

**MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
GENERAL ORDER**

**CHAPTER 4 - WEAPONS  
GO-04-11  
Page 1 of 2**

**DATE: 05/31/2018**

---

**FLYING WHILE ARMED**

---

**POLICY**

The purpose of this General Order is to set forth the procedures to be followed by sworn staff of the Marin County Sheriff's Office in the event their duties require them to fly while being armed.

**DEFINITIONS**

**TASER:** Less lethal, electronic control device (ECD).

**FIREARM:** Department issued or authorized weapon.

**NLETS:** National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System.

**LEO:** Law Enforcement Officer.

**LEO LOGBOOK:** Logbook containing the LEO's flight and department information.

**TSA:** Transportation Security Administration.

**PROCEDURES**

Current TSA regulations require that any LEO who intends to fly aboard a commercial airline while armed must have an operational need to have their weapon accessible to them from the time he or she would otherwise check the weapon, until the time it would be claimed after deplaning. The need to have the weapon accessible aboard the aircraft must be determined by the employing agency and be based on one of the following criteria:

- Assigned to a protective duty as a principal or advance team, or on travel required to be prepared to engage in a protective function
- Conducting a hazardous surveillance operation
- On official travel with a requirement to report to another location armed and prepared for duty immediately upon landing
- Control of a prisoner, or on a round trip ticket returning from escorting or traveling to pick up a prisoner

Common examples of travel that does not meet the TSA threshold for carrying a weapon while flying aboard a commercial airline includes, but is not limited to:

- Individuals possessing the status of a retired, contract, reserve, auxiliary or annuitant law enforcement officer

- Attendance of non-operational or enforcement related activities (e.g., training, conferences, police week, memorial services, personal travel, etc.).

In order to fly while armed with either a firearm or ECD, deputy sheriffs must demonstrate one or more of the operational needs described by TSA regulation and successfully complete the TSA mandated Flying While Armed training course, which shall be made available to any interested deputy by the Professional Standards Unit.

The Department Training Manager shall maintain a roster of all personnel who have completed the flying while armed training. Prior to providing an authorization to fly while armed, a captain or higher authority shall first verify the requesting deputy has in fact completed the required TSA training. Deputies flying while armed shall abide by GO-04-03, Use of Discharge of Firearms and GO-04-10, Electronic Control Devices.

Prior to making flight arrangements on a commercial airline, deputies shall contact the prospective airline to confirm the airline allows a LEO to fly armed. When a deputy is conducting a prisoner transport, the deputy should also verify the prospective airline allows prisoners to wear restraints while in flight.

To fly armed, a deputy must send his/her request, along with all related flight information, to a Captain or higher authority at least 48 hours prior to travel. The Captain shall verify the deputy completed the TSA mandated Flying While Armed training course and that they have demonstrated an operational need to fly while armed, as described TSA regulation. If approved, the authorizing officer will forward the deputy's request to the on-duty Communications Division Supervisor in order to obtain a NLETS unique alphanumeric identifier from DOJ. Once received, the unique alphanumeric identifier will be provided to the requesting deputy for presentation at the airport on the day of travel.

On the day of travel, a deputy who is flying while armed shall check in at the airline ticket counter and identify himself/herself as a deputy sheriff. The deputy will complete the armed traveler paperwork provided by the airline and obtain a boarding pass. The deputy will proceed to the armed LEO screening checkpoint and provide the unique alphanumeric identifier from the NLETS message and present to the TSA screener his/her Sheriff's Office identification card, badge, boarding pass, and a second form of identification (CDL / Passport). The deputy will complete the LEO logbook and proceed to his/her boarding gate.

At the boarding gate, the deputy shall provide airline staff with the armed traveler documentation and inform the gate agent of their intention to fly while armed and follow the boarding procedures outlined by those personnel. Deputies shall ask airline staff if any other armed officers are flying in their assigned aircraft and if any of those officers are providing prisoner transports on their flight.

**RELATED STANDARDS:**

General Order 04-03, Use and Discharge of Firearms  
General Order 04-10, Electronic Controlled Devices

**AFFECTED DIVISIONS:**

All

**DATE OF REVISIONS:**

07/24/2009

**By order of:**

ROBERT T. DOYLE  
SHERIFF-CORONER