POLICY

In order to more effectively and accurately address the increased firepower and body armor used by criminal suspects, the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) will make patrol rifles available to qualified officers. A patrol rifle is an authorized weapon owned by the BPD and made available to properly trained and qualified officers as a supplemental resource. Only BPD rifles may be carried while on-duty. Only BPD issued ammunition may be carried or used during deployment of a rifle.

Deployment Criteria

Officers assigned a patrol rifle shall exhibit sound judgment when deploying the patrol rifle. Deployment shall comply with Policy 1115, Use of Force. Situations in which the deployment of a rifle may be appropriate include, but are not limited to:

1. When a suspect:
   1.1. Is armed with a firearm, high-powered rifle, shotgun, or any weapon that is capable of injuring multiple persons or causing multiple serious injuries, or
   1.2. Is wearing body armor.

2. The officer reasonably anticipates an armed encounter.

3. An active-shooter incident.

4. Barricade and hostage incidents.

5. When an officer is faced with a situation that might require the delivery of accurate and effective fire at long range.

6. When the suspect has a tactical advantage, for example, armed-high ground.

NOTE: The availability of the rifle to patrol personnel must not cause members to deviate from notifying Emergency Services Unit (ESU) or SWAT personnel during incidents that would otherwise require their notification.

Patrol Rifle Officer

At the start of each assigned shift, any qualified, on-duty officer may, under the direct supervision of a permanent-rank supervisor, access the armory and sign-out his or her assigned patrol rifle. At the completion of the shift, the officer shall secure the patrol rifle in the armory. The issuing supervisor
and officer shall both sign the log book, when the weapon is signed-out and when returned.

1. Sign-in/out the rifle from the district/command armory at the beginning and end of each tour of duty.

2. Be guided by Policy 1115, *Use of Force*, governing deadly force in the display and discharge of the patrol rifle.

**Sector Sergeant**

1. Accompany and supervise the officer during removal/return of the patrol rifle to the secured district/section armory and sign the log book.

2. Respond to the scene when a patrol rifle is deployed. Supervise and assess the incident.

3. Make appropriate notifications to the Communications Unit and chain of command when the rifle is discharged, and implement steps outlined in Policy 1115, *Use of Force* and Policy 710, *Serious Use of Force and in Custody Death Response*.

4. Ensure ESU and/or SWAT are contacted when conditions warrant.

**Shift Commander/Lieutenant or Sergeant In Charge**

1. Ensure sector sergeants are completing required sign-in/out log book.

   1.1. The log book must include the serial number of the rifle, date, time and signature of the officer obtaining the rifle, and witnessing supervisor’s signature.

2. Ensure strict measures are used to secure the assigned rifles.


4. Ensure ESU and/or SWAT are contacted, when conditions warrant.

**Communications Unit**

1. Upon being notified that an officer has deployed a patrol rifle and is engaged in an incident, notify the neighboring rifle officer.

   **NOTE:** Due to the limited number of members who will be qualified to carry the rifle, the Communications Unit will issue a citywide broadcast upon request by a sector supervisor or shift commander, for an on-duty rifle-certified officer to respond to an active scene. Once the rifle has been deployed an announcement will be sent out to all officers by the Communications Unit to the on-scene supervisor and responding units.

2. Direct the secondary rifle officer to switch over to the active incident's communications channel, and provide a safe route of travel.
Transportation and Storage

Storage
1. The rifle will be kept in the “safe condition” at all times when not deployed and charged. The following describes the SAFE condition:
   
   1.1. Magazine removed,
   
   1.2. Bolt closed with chamber empty,
   
   1.3. Selector switch on SAFE, and
   
   1.4. Secured in a BPD issued or approved case as approved by the Range Master or his designee.

Patrol Ready

1. The rifle will be kept in the “safe condition” at all times when not deployed and charged. The following describes the SAFE condition:
   
   1.1. Magazine inserted,
   
   1.2. Bolt closed with chamber empty,
   
   1.3. Selector switch on SAFE, and
   
   1.4. Secured in a BPD issued or approved case as approved by the Range Master or his designee.

NOTE: While on patrol, the rifle shall be kept patrol ready with an empty chamber and a 25 round magazine inserted. The rifle shall be kept in a BPD issued or approved case in the trunk of the patrol vehicle. It shall have three additional magazines loaded with 25 rounds each. When carrying a patrol rifle in assigned vehicles, officers shall not leave the vehicle unlocked or unattended with the keys in the ignition. The patrol rifle shall not be left in the trunk after completion of a tour of duty. When not in use, patrol rifles will be stored in the district/command armory. Permanent or long term storage of these weapons in a vehicle is prohibited.

Armory Storage

1. The rifle will be placed in the “armory condition”, when the rifle is going to be inspected, checked for maintenance or on a break on the shooting line. The “armory condition” is as follows:
   
   1.1. Magazine removed,
   
   1.2. Bolt closed with chamber empty,
   
   1.3. Selector switch to SAFE, and
1.4. Ejection port visible.

Home Storage

Officers assigned a patrol rifle will be permitted to take the patrol rifle home. The rifle shall be stored at home consistent with storage of other departmental weapons. At a minimum, the rifle shall be stored with the ammunition separate, and either: a cable lock through the chamber, a trigger lock, or in a rifle safe. The patrol rifle, when transported from home to work, or from work to home, shall be transported in the storage condition.

Maintenance and Inspections

1. Each patrol rifle officer is required to respond to the Armory or Gunpowder Range upon request.

2. Each patrol rifle officer shall be responsible for promptly reporting any damage or malfunction of an assigned patrol rifle to their supervisor via an Administrative Report, Form 95.

NOTE: Only the BPD Armorer shall modify the patrol rifle.

3. The Range Master or his/her designee will inspect each patrol rifle during semi-annual qualification.

4. Patrol rifles shall be subject to inspection at any time by a rifle-qualified supervisor, the Range Master, or Armorer. In the absence of a rifle-qualified supervisor able to functionally inspect the rifle, the presence of and serial number of the patrol rifle shall be noted. The results of these inspections will be documented on the weekly equipment inspection sheets.

4.1. Supervisors must account for patrol rifles as part of the weekly vehicle and equipment inspection.

Training and Qualification Requirements

Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission (MPCTC) have clearly defined standards for the initial certification and annual qualification of law enforcement personnel to carry a rifle. These standards – along with the more rigorous standards of the BPD – are:

1. MPCTC requires one instructor per 5 students.

2. Patrol rifle instructors must have the type 3 rifle instructor certification, as designated by MPCTC.

3. The Firearms Training Unit will write and distribute to all personnel a training bulletin that explains the purpose, scope, and rules and regulations of the patrol rifle program. The Professional Development and Training Academy will provide a block of instruction to all in-service training classes, Sergeant Leadership School, and annual firearms qualification.
classes to apprise officers and sergeants of this program.

Selection of Personnel

Members shall be selected for the program, each of which will be authorized to employ a rifle upon satisfactory completion of the training program. The personnel selected for this program will meet the following criteria:

1. At least two years of service with the BPD,

2. Minimum previous annual pistol qualification and shotgun qualification course scores as determined by the Director, Professional Development and Training Academy.

3. Recommended by the member’s immediate supervisor and commanding officer.

4. Successful review of BPD employment record, including Internal Affairs Section and Equal Opportunity and Diversity Section histories.

RESCISSION


COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

This policy is effective on the date listed herein. Commanders are responsible for informing their subordinates of this policy and ensuring compliance.