery Contractor Contact Information:

Eastern Region: Temple University, Van Scott – (267) 468-8331

Central Region: Indiana University of PA, Michael Marcantino – (724) 549-1929

Western Region: Penn State-Fayette Campus, Todd Brothers – (724) 430-4114

## **Low Quantities of Ammunition**

There is currently a shortage and/or low quantities of ammunition for handguns. We would encourage constables to purchase their duty ammunition for firearms training several months in advance of the basic, annual or advanced firearms courses. Constables should have at least 120 rounds of duty ammunition available for training; 60 rounds to qualify and if needed, 60 additional rounds to re-qualify if failure on first attempt. Constables will not be permitted to qualify if they do not have enough duty ammunition available at the time of the qualification course. **PCCD will not provide the qualification ammunition.**

## **Handgun Registration for Firearms Training Courses**

During enrollment for firearms training courses, constables and deputy constables are asked to provide information on the weapon(s) that they will be practicing and qualifying with during the firearms training course. This information can be entered directly into the computer system when enrolling online. Constables may also use the Handgun Registration for Firearms Training form, along with the Training Enrollment form and provided those forms directly to the appropriate training delivery contractor.

It is very important that this information be provided either during enrollment or prior to the training course start date, please contact PCCD Staff or the appropriate training delivery contractor, so that the training delivery contractors will have a sufficient inventory of practice ammunition available.

## **Constables' Firearms Training Qualification with an Additional Weapon**

Qualification with two weapons is permitted, **subject to time constraints and range conditions.** Constables must qualify with Weapon 1 before they will be permitted to attempt to qualify with Weapon 2. Constables must have sufficient ammunition to qualify with Weapon 2.

In the event that a constable fails to achieve the required score during a qualification attempt and refires the portion of the course failed but still fails to qualify, that constable will not be permitted to attempt a qualification with Weapon 2.

## **2014 Optional Training**

Starting with the 2014 Constable Training Year, the Optional Training Course will be revised to include the 4-hour Chemical Aerosol block as well as the 4-hour Expandable Baton block. Participants **must** complete all 8-hours of instruction. Participants **will not** be permitted to pick and choose which segment to complete. One Optional Training course will be offered in the East, Central and West regions.