




# Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) Volunteer Program Policy

<b>Title:</b>	Use of Firearms by Volunteers	<b>Policy #:</b>	Vol 500_03
<b>Applicability</b>	Volunteers who use, possess, issue, transport, firearms or munitions, have access to firearms or munitions, or train others on the use or handling of firearms as part of their Volunteer Service.		
<b>Reference(s)</b>	ORS 166.210, 166.370, 181.534, 496.012(1), (5), 496.121, 498.012 and 498.016. OAR 125-155-0500(5)(e) 635–Division 600 <a href="#">ASD Policy 210_PO, Asset Management Policy</a> <a href="#">DAS Policy 50-010-05 Weapons in the Workplace</a> <a href="#">HR Policy 450_22, Use of Firearm</a> <a href="#">Vol Policy 500_01, Code of Conduct</a>		
<b>Effective Date:</b>	May 1, 2022	<b>Approved:</b>	

## I. Purpose:

This policy sets parameters for the use of firearms while volunteering for ODFW.

## II. Policy:

- A. This policy prohibits firearms at Volunteer activity locations unless a Volunteer is permitted to carry, handle, operate or transport a weapon as part of the Volunteer Service Description and in the course and scope of the Volunteers' service. A permit to carry a concealed handgun does not give a Volunteer the authority to use or carry a handgun while on official duty. (Reference [DAS Policy 50-010-05 Weapons in the Workplace](#))
- B. Firearms shall be used for wildlife management or education purposes only. It shall be clear that the intended use does not include physical force, physical protection, or personal use.
- C. Any Volunteer not complying with this policy will be subject to removal from the Volunteer program.
- D. Authorized Use of Firearms
  1. Volunteer Service Description
    - a. A Volunteer shall not use firearms and munitions until their records indicate the requirements for use of a firearm have been completed.
    - b. The Volunteer Service Description (VSD) shall identify all authorized firearm and munitions uses for that role and shall be signed by the Volunteer. Division administrators or region managers may designate specific Volunteer roles within their programs to use

or have access to firearms and munitions for wildlife management or education purposes. Such designation shall be documented on the VSD.

E. Volunteers whom have been granted authority to use or carry a firearm in the performance of their Volunteer duties shall ensure compliance with all aspects of this policy.

#### F. Lending Firearms

1. Lending of ODFW Firearms by Volunteers is prohibited.

#### G. Authorized Firearms

1. ODFW-owned Firearms – The department shall be responsible for supplying the appropriate firearms for Volunteer use. The following section details the types of firearms and any restrictions upon their use.
2. Volunteer-owned Firearms – Volunteer-owned firearms may be authorized for specific activities by the Volunteer’s Engagement Coordinator or Program Coordinator through coordination with the Statewide Volunteer Program Coordinator. (Attachment A – Special Firearms Authorization). Volunteers shall not be compensated for any lost, stolen, or damaged personal firearm used during Volunteer activities. Volunteers shall be responsible for all maintenance of personal firearms and to ensure the firearm is in good working order.
3. Shotguns and Rifles – Authorized Volunteers may use shotguns or rifles owned and supplied by the department.
4. Handguns – Handguns shall be carried or used only for unique situations such as horse pack trips and dealing with dangerous animals in close quarters when rifles or shotguns are determined to be much less effective. Volunteers shall not use or carry handguns unless written permission is obtained from the Program Coordinator for each specific activity. (Attachment A – Special Firearms Authorization). Examples include dealing with trapped animals or working near bear dens.

#### H. Firearm Training Requirements

1. The Engagement Coordinator shall ensure that Volunteers are properly trained in the use of any firearm before allowing it to be used in the course of ODFW activities, regardless of ownership. No Volunteer shall carry or use a firearm as part of the Volunteer’s official duties until the following training requirements are met:

#### I. Initial Training

1. All new and existing Volunteers that Volunteer for VSDs that requires the use of firearms shall, at a minimum, satisfactorily complete a Hunter Education class before carrying or using firearms on duty, with the following exceptions:

- a. Individuals who show evidence of completing a Hunter Education course in Oregon or any other state or Canadian province in the past three years.
- b. Individuals who show evidence of completing a law enforcement firearm training course within the past three years.
- c. Members of a Military Reserve or National Guard unit who have completed mandatory firearms training within the past three years.
- d. Volunteers certified as a Hunter Education instructor having taught the firearm safety module of a Hunter Education course within the past three years.
- e. Volunteers attending a training course sponsored or approved by the department for this specific purpose.

#### J. Continuing Training

1. After meeting the initial training requirements, Volunteers shall meet at least one of the following requirements every three years:
  - a. Attend or assist in the firearm safety and live fire segments of a Hunter Education course.
  - b. Complete a firearm safety course that is approved in Oregon for the issuance of a Concealed Weapons Permit.
  - c. Complete mandatory firearms training as a member of a law enforcement organization or a Military Reserve or National Guard unit.
  - d. Attend or assist a firearms training session approved or sponsored by the department designed for this specific purpose.

#### K. Firearms Inventory, Storage, Transport and Maintenance

##### L. Firearm Inventory

1. Each ODFW-owned firearm, shall be recorded in the region or division workstation inventory. A property number shall be on each department-owned firearm. (Refer to [ASD Policy ASD 210 PO](#))(High Risk Inventory)

##### M. Firearm Storage

1. Firearms and ammunition, including Volunteer-owned firearms, shall be stored in a locked gun safe if possible. If a gun safe is not available, the firearms shall be stored in a locked area or room. When a firearm safe is not available, firearms will be secured with action locks or in a locked case.

2. Firearms and ammunition stored in an office or workplace environment shall be kept out of sight from public view and shall not be accessible by the public or on-site contract services staff (e.g., janitorial services, office copier repair contractors).
3. Volunteers may be given access to gun storage areas as approved by their Engagement Coordinator or Program Coordinator.
4. Each station or work unit shall identify and appoint an employee who is responsible for the safe and proper storage of all firearms.

#### N. Firearm Transportation

1. Firearms shall be kept out of sight while in a vehicle. Overhead gun racks or mounts and behind-the-seat cases or bags are acceptable.
2. Firearms shall be unloaded while in transport to and from field activities. Unless securely locked to the vehicle, firearms should be returned to storage areas and not be left in vehicles overnight.

#### O. Firearm Maintenance

1. Each Volunteer granted authority to use or carry a firearm as a part of their Volunteer Service Description is responsible for the maintenance of equipment issued. This includes but is not limited to physically inspecting firearms for good working condition and barrel obstructions before each use. Firearms that have not received regular use shall be inspected and cleaned at least every six months.
2. Any firearm that's reliability is in question or that requires modification shall be inspected and repaired by a qualified gunsmith only. Volunteers shall contact their Program Coordinator, to arrange for repair or replacement of ODFW-owned firearm.
3. Any time a firearm is discharged accidentally, causes property damage, or creates an unsafe working condition in the course of a Volunteer's duties, the Volunteer shall report the incident to the Program Coordinator as well as the Engagement Coordinator no later than 24 hours after returning from the field or activity.
4. Specialized Training: Tranquilizing Immobilization Firearms and Net Guns. In addition to the initial and continuation training required above, Volunteers using firearms capable of delivering immobilizing drugs to animals or projecting nets for capture, shall be properly trained in the specific use of that equipment.

#### P. Firearm Special Use

1. Private Lands & Lands Closed to Public Use of Firearms

2. An ODFW Volunteer may need to enter private lands to perform duties requiring use of a firearm. In such instances, the Volunteer shall contact ODFW Engagement Coordinator, prior to making contact with the landowner.
3. ODFW Volunteers may need to use a firearm for wildlife management purposes in areas where another jurisdiction, such as a city, county, federal, or other state agency, has prohibited the use of firearms by the public. In such instances, the Volunteer shall contact the ODFW Engagement Coordinator.

Q. Incident Safety

1. Any injury to a person caused by a firearm under the control of a Volunteer shall be reported immediately to the Volunteer's Engagement Coordinator and the Oregon State Police.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

[Click here to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the Use of Firearms by Volunteer Policy](#)