



Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE STANDARDS AND TRAINING COMMISSION **TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM 2025-09**

DATE: June 5, 2025

TO: Criminal Justice Agency Administrators
Criminal Justice Training Center Directors
Criminal Justice Selection Center Directors

FROM: Director Chad Brown 
Criminal Justice Professionalism Division

SUBJECT: Approval of new Specialized and Specialized Instructor Long Gun Courses

This technical memorandum announces the approval of four new long gun courses with an effective date of July 1, 2025.

During the 2023 firearms rewrite, the subject matter expert (SME) workgroup removed semi-automatic rifle/carbine and shotgun content from the basic recruit training (BRT) program's Criminal Justice Firearms 80-hour course to allow for more in-depth pistol instruction. The SMEs also noted that the previous version of the Firearms Instructor Course did not provide instruction on how to teach patrol rifle or shotgun skills.

To address this training gap, Commission staff worked with SMEs to develop optional patrol rifle and shotgun courses to teach officers how to safely handle and operate the weapon system as well as to provide instructors resources to learn how to teach long gun skills to officers.

- 32-hour Specialized Instructor Course, #3024, Patrol Rifle Instructor
- 24-hour Specialized Instructor Course, #3025, Shotgun Instructor
- 32-hour Specialized Course, #3026, Patrol Rifle Operator
- 24-hour Specialized Course, #3027, Shotgun Operator

These courses are competency-based and may count toward an officer's mandatory retraining requirement. Instructors may view and download the course drafts ahead of the effective date by logging into the curriculum materials website: <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/ATMS/Home.aspx>.

Instructor Courses

Both long gun instructor courses expand on general firearms instructor techniques found in the Specialized Instructor Course, #801, Handgun Instructor. The new instructor courses also review the operator course curriculum and teach instructor-students how to evaluate and remediate students on proficiency evaluations and qualifications.

To successfully complete either long gun instructor course, instructor-students must pass, without remediation, a series of proficiency evaluations and qualifications similar to those found in the Handgun Instructor course. Only Commission-certified handgun instructors are eligible to take the long gun instructor courses, and successful completion of the patrol rifle or shotgun instructor course will

lead to Commission-certification in that weapon system. Additionally, only instructor-students who become Commission-certified patrol rifle or shotgun instructors will be authorized to teach the respective long gun instructor and operator course. They will also be authorized to sign off on mandatory in-service rifle or shotgun qualifications biennially, beginning July 1, 2026.

Important: Long gun instructor-students *will not* be required to complete an additional high-liability internship to earn the certification; handgun instructors *will not* be required to become long gun instructors; and officers *will not* be required to take the operator courses.

Instructor Train-the-Trainer

Once all four long gun courses go into effect July 1, 2025, the SMEs will coordinate with and visit various regions of the state to train and certify only current handgun instructors who are assigned to training centers. Then, it will be up to those newly certified long gun instructors to train other handgun instructors in their regions.

Training centers will be responsible for coordinating their own classes once their handgun instructors have been certified to teach the long gun courses.

New CJSTC Forms

Long gun instructors will be required to use the following forms when evaluating patrol rifle or shotgun instructor-students who seek a long gun instructor certification:

- CJSTC-4R Patrol Rifle Instructor Performance Evaluation
- CJSTC-4S Shotgun Instructor Performance Evaluation

Unlike the instructor courses, the operator courses will not have official CJSTC forms since they do not involve a certification. Instead, they will contain sample evaluation forms for instructors to use as they evaluate and qualify students.

Both long gun instructor performance evaluation forms are now available for instructors to download on the CJSTC forms website:

<https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/CJSTC/Publications/Forms.aspx>.

Operator Courses

Both long gun operator courses expand on the material used in the current BRT Criminal Justice Firearms 80-hour course with more information on shooting stances and ready positions as well as new content on mechanical offset, movement positions, and shooting from behind cover. Additionally, the Patrol Rifle Operator course will teach and require students to demonstrate how to transition from rifle to pistol during a deadly force encounter.

To successfully complete either long gun operator course, students must pass a series of proficiency evaluations and qualifications similar to those in the academy. Additionally, the Patrol Rifle Operator course will require students to complete active threat/shooter drills.

These optional courses are designed to familiarize students with the weapon systems, not to provide a certification. They may also be used to prepare officers for the biennial long gun qualifications.

Biennial Long Gun Qualifications in 2026

Beginning July 1, 2026, any law enforcement officer who carries or operates a patrol rifle or shotgun while on duty will need to qualify with it just like the handgun. Only Commission-certified long gun instructors or Commission-certified handgun instructors who complete any long gun instructor-style training recognized by their agency will be authorized to sign off on those respective long gun qualifications.

The patrol rifle qualification will be a 31-round course of fire (30 for rifle and 1 for pistol), and the shotgun qualification will be a 6-round course of fire (either slugs, 8 pellet shot, or 9 pellet shot). Both qualifications are defined in their respective long gun operator and instructor courses.

Similar to the in-service handgun qualification held biennially, agencies will dictate the number of attempts their officers will have to qualify with their long gun(s).

More information about the long gun qualifications and the associated revision of form CJSTC-86A will be released in a different technical memorandum closer to the 2026 effective date.

Long Gun Course Quick Reference Guide

The last two pages of this technical memorandum contain a quick reference guide to help the criminal justice community understand the purpose of the long gun courses, how to become a Commission-certified long gun instructor, and the requirements to sign off on mandatory in-service long gun qualifications beginning July 1, 2026.

If you have questions about the approval of the four new courses, please contact Training and Research Manager Rob Bates at RobertBates@fdle.state.fl.us or (850) 410-8672.

cc: Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission

Long Gun Course Quick Reference Guide

PATROL RIFLE INSTRUCTOR COURSE

Officers who complete this course may apply to become Commission-certified Patrol Rifle Instructors.

Once certified, they can teach the Patrol Rifle Instructor and Operator Courses, and qualify anyone at their agency who carries or operates a patrol rifle while on duty.

For Example: *Sgt. Smith completes the Commission-approved Patrol Rifle Instructor Course and applies to become a Commission-certified Patrol Rifle Instructor. Because Sgt. Smith is now a Commission-certified Patrol Rifle Instructor, she can teach the Patrol Rifle Instructor and Operator courses, and qualify other officers who carry or operate patrol rifles while on duty.*

PATROL RIFLE OPERATOR COURSE

Agencies may send their officers who carry or operate patrol rifles to this course to learn how to safely and effectively operate their weapon system. This course addresses the long gun training gap in basic recruit training.

There is no certification. This course is for familiarization purposes, only.

For Example: *Officer Jones was recently issued a patrol rifle by his agency, so he was sent to take the Commission-approved Patrol Rifle Operator Course to ensure that he knows how to safely and effectively operate it while on duty. Officer Jones will not receive a certification for completing the course.*

SHOTGUN INSTRUCTOR COURSE

Officers who complete this course may apply to become Commission-certified Shotgun Instructors.

Once certified, they can teach the Shotgun Instructor and Operator Courses, and qualify anyone at their agency who carries or operates a shotgun while on duty.

For Example: *Sgt. Johnson completes the Commission-approved Shotgun Instructor Course and applies to become a Commission-certified Shotgun Instructor. Because Sgt. Johnson is now a Commission-certified Shotgun Instructor, he can teach the Shotgun Instructor and Operator courses, and qualify other officers who carry or operate shotguns while on duty.*

SHOTGUN OPERATOR COURSE

Agencies may send their officers who carry or operate shotguns to this course to learn how to safely and effectively operate their weapon system. This course addresses the long gun training gap in basic recruit training.

There is no certification. This course is for familiarization purposes, only.

For Example: *Deputy Banks was recently issued a shotgun by her agency, so they sent her to take the Commission-approved Shotgun Operator Course to ensure she knows how to safely and effectively operate it while on duty. Deputy Banks will not receive a certification for completing the course.*

To Become a Commission-Certified Long Gun Instructor:

- Become a Commission-certified General Instructor; and
- become a Commission-certified Handgun Instructor; and
- successfully complete the CJSTC long gun instructor course of your choice and apply for the certification. There are no internship requirements for earning a long gun instructor certification.

To Sign Off on Mandatory In-Service Long Gun Qualifications:

- Become a Commission-certified Patrol Rifle or Shotgun Instructor; or
- become a Commission-certified Handgun Instructor *and* complete *any* patrol rifle or shotgun instructor-style training recognized by your agency.

For Example: *Officer Ramirez, who is a Commission-certified Handgun Instructor but not a Commission-certified long gun Instructor, took a one-day patrol rifle instructor-style course hosted by her agency three months ago. Because her agency recognizes this training, she is able to qualify other officers who carry or operate patrol rifles but not those who carry or operate shotguns, unless she completes any shotgun instructor-style training recognized by her agency.*

Key Takeaways:

- Only Commission-certified long gun instructors may teach the Commission-approved long gun courses they are certified in.
- Law enforcement officers who carry or operate any long gun while on duty *are not required* to complete any of the operator courses, but *will be required* to qualify with those long gun(s) every two years. Law enforcement officers who do not carry or operate a long gun while on duty *will not be required* to qualify with any of them.
- Either Commission-certified long gun Instructors, *or* Commission-certified Handgun Instructors who have completed *any* patrol rifle or shotgun instructor-style training recognized by their agency will be authorized to sign off on those respective long gun qualifications.
- Agencies, not FDLE or the CJSTC, will dictate the number of attempts their officers will have to qualify with their long gun(s) during in-service qualification.

Expected Timeline:

1. All long gun courses to be approved at the May 15, 2025, CJSTC Business Meeting.
2. All long gun courses to go into effect July 1, 2025.
3. Commission staff will work with the SMEs to schedule and conduct train-the-trainer sessions at approximately 4-6 different training schools around the state to certify current handgun instructors as patrol rifle and shotgun instructors. It will be up to those newly certified long gun instructors to train other Commission-certified handgun instructors in their regions.
4. The mandatory long gun qualification cycle to go into effect July 1, 2026.