



Homeland Security

Policy Statement # 045-06

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MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT COMPONENT HEADS

FROM:

Russell C. Deyo
Acting Deputy Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Deyo". The signature is written over the printed name and title of the sender.

SUBJECT:

Required Reporting of Off-Duty Contact with Law Enforcement by DHS Law Enforcement Personnel and the Suspension and/or Revocation of Authority to Carry a Firearm or other Weapon and Perform Law Enforcement Duties

Secretary Johnson and I greatly appreciate that every day, Department of Homeland Security (DHS or the Department) law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line in protection of our homeland. We recognize that law enforcement is a challenging occupation, characterized by high risks and inherent dangers. At the same time, DHS maintains an expectation that its law enforcement personnel will uphold the highest standards of conduct in both their personal and professional lives. To account for those occasions when a DHS law enforcement officer is involved in a situation where their conduct brings them into contact with, and places them under the scrutiny of law enforcement or the judiciary, this memorandum outlines the Department's policy for reporting such contact, and the potential implications on the law enforcement officer's authority to carry a firearm or other weapon and perform law enforcement duties.

Policy

This policy requires that DHS Components shall, at a minimum:

Expand or Ensure DHS Law Enforcement Officers' Notification Requirements Include All Off-Duty Reportable Law Enforcement Officer/Agency or Judicial Contact

To ensure officer behavior is consistent with the Department's law enforcement mission, responsibilities, and values, the Department requires all law enforcement officers report to their supervisor all off-duty reportable contact with a law enforcement officer/agency as defined in Appendix A. DHS law enforcement officers must immediately report their arrest to their supervisor. DHS law enforcement officers must report all other off-duty reportable contact to their supervisor within 48 hours of the incident.

Require Quarterly Advisement to DHS Law Enforcement Officers of their Duty Regarding Notification of Reportable Contact, the Lautenberg Amendment's Prohibitions on Carriage of Firearms, and Annual Lautenberg Certification

As part of the Department's strong stand against crimes of domestic violence, DHS requires that all law enforcement officers receive a quarterly verbal advisement, during quarterly firearms qualifications, of their duty to notify management of any off-duty reportable contact with a law enforcement officer/agency, to include convictions for misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence and issuance of protective or temporary restraining orders, as well as notification of the Lautenberg Amendment's prohibitions on carriage of firearms. DHS also requires all law enforcement officers complete, on an annual basis, Lautenberg Amendment certifications regarding no conviction of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, as defined in Appendix A.

Notification of Lautenberg Amendment Convictions Shall Result in the Immediate Suspension and Subsequent Revocation of Authority to Carry a Firearm or Perform Law Enforcement Duties

The Lautenberg Amendment requires that a law enforcement officer convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence may not possess a firearm or ammunition. DHS law enforcement officers convicted of such crimes, including pleas of no contest or sentences of probation before judgment, will no longer be authorized to carry a firearm or perform law enforcement functions. When a Component is initially notified of a potentially qualifying conviction, the Component is required to suspend the law enforcement officer's authority to carry a weapon and perform law enforcement duties within 24 hours of such notification. Once the Component is able to confirm the existence of a qualifying conviction, in consultation with the Component's legal counsel as appropriate, the authority to carry a weapon and perform law enforcement duties must be revoked. Subsequently, Components will pursue reassignment from a law enforcement position, an adverse action for failure to meet a condition of employment, or an adverse action based on the underlying misconduct.

DHS Law Enforcement Officer's Mandatory Notification of the Issuance of Protective Orders, Temporary Restraining Orders or any Other Court Order

Restricting a DHS Law Enforcement Officer's Contact with Another Individual or Ability to Possess a Firearm

Consistent with DHS's law enforcement mission, the Department requires all law enforcement officers report to their supervisor all protective and temporary restraining orders restricting their contact with another individual or their ability to possess a firearm, about which they are aware. Notification is required to be made within 48 hours of the law enforcement officer becoming aware of the protective order, temporary restraining order, or any other court order restricting the employee's contact with another individual or ability to possess a firearm. Upon notification of the issuance of protective or restraining orders, DHS Components must implement a process by which supervisors make an initial determination of the appropriate course of action, in consultation with Component leadership, Component counsel, the Component's Office of Professional Responsibility (or equivalent) and the Component's Office of Employee and Labor Relations (or equivalent) as appropriate.

Mandatory Suspension of Authority to Carry a Firearm or other Weapon and to Perform Law Enforcement Duties Following Notification of Law Enforcement Officer/Agency Contact Involving an Allegation of Off-Duty Violence by a DHS Law Enforcement Officer and/or Issuance of a Protective or Temporary Restraining Order Related to an Allegation of Domestic Violence or Other Alleged Violent Behavior

To best protect the interests of the public, the Department, the officer involved, and the alleged victim(s), this policy mandates the immediate suspension of an officer's authority to carry government-issued or otherwise authorized weapon(s) and to perform law enforcement duties upon notification of (1) an off-duty DHS law enforcement officer's contact with a law enforcement officer/agency where the allegation contains a component of unlawful or unjustified violence by the law enforcement officer; or (2) the issuance of a protective or temporary restraining order against a DHS law enforcement officer related to an allegation of domestic violence or based on some other form of alleged violent behavior, or the officer's ability to possess a firearm.

This policy requires that Components provide verbal notice to the officer at the time of suspension, with formal written documentation of the suspension of these authorities within five (5) business days after the date of verbal notification. This policy coincides with Component obligations to report all allegations of criminal misconduct and all allegations of serious, noncriminal conduct in accordance with DHS Management Directive 0810.1, dated June 10, 2004.

- For all circumstances requiring the formal reporting of misconduct in accordance with DHS Management Directive 0810.1, further assessments pertaining to the suspension of an officer's authority to carry government-issued or otherwise

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authorized weapon(s) and to perform law enforcement duties will be coordinated with the appropriate DHS internal investigative entity (Office of Inspector General and/or the Component Office of Professional Responsibility, or equivalent).

- For all circumstances that do not require the formal reporting of misconduct in accordance with DHS Management Directive 0810.1, Components will develop procedures to determine if continued suspension of an officer's authority to carry government-issued or otherwise authorized weapon(s) and to perform law enforcement duties is warranted. This will include an assessment into the facts and circumstances conducted by Component leadership (not less than a second-line supervisor) to determine whether continued suspension is warranted. In conducting such assessments, Component managers will consider both the law enforcement contact, action or order issued and the conduct of the officer involved. Even if a state or local court or law enforcement agency declines to take action, a review by Component managers may reveal that the officer's conduct is inconsistent with the continued authority to carry a firearm or other weapon or perform federal law enforcement duties.

In all situations where a Component suspends or revokes an officer's law enforcement authority to carry a firearm, DHS requires that Components immediately take custody of any government-issued firearms or other weapons, and where applicable, rescind, in writing, any previous authorizations to utilize a personally-owned firearm in the performance of the officer's duties.

Take Prompt Remedial Action for Failure to Report Law Enforcement and Judicial Contact

In accordance with this directive, upon awareness of an off-duty reportable contact that was not reported by a DHS law enforcement officer as required by this policy, DHS Components will review the situation, the factors underlying the failure to report, and take appropriate actions based on the information received, including discipline for misconduct as appropriate and in a manner consistent with law and regulation. DHS Components' policies will include penalties for a failure to report off-duty reportable contact.

Mandatory Biannual Reporting of All Suspensions or Revocations of DHS Law Enforcement Officer's Authority to Carry a Firearm and Perform Law Enforcement Duties

To promote greater transparency and accountability, DHS mandates that Department Components track and report to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Law Enforcement Policy the number of law enforcement officers who have had their authorities suspended or revoked following off-duty contact with a law enforcement

officer/agency or the issuance of a protective or temporary restraining order, and those who have subsequently had their authorities reinstated following internal agency review and assessment.

Require Annual Training for all Department Supervisors of Law Enforcement Officers on Federal Law, Regulations, and Department Policy Regarding the Suspension or Revocation of an Officer's Law Enforcement Authorities

As part of the Department's effort to establish sound policy and consistent practice regarding the suspension or revocation of a law enforcement officer's authorities, annual training will be provided to managers regarding the decision-making process associated with this policy.

Require Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Training for all Department Law Enforcement Officers

As part of the Department's strong stand against crimes of domestic violence, annual training will be provided to all Department law enforcement officers regarding these crimes to reinforce Department values and assist in preventing domestic violence.

Within 60 days from the date of this policy, each DHS Component shall designate an executive-level point of contact at the Component's headquarters office who will be responsible for the implementation of this policy, and for promoting compliance with its provisions, within his or her area of responsibility and who will consult with their Component privacy office to ensure appropriate Privacy Act coverage for the collection of this information. Upon designating a POC for this policy, DHS Components will provide DHS Law Enforcement Policy with their designee's contact information. In addition, within 60 days from the date of this policy, each DHS Component shall provide to DHS Law Enforcement Policy their plan to implement the policy, ensuring that responsibilities under labor relations statutes and union agreements are fulfilled, as applicable.

All questions regarding the scope and implementation of this policy should be directed to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Law Enforcement Policy, Office of Policy.

APPENDIX A

Required Reporting of Off-Duty Contact with Law Enforcement by DHS Law Enforcement Personnel and the Suspension and/or Revocation of Authority to Carry a Firearm or other Weapon and Perform Law Enforcement Duties

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms have the definitions set forth below:

Convicted of a Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence: a law enforcement officer who has been found guilty under federal, state or tribal law of a crime defined by 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(33)(A), provided that the law enforcement officer “was represented by counsel in the case, or knowingly and intelligently waived the right to counsel in the case,” and, if the law enforcement officer was entitled to a trial by jury, the case was, in fact, tried by jury or the law enforcement officer “knowingly and intelligently waived the right to have the case tried by a jury, by guilty plea or otherwise,” 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(33)(B). Convictions include no contest pleas and sentences of probation.

Government-Authorized Personally Owned Weapon: A firearm or other weapon that is not government-owned, but is authorized by the government for use by a law enforcement officer in performance of their official duties.¹

Government-Owned Weapon: A firearm or other weapon owned by the government and assigned to a law enforcement officer for use in performance of their official duties.

DHS Law Enforcement Officer: For the purpose of this policy, a law enforcement officer is any employee within the Department who is duly sworn and authorized by law to carry a weapon, make arrests, or execute search and arrest warrants.

Lautenberg Amendment: Specifically refers to 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(9), which prohibits anyone who has been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from possessing any firearm or ammunition.

Off-Duty Reportable Contact: All instances where a DHS law enforcement officer is off-duty and not acting in an official capacity and is questioned, interviewed, detained, or arrested as a subject of an enforcement action or investigation by a law enforcement agency (either internal to DHS or external) during the course of said agency’s official duties to determine if the DHS law enforcement officer was a party to an alleged violation of law. Reportable contact also includes the known

¹ Nothing in this policy shall be construed as interfering with the right of law enforcement officers to carry privately owned firearms for personal use as private citizens. Law enforcement officers are expected to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws when exercising this right.

issuance of any protective order, temporary restraining order, or other court order restricting a DHS law enforcement officer's contact with another individual. Reportable contact excludes instances when a DHS law enforcement officer is contacted for civil violations or traffic violations where there was no allegation of violence, threat of violence, or where the civil or traffic violation did not include the possession or use of alcohol or drugs.

Suspend Law Enforcement Authorities: an affirmative management action, in writing and pursuant to any procedures which have been or may be established, which temporarily removes a law enforcement officer's authority to perform law enforcement duties and carry a government-issued firearm or other weapon, as well as the authority granted through their law enforcement position to carry a personally-owned or off-duty weapon as a result of alleged misconduct (including self-reported misconduct) or disciplinary action. The action results in the law enforcement officer's surrender of all DHS-issued firearms or other weapons, badges and credentials, and temporary removal of the authorization to carry a firearm in the performance of the officer's official duties and perform law enforcement duties, to include the authorization of home-to-work privileges.

Revoke Law Enforcement Authorities: an affirmative management action, in writing and pursuant to any procedures which have been or may be established, which permanently terminates a law enforcement officer's authority to perform law enforcement duties and carry a government-issued firearm or other weapon, as well as any authority previously granted through their law enforcement position to carry a personally-owned firearm while on duty. This action results in the law enforcement officer's surrender of all DHS-issued firearms or other weapons, badges and credentials, and termination of the authorization to carry a firearm in the performance of the officer's official duties, to include the authorization of home-to-work privileges. In accordance with law, regulation, and policy, a permanent revocation of firearms credentials may be grounds for reduction in grade, reassignment, or removal.