



Apex Police Department General Order



Title Respiratory Protection Program		Order Number 1406-21
Effective Date: December 8, 2021	Amends: 1406-14	
CALEA Standard: 17.5.2	Rescinds: F1406 - Respirator Inspection Form	
Reference: OSHA Respiratory Protection Standards 29CFR 1910.134	Pages: 8	
Forms: F1406a – Annual Certification/Information for Employees F1406b—Unissued Respirator Inventory & Inspection Appendix A; OSHA Sec. 1910.134, - Fit Testing Procedures Appendix B-1; OSHA Sec. 1910.134 - User Seal Check Procedures Appendix B-2; OSHA Sec. 1910.134 - Respirator Cleaning Procedures Appendix C; OSHA Sec. 1910.134 - OSHA Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire Appendix D; OSHA Sec. 1910.134 - Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard		

Respiratory Protection Program

Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to specify the Apex Police Department’s Respiratory Protection Program.

Policy

The Apex Police Department (APD) is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees. It is the policy of the APD for all employees to take necessary precautions to prevent exposure to hazardous substances when working in known or suspected environments where occupational exposures may occur and if exposed, report the exposure in accordance with departmental and Town of Apex (TOA) policies. These procedures are established in the interest of employee health and safety.

Definitions

Air Purifying Respirator (APR) – A type of respirator used in toxic environments where the breathable level of oxygen is known to be sufficient. APRs are designed to protect the wearer for short periods ONLY.

Escape-Only Respirator – A type of respirator used only for an emergency exit.

Fit Test – A test to ensure that an issued respirator is the proper size for the wearer and an air-tight seal is achieved between his/her face and the respirator to ensure the respirator is the correct size and fit.

Qualitative Fit Test (QLFT) – A pass/fail test method that uses the wearer's sense of taste or smell, or his/her reaction to an irritant to detect leakage into the respirator face piece. QLFT does not measure the actual amount of leakage.

Quantitative Fit Test (QNFT) – An assessment of the respirator's fit by numerically measuring the amount of leakage into the respirator.

Procedures

Respiratory Protection Program

1. The Respiratory Protection Program (RPP) is part of the TOA's and APD's safety program.
2. Respirators may be necessary to protect the health of employees in specific circumstances. Use of respirators may be necessary:
 - By members of the Special Response Team (SRT) during deployment of chemical agents
 - By other employees of the department during crowd control, other situations where chemical agents are deployed, or there is a need for respiratory protection (i.e., crime scenes where there is the identified need for respiratory protection and an emergency does not exist that requires immediate entry, etc.)
3. Employees will not enter a contaminated air environment (including but not limited to drug and explosive manufacturing facilities) unless they have and wear an appropriate and fully-functioning respirator and other necessary protection equipment.
 - Exceptions may be made in emergency circumstances; however, employees will attempt to minimize their exposure and length of time in the contaminated air environment.

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4. The Administrative Division Commander, and for the Special Response Team the SRT Commander, will conduct research to identify specific respirators and/or self-contained air system that may be appropriate for use by the department.
 - The respirators selected must be in compliance with applicable NIOSH and OSHA standards for their intended application.
5. Employees that may be issued or use a respirator will be provided a copy of the "[OSHA Standard 1910.134 Information for Using Respirators When Not Required – Appendix D.](#)"
 - Employees will:
 - Sign and date the form and forward it to their supervisor
 - Supervisors will:
 - Review the information with their employees to ensure understanding
 - Make a copy of the signed form and provide it to their employees
 - **Forward the original form to the Administrative Division Commander**
 - The Administrative Division Commander will:
 - File the original form in each employee's personnel file

Medical Evaluation/Fit Testing

1. Employees issued or authorized to use respirators will submit to a medical evaluation by an identified physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP) approved by the TOA, at no cost to the employee.
 - The medical evaluation will be in compliance with OSHA standard 1910.134.
 - The medical evaluation will generally be conducted during the pre-employment medical exam and before a respirator is issued or used.
2. Employees issued or authorized to use respirators will have their respirator tested for fit.
 - **The fit test will be conducted annually in compliance with OSHA standard 1910.134.**
 - Fit testing may be done using either a QLFT or QNFT method.
 - The choice of which fit test method is used depends on the type of respirator and the minimum level of protection needed.
 - Fit testing must be done before an employee starts wearing a respirator in the work environment, anytime a different respirator face piece is used, and at least annually thereafter.

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- Fit testing is required for all negative and positive-pressure, tight-fitting respirator face pieces.
 - Per OSHA standards, any officer with a beard must be clean shaven prior to his/her annual fit testing.
 - Additionally, a sample of officers will be fit checked annually to determine if their facial hair negatively impacts the respirator's effectiveness.
3. During the annual fit testing, employees will be asked to certify that they have no medical symptoms or conditions that will impede their ability to use a respirator. Form F1406a – *Annual Certification/Information for Employees* will be used for this purpose.
 4. Employees will be medically re-evaluated under the following circumstances:
 - The employee reports medical signs or symptoms that are related to the employee's ability to use a respirator
 - A PLHCP, a supervisor, or any other person observes that the employee is having a medical problem during respirator use and he/she informs the employee of his/her observation
 - Information from the respiratory protection program, including observations made during fit testing and program evaluation, indicates a need for employee reevaluation
 - A change occurs in workplace conditions (e.g., physical work effort, type of respirator used, protective clothing, temperature) that may result in a substantial increase in the physiological burden placed on an employee

Respirator Use

1. Employees issued or authorized to use respirators will use their respirator under the following circumstances:
 - When exposed to a contaminated air environment for which the respirator is designed (i.e., deployment of chemical agents)
 - When directed to do so by the SRT Commander or other supervisor
 - Whenever possible in routine and reasonably foreseeable emergency situations where the respirator will help protect the employee from contaminated air
2. Employees will clean, disinfect, and store respirators in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
3. Employees will not use respirators with tight-fitting face pieces if the respirator fails a seal check.
 - If the cause is facial hair coming between the sealing surface of the face piece and the face or interfering with the valve function, then the employee must remove the facial hair causing the failure of the seal check.

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- Any other condition that interferes with the face-to-face piece seal or valve function will be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately and forwarded to the Administrative Division Commander.
4. If an employee wears corrective glasses, lenses, goggles, or other personal protection equipment, such equipment must be worn in a manner that does not interfere with the seal of the face piece to the face of the user. Employees will not wear contact lenses when using a respirator in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendation.
 5. For all tight-fitting respirators, employees will perform a user seal check each time they put on the respirator using procedures in [OSHA Appendix B-1](#) or procedures recommended by the respirator manufacturer.

Storing, Reusing and Disposing of Respirators

Storage

1. Respirators and filters that are issued will be stored by employees in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.
2. Stock respirators and filters will be stored by the Quartermaster and/or SRT Commander in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.

Reuse

1. Respirators with replaceable filters are reusable and respirators classified as disposable may be reused by the same worker as long as it functions properly.
2. All filters must be replaced whenever they are damaged, soiled, or cause noticeably increased breathing resistance (i.e., causing discomfort to the wearer).
 - The employee using the respirator is responsible for contacting the Administrative Division Commander for a replacement filter.
3. Before each use, the outside of the filter material should be inspected.
 - If the filter material is physically damaged or soiled, the filter for respirators with replaceable filters will be changed and disposable respirators will be discarded.

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Disposal

1. Respirators that have been designated as to be disposed or are no longer serviceable, will be removed from inventory, and not issued or used.
2. Respirators will be disposed of in the following manner:
 - If allowed by applicable laws and regulations, the respirators will be surplus through the TOA Purchasing Agent
 - If not allowed to be surplus and after approval by the TOA Purchasing Agent, the respirators will be destroyed in a manner that make them no longer usable (i.e., cutting the sides) and discarded

Replacement of Filters

1. Filter systems that do not have an End of Service Life Indicator (ESLI) will be replaced as follows:
 - Following any use where the respirator was unsealed and exposed to any contaminant
 - **NOTE:** The manufacturer's standard is based upon "Maximum Use Concentrations" which indicates that, if the filter will be used after the initial exposure, a formula should be applied to determine the effectiveness for subsequent exposures
 - By replacing the filter after the first exposure and not permitting a subsequent exposure, this replacement cycle exceeds manufacturer's recommendations
 - If the filter has an expiration or "replace by" date, before the date indicated
 - If no such date is indicated:
 - SRT filters – every two years, unless the manufacturer recommends a shorter timeframe
 - Non-SRT filters – Every five years, unless the manufacturer recommends a shorter timeframe

Training

1. The Training Coordinator, in conjunction with the Safety Coordinator, will coordinate the training of the following topics:
 - Respiratory hazards to which employees are potentially exposed during routine and emergency situations
 - Proper use of the respirator, including knowledge of conditions that may result in face piece seal leakage, preventing employees from removing respirators in hazardous environments, recommended actions to ensure continued effective respirator operation throughout the work shift, and establishing procedures for the use of respirators in atmospheres that are immediately dangerous to life or health

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- Putting on and removing the respirator
 - Any limitations on respirator use
 - Respirator maintenance
 - Other topics as indicated or required
2. Employees attending training will be provided a copy of:
 - [OSHA Standard 1910.134, User Seal Check Procedures – Appendix \(B-1\)](#)
 - [OSHA Standard 1910.134 Respirator Cleaning Procedures – Appendix \(B-2\)](#)
 - Employees will sign or in some other acceptable manner verify receipt of these documents
 3. All respiratory training will be documented in accordance with [General Order 501 – Training: Organization and Administration](#).

Inspection/Evaluation


1. All employees issued or using a respirator will inspect the respirator monthly and prior to use as outlined in this General Order and applicable OSHA regulations.
 - The person assigned to or using the respirator is responsible for conducting the inspection.
 - The SRT Commander or his/her designee will inspect all respirators that are in agency inventory but not assigned to an individual for operational readiness on a quarterly basis.
 - The inspection will be documented on form F1406b – *Unissued Respirator Inventory & Inspection* and submitted through the chain of command to the Office of the Chief of Police. Any identified operational issues will also be reported to the Quartermaster and the respirator will be repaired or replaced. (17.5.2)
2. Inspections will include:
 - A check of respirator function, tightness of connections, and the condition of the various parts including, but not limited to, the face piece, head straps, valves, connecting tube, and cartridges, canisters or filters
 - A check of elastomeric parts for pliability and signs of deterioration
3. Inspections of all issued respirators will be documented on form F604a – *Personnel Equipment/Uniform/Office Inspection* and include the date the inspection was performed, the name (and/or signature) and employee number of the person who completed the inspection, the findings, and a serial number or other means of identifying the inspected respirator. Any required remedial action will be noted in the Notes section of the form.

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- Supervisors will ensure respirators assigned to their personnel are inspected and documented during monthly line inspections.
 - **Completed forms F604a – Personnel Equipment/Uniform/Office Inspection will be submitted to the Division Commander as part of the monthly report.**
4. If a respirator needs to be repaired, replaced, or otherwise needs service, employees will notify their supervisor, who will determine if the respirator should be removed from service.
- The supervisor will then notify the Administrative Division Commander.
 - The Administrative Division Commander will have another respirator issued to the employee, if one is available, and take appropriate steps to have the original respirator repaired or replaced.
5. At least annually, the Administrative Division Commander will evaluate the Respiratory Protection Program.
- The review will include, at a minimum:
 - A determination of the effectiveness of the program
 - A determination of any respirator or filter system that needs to be replaced
 - Verification that an adequate supply of approved respirators and stored filter systems are available, serviceable, and not expired
 - Verification that required pre-employment (pre-issue) medical evaluations and annual fit testing is conducted
 - Verification of monthly inspections to ensure compliance with this General Order
 - A review of any changed, updated, or revised standards or regulations that might affect the program
 - Coordination with the TOA Safety and Risk Manager
 - **The review will be completed and submitted to the Chief of Police, through the chain of command, no later than February 25th of the year following the period subject to analysis**
 - This date can be extended with approval from the Chief of Police

Text in “Green” denotes a significant change in policy

BY ORDER OF:



Jason P. Armstrong
Chief of Police