

Firearms Policy & Procedure

It is the intention of the Wishram School District to provide a safe, disciplined and drug free school environment for all who visit and occupy our buildings. In order to strengthen the district's effort to increase safety and security additional measures will be set in place to allow key school personnel engaged in school security activities as stated in RCW 9.41.280 to carry firearms.

The following procedures will provide guidance to the Wishram School District and security personnel for the carrying of firearms and the use of force.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The school district may decide to establish a school safety advisory committee to govern the operation of school safety and security activities. This committee shall represent various agencies or individuals considered to be subject-matter experts in field of school and community safety and security. The membership will consist of the following but not necessarily limited to: Law Enforcement, School Safety and Security, key school personnel, Fire Service, Emergency Management, the district's insurance carrier, district legal counsel and a parent representative.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

NECESSARY: Means that no reasonably effective alternative to the use of force appeared to exist and that the amount of force used was reasonable to effect the lawful purpose intended.

DEADLY FORCE: Means the intentional application of force through the use of firearms or any other means reasonably likely to cause death or serious physical injury.

SCHOOL PROPERTY: All property owned and operated by the Wishram School District may also include, by definition, school activities that are sponsored by the Wishram School District and held off-campus in a neutral location.

PHYSICAL FORCE: Intentional application of force through the use of physical contact. This includes counter joints, hitting, kicking, and the use of OC/pepper spray, or any other use of force that results in injury or complaint of injury. This does not include routine handcuffing and escort techniques, not amounting to the conditions above.

BODILY INJURY/HARM: Physical pain or injury or an impairment of physical condition.

GREAT BODILY HARM: Bodily injury which creates the probability of death or causes significant serious permanent disfigurement or loss or impairment of any part of an organ.

DEADLY WEAPON: Any explosive, firearm (loaded or unloaded), any other instrument, device, article, or substance, including vehicles, which under circumstances of its use, is readily capable of causing death or substantial bodily harm.

PERSONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Management Support

All persons employed specifically as a school security officer or other school personnel engaged in school security activities that carry firearms or other lethal or less than lethal weapons, authorized by the school board and district shall undergo an extensive background check that may include fingerprinting, polygraph and psychological screening. The Wishram School District shall bear the cost of these screenings.

Retired or former law enforcement personnel that have been hired by the Wishram School District, that as part of their job function, will be carrying a firearm, shall be in possession of a Retired Commission Card, issued by a State of Washington certified municipal law enforcement agency, sheriff's office or the state patrol. In lieu of a Retired Commission Card a former or retired law enforcement officer must possess a valid and current Concealed Weapons Permit issued by a municipal police department or sheriff's office in the state of Washington or be eligible to obtain a permit. A letter of agreement from the retired law enforcement officer's former agency police chief or sheriff may be required.

Any School Board designated employee, without former law enforcement experience, hired by the Wishram School District, that will be engaged in school security activities must qualify and be in possession of a concealed weapons permit prior to performing job duties that require carrying a firearm.

Reserve law enforcement officers or deputies, with a limited commission card, in good standing with their law enforcement agency may be employed by or used in the capacity of providing security services in the Wishram School District. This service may require a letter of agreement or memorandum of understanding from their respective police chief or sheriff.

USE OF FORCE

Use of Force policy will be reviewed annually and the district may decide to test security staff on their knowledge of the policy

The Wishram School District recognizes that school personnel, especially those engaged in school security activities may be confronted with circumstances where control must be exercised, to restrain individuals who pose harm to themselves or others, to quell disturbances, or to effect protective custody detainment. In most circumstances the decision to use physical force, to gain compliance, will follow verbal persuasion, advisement, or warning.

This policy is intended to guide officers, or other school personnel in their decision to use reasonable force and to consider alternative methods in the application of that force. The reasonableness of the force applied shall be evaluated against the facts and collective knowledge available to the officer at the time the force is applied.

WHEN FORCE MAY BE USED

Reasonable physical force may be used by school security personnel when necessary to defend against an attack, restrain, remove, or disarm persons who present a threat of harm to themselves or others, property damage or theft, or who disrupt school activities.

Physical force is necessary only when other means of defense, restraint, removal, or disarmament would likely be ineffective after such other means have been attempted and were ineffective.

In determining whether the use of physical force is reasonable and necessary, all circumstances shall be considered, including without limitation the person's age, physical strength, size, sex, maturity and previous history, the seriousness of the problem and the threat posed by the person, and the availability and use of other means of defense, restraint, removal or disarmament not involving the use of physical force.

Examples of force that could be reasonable and necessary include, but are not limited to the following:

- Using reasonable and necessary force to quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical injury to any person;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a person's control;
- Using reasonable and necessary force for the purpose of self-defense or the defense of others;
- Using reasonable and necessary force for the protection of property;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to remove a disruptive student from a classroom or school premises, motor vehicle or school bus or from school sponsored activities;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to prevent a person from inflicting harm on himself or herself;
- Using reasonable and necessary force to protect the safety of others;
- Using incidental, minor or reasonable physical contact designed to maintain order and control, protect or defend;
- Using reasonable force in physical activities associated with athletics.

When physical force is no longer necessary, it should be discontinued. Action taken after the fact may be in the form of a student conference, referral, suspension, expulsion or civil or criminal court action.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE

The State of Washington has identified and labeled several levels of force that an officer may use and has categorized several control techniques into each level of force.

Since School Security Officers are considered persons of authority within the school setting, SSO's will follow similar guidelines for the use of force continuum as regular law enforcement officers.

The categories and use of force guidelines are as follows:

LEVELS

OFFICER PRESENCE: The mere presence of a School Security Officer is often enough to calm a tense situation or deter unwanted activity.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION: The use of verbal skills, to include commands can achieve the desired results in most situations. Proper communication can de-escalate a tense situation and deter the need for a physical intervention.

Use of force beyond **Officer Presence** and **Communication** must be justified.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION: Situations arise where words alone do not resolve a conflict. Physical force/bare hands contact to guide, direct, hold, restrain or defend are necessary at this level. Defensive tactics holds may be applied to restrain aggressive individuals. Handcuffs may be applied to person(s) who are aggressive, pose a real threat or are believed to have committed a crime that the level of offense dictates the need for restraints prior to an arrest by law enforcement.

PEPPER SPRAY/FOAM: When an individual or individuals are violent, damaging school property or posing a threat to others, Pepper Spray/Foam may be used in an attempt to de-escalate the threat and to gain compliance. It is assumed that verbal and other less physical measures have been used or deemed inappropriate. Using Pepper Spray/Foam on highly aggressive persons, who could pose a physical threat of injury, may be advisable in lieu of physical force/physical intervention. Anytime the situation is serious enough to require the use of Pepper Spray/Foam, law enforcement will be notified and criminal charges requested.

TEMPORARY INCAPACITATION/TASER: At this level the situation could be so extreme, potentially dangerous, and immediate that for safety reasons it could be necessary to temporarily incapacitate the individual. This includes all methods of non-deadly force beginning with empty hand up through impact tools or Taser (if authorized). Temporary incapacitation is used to stop an individual from injuring you or others and to gain compliance or alleviate the threat. Anytime the situation is serious enough to require the use of a Taser, law enforcement will be notified for further investigation for possible criminal charges.

DEADLY FORCE: Use of deadly force must be justified RCW 9A.16.040

When you are in immediate fear of death or serious physical harm to yourself or others you are justified to use deadly force. Deadly force can be applied by any means available including, but not limited to, hands, impact tools or firearm.

Legal References:

Chapter RCW 9A.16

WAC 392-400-235

Use of Force Requires a Report

Any use of force that escalates the behavior of the intended person or any use of force that requires the security officer to place their hands upon a student or adult, other than to escort said person, will require a report to be written and submitted to the district superintendent or their designee. The use of force that can be interpreted as assaultive behavior or results in injury, substantial or great bodily harm and possibly death will require a report to be made and mandatory notification of law enforcement for investigation.

Caring for Injured Due to Use of Force

Any use of force on behalf of school security officers, or other school personnel engaged in school security activities where injury results will summon appropriate medical attention immediately. This will cause a report to be made and law enforcement will be called for investigation regardless of the severity of the injury.

EQUIPMENT

Any equipment that is used for school safety and security and carried by the security officer or other personnel engaged in school security activities may be supplied by the district or individuals providing security services. If the individual chooses to supply their own equipment the cost of such equipment will be borne by the individual. Regardless of who provides the equipment, including firearms, all equipment must be approved by law enforcement and the advisory committee and meet industry standards. All equipment supplied by individuals and or the Wishram School District will

be inventoried, inspected and records, including serial numbers, will be on file at the Superintendent's Office.

All security staff carrying firearms and other equipment will be trained in the proper use of such equipment. Refer to training requirements

ANNUAL INSPECTION

All equipment used for school security activities will be inspected annually for structural and functional integrity; any equipment not meeting industry standards will either be repaired or replaced in a timely manner. Any equipment, such as ballistic vests and OC/pepper spray that have expiration dates, will be replaced on or before the expiration date. All equipment that has an expiration date will be recorded and information kept at the Superintendent's Office.

CARRYING EQUIPMENT

The decision to carry and use equipment will be made by the Wishram School District security staff with input from the advisory committee. The firearms and equipment listed below are options for the Wishram School District to consider and authorize. All equipment that is used will be approved by the school board and meet law enforcement standards.

EQUIPMENT

- Ballistic Vests Asp/Collapsible Baton
- OC/Pepper Spray Handcuffs- either hinged or chained
- TASER
- Two Way Radios with one channel connected to a law enforcement frequency. The frequency used will be determined by the cooperating law enforcement agency and the Wishram School District.

FIREARMS

Types of Firearms *(The firearms listed below are options for the Wishram School District to consider and authorize.)*

Handguns: Any handgun, whether supplied by an individual or by the Wishram School District, used in school security activities must meet the following criteria:

Any American made, solid frame, double action revolver of .38, 38+P or .357 caliber with at least a 1 ¾ inch and no longer than 4 inch barrel. Semi- auto pistols either single or double action .380, 9mm .40 or .45 caliber; Smith & Wesson, Berretta, Sig Sauer, Glock, H&K, Springfield, Para Ordnance, Kimber, Colt or a similar handgun that is approved and used by the local law enforcement agency or sheriff's office, the barrel length: minimum of 1 ¾ inch to a maximum of 4 inches. Match grade, competition grade, or "Race Guns" are not approved for use in school.

Long guns: approved and available for use by security; it will be mandatory they be stored in an approved gun safe, during school hours, that is in a secure location, inside the school and readily available for use if needed.

Remington 870 shotgun (barrel length will meet law enforcement standards) or rifle of .223 caliber either a Mini 14 or AR-15 or other rifle of similar design.

MAGAZINES AND SPEED LOADERS

The number of and storage capacity of speed loaders or magazines, to be carried, will be determined by the Wishram School District and local law enforcement agency.

Storage and/or Transportation of Firearms

Transportation of firearms to and from home: staff engaged in school security activities that have been approved to carry firearms may choose to transport their weapons to and from home and school. In this case transportation and carrying of firearms will be done in accordance with current state law.

If firearms are stored at school during non-school hours they will be secured in a gun safe and the safe will be stored in a secure room within the school.

FIREARMS TRAINING

All firearms training for school personnel engaged in school security activities will meet law enforcement standards (RCW 9.41.280). Training standards for Wishram School District will meet or exceed the standards of the local sheriff's office.

To every extent possible, the Wishram School District will attempt to have the local law enforcement agency provide a certified instructor to train school personnel. If, for whatever reason the law enforcement agency declines to provide training the Wishram School District will seek training from a private vendor. Firearms training instructors whether from a private vendor or a local law enforcement agency must have completed a course of instruction and be certified by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission.

Firearms qualification training records for school personnel will be kept on file at the district office. Any school personnel working in a school security capacity that fails to qualify will be required to re-qualify; failure to re-qualify will result in revocation of designation as authorized security personnel and the person will not be authorized to use or carry firearms under the board's designation until re-qualification has been successfully completed. Remediation training will be required until the individual is able to qualify with and demonstrate competence with a firearm.

All persons receiving firearms training will engage on the range with a certified instructor live fire situations that require shoot, don't shoot decision making and other dynamic scenarios.

Firearms Simulation Training Simulators (FATS) offered by some insurance carriers will be an accepted form of training but it will not fully replace live fire training.

All school personnel whether a security officer or other designated administrators that carry firearms must train and qualify at least 3 times per year. Two of which are live fire and one of which can be simulation.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF FIREARMS

All firearms used by school staff engaged in school security activities will be responsible to maintain the firearms working integrity. They shall be cleaned after every qualification. Any malfunction will be reported to the Superintendent or their designee; the firearm will be removed from service until appropriate repairs can be made by a licensed and certified gunsmith or the manufacturer.

MODIFICATION TO FIREARMS

All firearms, whether handguns or long guns, cannot be modified and must meet the specifications of the manufacturer; the only exception will be the installation of approved “night sights,” or rifle sights on the shotgun barrel.

TYPES OF HOLSTERS

Open carry holster will meet retention level II or level III law enforcement standards. Concealed carry holsters; shoulder holsters must meet a minimum retention level I or greater.

AMMUNITION

All ammunition must meet the local municipal police department or county sheriff’s office standards for both handguns and long guns. Hand or reloaded ammunition is not allowed. The Wishram School District will purchase all ammunition and storage of additional rounds of ammunition will be in a locked in safe or closet within the school.

OPEN CARRY OR CONCEALED CARRY

The decision to have school staff engaged in school security activities carry firearms in the open or concealed will be a decision made by the Wishram School District in conjunction with local law enforcement based upon best practices.

IDENTIFICATION

If school personnel are ever required to draw a firearm to confront an active shooter in the school it will be important for them to be easily identified when law enforcement arrives on campus to avoid a “friendly fire” situation. Therefore the district will work with local law enforcement personnel to determine procedures for easy identification.

DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS

The discharge of a firearm falls into an intentional or accidental situation. Intentional discharge will occur either during qualification at the range or in the line of duty. Any intentional or accidental discharge of a firearm on school campus, within any building or school sponsored activity will require a law enforcement investigation. Discharging a firearm at the shooting range during training and qualification is exempt from the reporting requirement.

Firing warning shots in the line of duty are not allowed; the risks of injury to innocent parties are too great.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING PLANS

All school personnel whether designated as a security officer or other school personnel engaged in school security activities that carry firearms, and or other equipment, will be required to develop a training plan. An initial and a recertification training plan will be required for any and all of the following equipment that will be carried:

- Firearms • ASP/Collapsible Baton • Handcuffs • OC/Pepper Spray • TASER

USE OF FORCE TRAINING

Any person employed by Wishram School District in the capacity of a school security officer, or other school personnel that will be engaged in security activities or where there is a reasonable expectation that use of force will be a part of their job function, shall receive training in and understand all facets regarding use of reasonable and necessary force. Including the continuum of force taught in basic law enforcement training. The Wishram School District will conduct an annual review and test of all individuals engaged in school security activities to measure the level of knowledge.

TRAINING RECORDS AND RETENTION OF RECORDS

All school district security training records will be kept on file in a secure location for a period not to exceed 3 years after the person leaves district employment.

Wishram School District
Adoption Date: 11/2018 Revised: 2/2023
Classification: Optional

FIREARMS SECURITY OFFICER DUTIES AUTHORIZATION

All persons employed specifically as a school security officer or other school personnel engaged in school security activities that carry firearms or other lethal or less than lethal weapons, authorized by the school board and district must comply with Policy 6514 and must have documented evidence

Management Support

of Wishram School Board's specific authorization to use and carry firearms to carry out the duties of a school security officer for Wishram School District.

Name of School District employee: _____

School Board Authorization

School Board Director: _____ Signature: _____

School Board Director: _____ Signature: _____

School Board Director: _____ Signature: _____

School Board Director: _____ Signature: _____

School Board Director: _____ Signature: _____