



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

1000 NAVY PENTAGON

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-1000

SECNAVINST 5500.29C

N09N

August 27, 2003

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5500.29C

From: Secretary of the Navy  
To: All Ships and Stations

Subj: USE OF DEADLY FORCE AND THE CARRYING OF FIREARMS BY  
PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT, SECURITY DUTIES AND PERSONAL  
PROTECTION

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5530.14C  
(b) OPNAVINST 5580.1A  
(c) OPNAVINST 3591.1C  
(d) MCO 3574.2J  
(e) MCO 5500.6F  
(f) CJCSI 3121.01 (S) (NOTAL)

Encl: (1) DoD Directive 5210.56 of 1 Nov 01

1. Purpose. To implement enclosure (1).

2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 5500.29B.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all Department of the Navy military and civilian personnel or contract security forces of the Department of the Navy who carry firearms as specified in enclosure (1). For contract security forces, the applicable contents of this instruction will be invoked in the contractual agreement between the Department of the Navy and the other contracting party.

4. Policy.

a. Department of the Navy personnel regularly engaged in law enforcement and security duties shall be armed when actually engaged in such duties. Such personnel may not carry firearms when in off-duty status, unless they are otherwise assigned to do so by higher authority. Prior to being armed, they shall be qualified per references (a) through (e), as appropriate. Individuals will remain so qualified during the period in which they are armed. Commanders and commanding officers may revoke an individual's authorization to carry a firearm as a result of a safety, legal, or policy violation.

b. The Director, Naval Criminal Investigative Service (DIRNCIS), is delegated authority to arm appropriately trained

NCIS personnel engaged in law enforcement, security, and counterintelligence duties. He may further delegate this authority to Assistant Directors, Deputy Assistant Directors, and Special Agents in Charge. The Director, NCIS may authorize NCIS personnel to carry non-government-issued handguns for use in the performance of duties. Except for NCIS special agents, authorization to carry a non-government weapon shall include a termination date, not later than one year from the date of the authorization and must be revalidated each year. The authorization shall also advise the individual that only government provided ammunition may be used in the weapon while the individual is "performing official duties." All such handguns shall be certified as meeting Department of the Navy and NCIS safety and operational standards.

c. The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) are delegated authority to arm appropriately trained military and civilian personnel of the Navy and Marine Corps assigned to law enforcement, security, and counterintelligence duties. They may further delegate this authority.

d. NCIS personnel engaged in law enforcement, security, and counterintelligence duties and Navy/Marine Corps Criminal Investigators assigned to NCIS, and Marine Corps Military Police Investigators shall be issued credentials that reflect their authority to carry firearms. The carrying of firearms by NCIS personnel outside the Continental United States (CONUS) shall be consistent with the applicable Status of Forces Agreement and or host nation law and regulations.

e. Authority to arm military or civilian personnel of the Navy for personal protection outside the CONUS, under paragraph E1.1.3 of enclosure (1), is delegated to the CNO, Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO), and U.S. Navy Unified Command Component Commanders.

f. Authority to arm military or civilian personnel of the Marine Corps for personal protection outside the CONUS, under paragraph E1.1.3 of enclosure (1), is delegated to the CMC and the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (ACMC).

g. Military and civilian personnel of the Department of the Navy not involved in full time law enforcement, security or counter-intelligence duties shall not carry government-issued

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firearms for personal protection within the CONUS or when they have been provided an official protective service detail, unless specifically authorized by the CNO, VCNO, CMC, ACMC, or Dir NCIS, respectively.

h. Military and civilian personnel of the Navy and Marine Corps who are involved in full time law enforcement, security, or counterintelligence duties shall not carry government-issued firearms for personal protection within the CONUS when not actually engaged in law enforcement, security, or counterintelligence duties, unless specifically authorized by the CNO, VCNO, CMC, or ACMC, respectively.

i. All military and civilian personnel of the Navy and Marine Corps authorized under this instruction to carry firearms must receive annual firearms safety instruction, weapons qualification, sustainment training, and instruction regarding the use of deadly force required by references (a) through (e), as appropriate. DIRNCIS must ensure weapons qualification and training requirements for personnel assigned to NCIS, who are authorized to carry weapons, meet federal law enforcement standards.

(1) Firearms qualifications for Navy military and civilian personnel, who will be armed for personal protection shall at a minimum, consist of the course of fire in reference (c).

(2) Marine Corps military and civilian personnel shall qualify per reference (d).

j. Navy military and civilian personnel, and Marine Corps military personnel whose duties require the carrying of concealed firearms and Marine Corps civilian personnel whose duties require the carrying of firearms shall be issued OPNAV Form 5512/2, which shall be signed by the appropriate authorizing official (commanding officer or individual designated in writing by the commanding officer). This form shall be in the possession of the individual while armed. The authorization must be withdrawn whenever the person to whom issued no longer meets the training, qualification or proficiency requirements, or no longer needs to be armed.

(1) The exceptions are NCIS personnel engaged in law enforcement, security, and counterintelligence duties, Marine

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Corps criminal investigators, Marine Military Police Investigators and Navy and Marine Corps protective service personnel, whose credentials authorize the carrying of firearms.

k. This instruction does not apply to Navy and Marine Corps personnel performing operational missions. Personnel engaged in those missions overseas are subject to the Standing Rules of Engagement in reference (f) or mission specific rules of engagement. Domestic military activities will be conducted under authority in this instruction, unless other superseding rules are specifically identified.

l. The Gun Control Act of 1968, as amended (18 U.S.C. § 922), makes it a felony for a person to ship, transport, possess, or receive firearms or ammunition if that person has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence. Per paragraph E1.1.10 of enclosure (1), there is no exception for law enforcement, security, and counterintelligence personnel.

m. Navy and Marine Corps personnel engaged in law enforcement and security duties shall refer to enclosure (2) of DoD Directive 5210.56 (enclosure (1)) for guidance on the use of deadly force. Paragraphs E2.1.2.3.2 of enclosure (1) provide guidance for the use of deadly force to protect DoD assets specifically designated as "vital to national security." DoD assets shall be specifically designated as "vital to national security" only when their loss, damage, or compromise would seriously jeopardize the fulfillment of a national defense mission. The CNO and the CMC are given the authority to designate those assets under their cognizance as "vital to national security." Combatant Commanders have this authority for assets under their cognizance; authority may be delegated to the Naval Component Commander. Whenever naval assets are designated as being "vital to the national security" or asset designation status changes, the Naval Component Commander will keep the CNO or CMC informed of these changes.

n. Paragraph E2.1.2.3.5 of enclosure (1) provides guidance for U.S. military forces to protect critical public infrastructure.

5. Action. CNO and CMC will issue or revise as necessary all orders, regulations and instructions to comply with the provisions of this instruction.

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6. Form. OPNAV 5512/2 (Rev 6-81), Authorization to Carry  
Firearms, S/N 0107-LF-055-1400, may be obtained at  
<http://forms.daps.mil>.

*Hansford T. Johnson*

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Acting

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# Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 5210.56

November 1, 2001

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Administrative Reissuance Incorporating Change 1, January 24, 2002

ASD(C3I)

**SUBJECT: Use of Deadly Force and the Carrying of Firearms by DoD Personnel  
Engaged in Law Enforcement and Security Duties**

- References: (a) DoD Directive 5210.56, "Use of Force by Personnel Engaged in Law Enforcement and Security Duties," February 25, 1992 (hereby canceled)
- (b) Section 1585 of title 10, United States Code
  - (c) Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 108.11, "Carriage of Weapons," current edition
  - (d) Section 1472 of title 49, United States Code
  - (e) Section 922(g)(9) of title 18, United States Code

## 1. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This Directive reissues reference (a) and implements the provisions of reference (b) that govern the carrying of firearms *and the use of deadly force by DoD military and civilian personnel performing law enforcement and security duties*, and references (c) and (d) that apply to the carrying of firearms by DoD military and civilian personnel aboard commercial aircraft.

## 2. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This Directive:

2.1. Applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities in the Department of

Defense (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components"). The term "Military Services," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

2.2. Authorizes DoD personnel to carry firearms while engaged in law enforcement or security duties, protecting personnel, vital Government assets, or guarding prisoners.

2.3. Does not apply to DoD personnel engaged in military operations and subject to authorized rules of engagement, or assigned to duty in the following areas or situations, as defined by an executive order or a DoD Directive:

2.3.1. In a combat zone in time of war.

2.3.2. In a designated hostile fire area when rules of engagement apply, or when the combatant commander issues operations orders setting forth different criteria.

2.3.3. Under the operational control of another Federal Agency carrying firearms in support of the mission, subject to the approval and requirements of both the Federal Agency and the DoD Component.

2.3.4. Civil disturbance mission area.

2.3.5. Military Services personnel performing training missions.

2.4. Requires that the principles defined in this Directive on use of deadly force with firearms be applied equally to personnel using any weapon or equipment which, when properly employed in their intended application, would exert deadly force.

2.5. Requires establishing criteria for compliance with its provisions by contract security forces.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Armed. Equipped with a loaded firearm.

3.2. Deadly Force. Force that a person uses causing, or that a person knows or should know would create a substantial risk of causing, death or serious bodily harm. Deadly force shall be used only as set forth in enclosure 2.

3.3. Defense Criminal Investigative Organizations (DCIOs). The Naval Investigative Service Command, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, the Army Criminal Investigations Command, and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and any successor organizations.

3.4. Imminent. The determination of whether a particular threat or danger is "imminent" is based on an assessment of all the circumstances known to DoD personnel at the time. "Imminent" does not necessarily mean "immediate" or "instantaneous."

### 3.5. Locking Device for Firearms

3.5.1. A device that when installed on a firearm and secured by a key or mechanically, electronically, or electro-magnetically operated combination lock prevents the firearm from being discharged without first deactivating or removing the device by means of a key or mechanically, electronically, or electro-magnetically operated combination lock; or

3.5.2. A mechanical, electrical, or electro-magnetic locking mechanism incorporated into the design of the firearm that prevents discharge of the weapon by anyone not having access to the key or other device designed to unlock and allow discharge of the firearm.

3.6. Serious Bodily Harm. Does not include minor injuries, such as a black eye or a bloody nose, but does include fractured or dislocated bones, deep cuts, torn members of the body, serious damage to the internal organs, and other life-threatening injuries.

## 4. POLICY

It is DoD policy:

4.1. To limit and control the carrying of firearms by DoD military and civilian personnel. The authorization to carry firearms shall be issued only to qualified personnel when there is a reasonable expectation that life or DoD assets will be jeopardized if firearms are not carried. Evaluation of the necessity to carry a firearm shall be made considering this expectation weighed against the possible consequences of accidental or indiscriminate use of firearms. DoD personnel regularly engaged in law enforcement or security duties shall be armed. In addition, safety lock devices and instructions for their proper use shall be provided with all firearms issued to such personnel who have been authorized to retain firearms at their residence or

non-government locations. Procedures on authorization to carry and the carrying of firearms are in enclosure 1.

4.2. That DoD military and civilian personnel engaged in law enforcement or security duties shall avoid the use of force where they can carry out their duties without resorting to its use. In such cases where the use of force is warranted, DoD personnel shall use the minimum amount of force necessary to reach their objective. Deadly force shall only be used as described in enclosure 2.

4.3. That when personnel must carry firearms aboard aircraft, either on their person or in baggage, commercial airline or military passenger service representatives shall be notified before the flight departure. Personnel shall carry written authorization to carry the firearm and proper identification to include a full-face photograph. If the firearm is carried in baggage, the weapon shall be unloaded and securely locked in the baggage. Procedures for the authorization and carrying of firearms on commercial and/or military aircraft are in enclosure 3.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence shall monitor compliance with this Directive as it relates to counterintelligence, law enforcement and security matters.

5.2. The Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall monitor compliance with this Directive as it relates to criminal investigative policy and law enforcement functions in the DCIOs.

5.3. The Heads of the DoD Components shall:

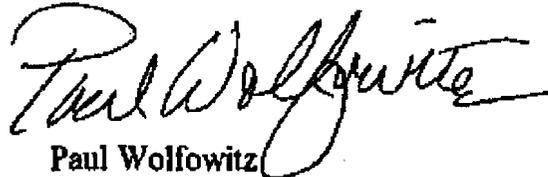
5.3.1. Authorize DoD personnel to carry firearms in accordance with this Directive. The Director of Administration and Management shall also exercise this authority for OSD and the Defense Legal Services Agency.

5.3.2. Establish, as needed, implementing procedures to ensure compliance with this Directive, and to ensure that all bargaining obligations have been satisfied prior to implementation.

5.3.3. Ensure that local commanders develop criteria, consistent with this Directive and local law, for the carrying of firearms and the use of force by contract security forces.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.



Paul Wolfowitz  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Enclosures - 3

- E1. Guidance on the Arming of DoD Law Enforcement and Security Personnel
- E2. Guidance on Use of Deadly Force
- E3. Guidance for DoD Personnel Who Carry Firearms While Aboard Commercial and Military Aircraft

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

GUIDANCE ON THE ARMING OF DoD LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY PERSONNEL

E1.1.1. Authorizations to carry firearms shall be granted by the Heads of the DoD Components or their designees. Personnel to be issued a firearm shall be briefed thoroughly on their individual responsibilities and shall receive the mandatory training as required by this Directive.

E1.1.2. An authorization to carry firearms may be granted to personnel authorized to be engaged and in fact engaged in the following activities:

E1.1.2.1. Law enforcement activities, including investigations of espionage, sabotage, and other serious crimes in which DoD programs, personnel, or property are the victim; in cases where DoD personnel are involved in serious crimes; or where investigations are conducted in hazardous areas or under hazardous circumstances.

E1.1.2.2. Protecting classified information, systems, or equipment.

E1.1.2.3. Protecting the President of the United States, high ranking Government officials, DoD personnel, or foreign dignitaries.

E1.1.2.4. Protecting DoD assets and personnel.

E1.1.2.5. Guarding prisoners.

E1.1.3. DoD military and civilian personnel may be authorized to carry firearms for personal protection in overseas areas when the DoD Component headquarters intelligence center identifies a credible and specific threat against DoD personnel in that regional area. Firearms shall not be issued indiscriminately for that purpose. The Heads of the DoD Components, or their designees, must approve authorizations. Before individuals are authorized to carry a firearm for protection under this Directive, the Heads of the DoD Components or their designees must evaluate the probability of the threat in a particular location, the adequacy of support by DoD protective personnel, the adequacy of protection by U.S. or host nation authorities, and the effectiveness of other means to avoid personal attacks.

E1.1.4. Except in situations requiring immediate action to protect life or vital Government assets, all authorizations to carry firearms by personnel shall be in writing, signed by the appropriate authorizing official, and issued only to personnel who

satisfactorily have completed qualification training, proficiency testing, and use of deadly force training within the preceding 12 months. Written authorization does not have to be maintained by the person while the weapon is carried except as noted in paragraph 4.3., above, of this Directive. As a minimum, annual firearm qualification training is also required of all personnel issued and maintaining firearms. Records of individual qualification results must be retained for as long as the individual possesses a firearm.

E1.1.5. DoD military and civilian personnel regularly assigned to law enforcement or security duties may be given a continuing authorization to carry firearms provided they pass the required yearly qualification standards. Personnel assigned firearms for personal protection under the provisions of paragraph E1.1.3., above, shall be authorized to carry firearms on a case-by-case basis only for the duration of specific assignments or threats. Procedures shall be established to ensure that any individual being issued a firearm has written authorization in effect before the actual issuance of the weapon.

E1.1.6. Firearms shall be returned to a designated control point on completion of the assignment for storage and accountability in accordance with Component procedures. The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Inspector General, Department of Defense may authorize exceptions to this requirement for the DCIOs.

E1.1.7. An individual authorized to carry a firearm is responsible for ensuring proper safeguards to prevent loss, theft, or unauthorized use. All firearms issued to DoD security or law enforcement personnel, who have been authorized to retain such firearms at their residence or

non-government locations, shall be accompanied by safety lock devices and instructions for their proper use.

E1.1.8. The Heads of the DoD Components, or their designees, shall authorize weapons to be carried off an installation by DoD personnel engaged in official duties.

E1.1.9. Only Government-owned and issued weapons and ammunition are authorized to be carried by DoD personnel while performing official duties. The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Inspector General, Department of Defense, may authorize an exception to this requirement for the DCIOs.

E1.1.10. The Domestic Violence Amendment to the Gun Control Act (reference (e)) makes it a felony for anyone who has ever been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence at any time prior to or after the passage of the September 30, 1996 law to possess any firearm or ammunition. There is no exception for law enforcement and security personnel. For any individual who has ever been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence within the meaning of this statute, continued retention of any firearm or ammunition, whether Government-issued or privately owned, is illegal and may subject that individual to felony criminal penalties. Penalties may include a sentence of imprisonment of up to 10 years and a fine of up to \$250,000, as well as administrative actions.

E1.1.10.1. Law enforcement or security personnel who have qualifying convictions:

E1.1.10.1.1. May not possess any firearm or ammunition.

E1.1.10.1.2. Must immediately return any Government-issued firearm or ammunition to their supervisor.

## E2. ENCLOSURE 2

### GUIDANCE ON USE OF DEADLY FORCE

E2.1.1. Guidance regarding the use of deadly force is provided in paragraph E2.1.2., below. The Heads of the DoD Components shall consult, as appropriate, with the General Counsel, Department of Defense, the General Counsel of the DoD Component, or their designees, for legal sufficiency of the Component's use of deadly force implementing guidance. The Heads of the DoD Components, or their designees, may impose further restrictions on the use of deadly force if deemed necessary in their judgment and if such restrictions would not unduly compromise the national security interests of the United States.

E2.1.2. Deadly force is justified only under conditions of extreme necessity and when all three of the following circumstances are present:

E2.1.2.1. Lesser means have been exhausted, are unavailable, or cannot be reasonably employed;

E2.1.2.2. The risk of death or serious bodily harm to innocent persons is not significantly increased by use; and

E2.1.2.3. The purpose of its use is one or more of the following:

E2.1.2.3.1. Self-Defense and Defense of Others. When deadly force reasonably appears to be necessary against a hostile person(s) to protect law enforcement or security personnel who reasonably believe themselves or others to be in imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm by the hostile person(s).

E2.1.2.3.2. Assets Involving National Security. When deadly force reasonably appears necessary to prevent the actual theft or sabotage of assets vital to national security. DoD assets shall be specifically designated as "vital to national security" only when their loss, damage, or compromise would seriously jeopardize the fulfillment of a national defense mission. Examples include nuclear weapons; nuclear command, control, and communications facilities; and designated restricted areas containing strategic operational assets, sensitive codes, or special access programs.

E2.1.2.3.3. Assets Not Involving National Security But Inherently Dangerous To Others. When deadly force reasonably appears to be necessary to prevent the actual theft or sabotage of resources, such as operable weapons or ammunition, that are inherently dangerous to others; i.e., assets that, in the hands of an

unauthorized individual, present a substantial potential danger of death or serious bodily harm to others. Examples include high-risk portable and lethal missiles, rockets, arms, ammunition, explosives, chemical agents, and special nuclear material.

E2.1.2.3.4. Serious Offenses Against Persons. When deadly force reasonably appears necessary to prevent the commission of a serious crime that involves imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm (for example, setting fire to an inhabited dwelling or sniping), including the defense of other persons, where deadly force is directed against the person threatening to commit the crime. Examples include murder, armed robbery, and aggravated assault.

E2.1.2.3.5. Protect Public Health or Safety. When deadly force reasonably appears to be necessary to prevent the destruction of public utilities or similar critical infrastructure vital to public health or safety, the damage to which, would create an imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm.

E2.1.2.3.6. Arrest or Apprehension. When deadly force reasonably appears to be necessary to arrest or apprehend a person who, there is probable cause to believe, has committed one of the serious offenses referred to in subparagraphs E2.1.2.3.2. through E2.1.2.3.5., above.

E2.1.2.3.7. Escape. When deadly force has been specifically authorized by the Heads of the DoD Components and reasonably appears to be necessary to prevent the escape of a prisoner, provided there is probable cause to believe that such person:

E2.1.2.3.7.1 Has committed or attempted to commit one of the serious offenses referred to in subparagraphs E2.1.2.3.2. through E2.1.2.3.5., above; and

E2.1.2.3.7.2 Would pose an imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm to law enforcement or security personnel or to any other person.

E2.1.3. For contract security forces, use of deadly force criteria shall be established consistent with this Directive and local law.

E2.1.4. Personnel shall not be permitted to perform law enforcement or security duties requiring the use of weapons until they have received instruction on applicable regulations for the use of deadly force in the performance of such duties. Additionally, annual refresher training shall be given to all personnel assigned to those duties to ensure that they continue to be thoroughly familiar with all restrictions on the use of deadly force.

E2.1.5. Personnel carrying weapons for personal protection under the provisions of paragraph E1.1.3, enclosure 1, shall have the necessary training on deadly force commensurate with that prescribed by this Directive.

E2.1.6. Additional requirements for the use of firearms:

E2.1.6.1. Warning shots are prohibited.

E2.1.6.2. When a firearm is discharged, it will be fired with the intent of rendering the person(s) at whom it is discharged incapable of continuing the activity or course of behavior prompting the individual to shoot.

E2.1.6.3. Shots shall be fired only with due regard for the safety of innocent bystanders.

E2.1.6.4. In the case of holstered weapons, a weapon should not be removed from the holster unless there is reasonable expectation that use of the weapon may be necessary.

E2.1.6.5. The Heads of the DoD Components may establish additional considerations in implementing procedures over the use of firearms.

**E3. ENCLOSURE 3**

**GUIDANCE FOR DoD PERSONNEL WHO CARRY FIREARMS WHILE ABOARD  
COMMERCIAL AND MILITARY AIRCRAFT**

E3.1.1. The following rules satisfy both the Federal Aviation Administration administrative regulations and military directives for DoD personnel who carry firearms aboard commercial and/or military aircraft: (Those rules were developed to ensure the safety of aircraft and the personnel on the aircraft.)

E3.1.2. DoD personnel authorized to carry firearms aboard commercial and/or military aircraft shall follow the following rules:

E3.1.2.1. Personnel shall possess written authorization to carry firearms, such as a letter of authorization or the DoD Component credentials. Exceptions shall only occur as a result of prior coordination with competent authority.

E3.1.2.2. If the firearm is not required during the flight, the person carrying the firearm shall:

E3.1.2.2.1. Declare to the commercial airline representative or military passenger service representative before the baggage is checked that a firearm is in the baggage and that the firearm is unloaded.

E3.1.2.2.2. Inform the commercial airline representative or military passenger service representative that the container is appropriate for air transportation. If the firearm is a handgun or other weapon that normally is not fired from the shoulder position, the baggage shall be locked and the key shall be kept by the person carrying the firearm.

E3.1.2.3. If a firearm must be accessible during flight, the person carrying the firearm shall:

E3.1.2.3.1. Notify the airlines or passenger service representative at least 1 hour before the plane departs that the weapon shall be carried on the aircraft. If an emergency occurs and the airline cannot be notified 1 hour before the plane departs, then the airline shall be notified expeditiously.

E3.1.2.3.2. Present official Government identification and written authorization, which contain his or her full-face picture, signature, and the official seal of the authorizing organization, to the airline's attendant.