



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: INVESTIGATION OF FIREARMS DISCHARGES		NO: G-300	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: August 1, 1990	REVIEWED: 06/22/2018	REVISED: 10/22/2009	UPDATED: 06/22/2018

It shall be the policy of the Kern County Sheriff's Office to investigate **all** incidents involving the use of lethal force or any discharge of a firearm by a member of the Sheriff's Office. Lethal force is any use of force that is likely to result in serious injury or death of any person. This policy does not apply to an intended discharge of a firearm during training or unintentional discharge on the firing line at the Range, unless the unintentional discharge results in injury.

DIRECTIVE 1

The commander, sergeant, and detectives assigned to an investigation will have full staff authority during the scope of the investigation.

DIRECTIVE 2

As deemed necessary by the officer in charge of the investigative team, officers involved in the incident, either as principals or witnesses, may be compelled to cooperate with the investigation. All such officers shall be afforded all rights and consideration applicable under Section 3300-3311 of the Government Code.

Prior to obtaining any compelled statements, the investigating officer will give the subject officer a complete pre-interview advisal as set forth in the Dictation Guide of Section D-300 of the Sheriff's Policy and Procedures Manual.

PROCEDURE A – LETHAL FORCE INVESTIGATIONS

Any officer who uses lethal force will:

- Request medical aid and assistance as needed;
- Preserve the scene;
- Notify the Communications Center of the incident.

The Communications Center will:

- Notify an on-duty field supervisor.

The Shift Supervisor who is notified in such cases will:

- Ensure that the scene is properly preserved;
- Instruct the Communications Center to initiate a call-out of investigative personnel;
- Assign personnel as available and necessary to identify and isolate any witnesses;
 - If a witness is unable to remain at the scene, a statement will be taken and complete personal information will be obtained.
- Assign an officer not involved in the incident to transport the involved officer to the closest Sheriff's station where they will be sequestered to prevent any unnecessary questioning;
 - The involved officer will be allowed and encouraged to contact his/her family to notify them of his/her well being and obtain support as needed.
- Provide a complete briefing for investigators when needed.

In cases of officer injury, the shift supervisor will:

- Assign an officer to accompany the injured officer to the hospital;
 - Take charge of the injured officer's equipment;
 - Receive a dying declaration when necessary.

The Communications Center will:

- Call out and notify personnel in accordance with the officer-involved shooting protocol.

The Detective Division Commander will:

- Maintain ultimate control of the investigation.

The Sergeant in charge of the investigation team will:

- Assign sufficient Detectives and Technical Investigators to the investigation;
- Assign duties to personnel on the investigative team as the situation dictates;
- Ensure that the incident is investigated following current, accepted policy investigative procedures;
- Coordinate with the field supervisor on who is responsible for writing reports;

G-300-2

EFFECTIVE: August 1, 1990	REVIEWED: 06/22/2018	REVISED: 10/22/2009	UPDATED: 06/22/2018
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- Involved officers in incidents with serious injury or death will not write a report.
- Forward all reports to the Detective Division Commander.

The Detective Division Commander will:

- Initiate a review of the incident according to DPPM Section G-600.

DIRECTIVE A-1

Procedure A will apply to any on-duty incident in Kern County, regardless of the jurisdiction, or any off-duty incident that occurs in the Sheriff's Office's jurisdiction.

DIRECTIVE A-2

Any off-duty incident in another jurisdiction in Kern County will be investigated by the agency of jurisdiction unless that agency requests the incident be investigated by the Sheriff's Office. If the agency of jurisdiction investigates the incident, the Sheriff's Office's litigation officer, Detective Division Commander, and a Detective Sergeant will respond to assist the other agency.

DIRECTIVE A-3

Any incident that occurs outside of Kern County will be worked by the agency of jurisdiction. The Sheriff's Office's litigation officer, Detective Division Commander, and a Detective Sergeant will respond to assist the other agency.

PROCEDURE B: SHOOTING OF AN ANIMAL

An officer who shoots at an animal will:

- Ensure the weapon is safe;
- Check for injured persons and/or damage;
- Seek medical aid as necessary;
- Notify an on-duty supervisor, or the Rangemaster if at the range;
- Preserve the scene.

The supervisor will:

- Ensure the scene is preserved;
- Notify the on-duty Watch Commander;

G-300-3

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- Notify the Detective Division Commander or Robbery/Homicide Sergeant in his/her absence.
- Notify the Internal Affairs Commander and Sergeant via email.

The Detective Division personnel will:

- Determine the scope of the investigation;
- Initiate the appropriate level of investigation;
- Initiate a review of the incident pursuant to DPPM Section G-600.

PROCEDURE C: UNINTENTIONAL DISCHARGES OF FIREARMS

An officer who unintentionally discharges a firearm will:

- Ensure the weapon is safe;
- Check for injured persons and/or damage;
- Seek medical aid as necessary;
- Notify an on-duty supervisor, or the Rangemaster if at the range;
- Preserve the scene.

The supervisor will:

- Ensure the scene is preserved;
- Notify the on-duty Watch Commander;
- Notify the Detective Division Commander or Robbery/Homicide Sergeant in his/her absence.
- Notify the Internal Affairs Commander and Sergeant via email.

The Detective Division personnel will:

- Determine the scope of the investigation;
- Initiate the appropriate level of investigation;
- Initiate a review of the incident pursuant to DPPM Section G-600.

G-300-4

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DIRECTIVE C1

An unintentional discharge of a firearm at the firearms range or during training will be investigated by the Rangemaster who will forward a copy of the report to the Detective Division Commander. If the incident results in injury or death to any person, or the Rangemaster determines the investigation is too complex, the Detective Division will assume the investigation.

G-300-5

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