

1. Authorization

- a. Upon determining that there is a legitimate need for a non-law enforcement, BLM employee to possess, carry, or use a firearm, and in accordance with the process prescribed by the state firearms manager, the supervisor must submit a request to obtain authorization from the state director. This authorization allows the supervisor's employee to complete firearms training and carry and use firearms. In addition, field office manager endorsement is required as part of the request to the state director.
- b. A background check must be conducted to determine whether an employee is prohibited from possessing, carrying, or using a firearm by court order; as a condition of sentencing, probation, or parole or pretrial diversion agreement; because of conviction of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence; because of a felony crime; or because of a history of mental illness that presents a risk of injury to the employee or others. After the initial background check, rechecks must be performed a minimum of every 4 years.
- c. After successful completion of a background check, the employee may attend firearms training.
- d. The state firearms manager must prepare a certificate of firearms authorization for the employee, verify that the employee has passed a background check and successfully completed training and live fire range qualification requirements, and request the state director's signature on the certificate of firearms authorization.
- e. The certificate of firearms authorization must not cover more than a 12-month period and must include the following information:
  - 1) Employee's name,
  - 2) Duties requiring use of firearms,
  - 3) Geographic area where the authorization is valid,
  - 4) Purpose of firearm use,
  - 5) Issuance and expiration date,
  - 6) Specific type of firearm(s) the employee is authorized to carry,
  - 7) Serial number(s) of personal firearm(s) the employee is authorized to carry,
  - 8) State director's name, and
  - 9) State director's signature and date.
- f. A certificate of firearms authorization expires upon the occurrence of any of the following circumstances:
  - 1) At the end of the calendar year in which it was issued or the completion of the project, whichever occurs first;
  - 2) When there is a change of duty station, status, or transfer;
  - 3) Upon failure to demonstrate shooting proficiency or strict adherence to firearms safety, transport, or security requirements;

- 4) A conviction for domestic violence or the subject of a domestic violence protection order; or
- 5) When rescinded for any reason by the employee's supervisor or manager.

## 2. Training

- a. Non-law enforcement employees who possess, carry, or use a firearm in the performance of their official duties must successfully complete classroom training in the following categories, at a minimum:
  - 1) General and range firearms safety;
  - 2) Laws, rules, regulations, and policies;
  - 3) Employee and supervisory responsibilities;
  - 4) Incident reporting;
  - 5) Firearms care and maintenance; and
  - 6) Firearms skills.
- b. Live Fire Range Qualification. This portion of the firearms training course must take place on the firing range under the control of an authorized instructor. The target for animal protection training must be 8 ½ by 11 inches in size and must be placed a distance of 15 yards from the firing line. Proficiency is achieved when 70 percent of the shots are on the target and when all sequences of shots are fired within the allowable time of 25 seconds. Each sequence must be performed twice to demonstrate proficiency. The shooter must also exhibit proper safe handling of the firearm(s).
- c. Pump and Semi-Automatic Shotguns. This portion of the training course includes two sequences of live range fire consisting of magazine capacity for the shotgun, plus one (i.e., Remington 870, four rounds in magazine, plus one).
  - 1) The shooter must start with a full magazine and empty chamber. The weapon must have the action closed and the safety on.
  - 2) On the command to fire, the shooter is required to fire the rounds in the magazine, then reload and fire one additional round.
  - 3) Upon completion, the shooter must open the action and make sure the safety is on.
  - 4) The time limit is 25 seconds, and this sequence is repeated.
- d. Double-Barrel Shotguns. This portion of the training course includes two sequences of live range fire consisting of four rounds per sequence.
  - 1) The shooter must start with a full magazine and empty chamber. The weapon must have the action closed and the safety on.
  - 2) On the command to fire, the shooter is required to fire the rounds in the magazine, then reload and fire one additional round.
  - 3) Upon completion, the shooter must open the action and make sure the safety is on.

- 4) The time limit is 25 seconds, and this sequence is repeated.
- e. Rifles. This portion of the training course includes two sequences of live range fire consisting of magazine capacity for the rifle, plus one round (i.e., a bolt action rifle with magazine capacity of three rounds; the course is four rounds for each sequence).
  - 1) The shooter must start with the magazine fully loaded. The action must be closed on an empty chamber and the safety on.
  - 2) On command to fire, the shooter must fire the rounds in the magazine, then reload and fire one additional round.
  - 3) Upon completion, the shooter must open the action and make sure the safety is on.
  - 4) The time limit is 25 seconds, and this sequence is repeated.
- f. Handguns. This portion of the training course includes two sequences of live range fire, each consisting of cylinder/magazine capacity for the handgun.
  - 1) The shooter must start with a fully loaded handgun.
  - 2) On the command to fire, the shooter must fire all rounds contained in the cylinder/magazine.
  - 3) Upon completion, the shooter must open the cylinder/slide and make sure the handgun is unloaded.
  - 4) The time limit is 25 seconds, and this sequence is repeated.
- g. Refresher Training. Employees must successfully complete refresher classroom training every 2 years and successfully complete live fire range qualification on an annual basis. Certificates of firearms authorization must not be renewed for employees that cannot successfully complete their refresher training and perform their firearms qualification.
- h. Firearms instructors must refuse to qualify any student who demonstrates a lack of basic situational awareness or firearms safety awareness or a solid understanding of the mechanical operation of firearms, regardless of that employee's successful completion of the prescribed live fire range qualification.
- i. Wild Animal Behavior Training. A basic understanding of animal behavior is an essential component of effective self-defense against large predators. All firearms instruction that is conducted to prepare employees to defend themselves against wild animal attacks must include the following:
  - 1) A minimum of 2 hours of training in the behaviors and characteristics of the applicable dangerous animal, taught by a knowledgeable instructor.
  - 2) The use of nonlethal rounds and capsaicin-based deterrent spray for deterring aggressive animals.
  - 3) The ethical implications and legal requirements associated with killing a game animal in defense of life and property.

- 4) Employees choosing to supplement or replace the use of firearms with pepper- based deterrent spray for protection against dangerous wild animals must complete a training program in the use of the spray, taught by a trained and knowledgeable instructor.
- j. BLM firearms instruction must be of professional caliber. States are encouraged to promote and fund advanced instructor training relevant to the type(s) of firearms and conditions to which employee(s) will be exposed. Firearms instructors and firearms training coordinators must have significant experience in the use of firearms and must meet one or more of the following requirements prior to independently instructing employees:
- 1) A Federal Law Enforcement Training Center graduate.
  - 2) A National Rifle Association firearms instructor.
  - 3) Minimum 16 hours of basic firearms instructor training.
  - 4) One block of discipline-specific firearms instructor training, as applicable:
    - a) Shotgun.
    - b) Rifle.
    - c) Handgun.