

UNIVERSITY of NORTH ALABAMA
Police Department Policy & Procedures

0016	<i>Weapons and Firearms Policy</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/14/2013
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I. Purpose

This policy governs the possession and use of firearms, ammunition, and other dangerous weapons at the University of North Alabama. It is applicable to all staff, faculty, students, and visitors. Pursuant to the Code of Alabama 16-51-12, the University of North Alabama has been given the right to control buildings and grounds owned by the University. The President, with approval of the Board of Trustees, has authority to appoint police officers, and with that appointment, grants University Police Officers the authority to eject trespassers without warrant for violation of all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations relative to this policy and necessary for its enforcement.

It is the purpose of the University of North Alabama to create safe and appropriate procedures when addressing individuals in possession of a weapon or firearm. The University of North Alabama Police Department (UPD), working within the philosophy of the President and Board of Trustees “Weapons Free Campus”, will respond and handle all situations concerning firearms involving university buildings, facilities and premises.

II. Weapons Policy Statement

Possession of firearms, ammunition, or dangerous weapons is prohibited while on University-owned or -controlled property at all times. This includes all parking lots, grounds, and facilities of the University of North Alabama. This prohibition applies to all members of the University community, visitors, and guests regardless of whether such person has a permit to carry or possess the weapon. These prohibited weapons include, but are not limited to:

- Fixed blade knives on the person or in a vehicle or any folding knife with an overall length greater than eleven (11) inches
- Shotgun, rifle, or other shoulder gun
- Pistol or revolver
- Air gun or spring compression gun
- Bow and arrow
- Crossbows
- Slingshots or other throwing weapons
- Spears
- Swords
- Brass knuckles
- Fireworks or explosive devices
- Tasers or stun guns

This policy does not apply to:

- Law Enforcement Officers of the Federal Government, State, or of any county, city, or town when in the discharge of their official duties.
- Civil officers of the United States in the discharge of their official duties.
- Private police or security personnel when hired by, or under contract with, the University.
- Law Enforcement Officers attending school as students. Their weapons must be concealed unless wearing a uniform.
- Campus food service knives.
- The President's residence.

Visitors and guests may temporarily store weapons at the University Police Department for no more than 48 hours. UPD and the University are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted for certain instructional purposes, displays, ceremonies, drills, reenactments, and performances and must be authorized by the Chief of University Police or his/her designee.

No weapons will be allowed at any University athletic event or building. The same procedure of warning and trespass for carrying/possession on campus will apply to athletic events.

The University complies with, and shall enforce, all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations relative to this policy and necessary for its enforcement.

III. Responsibilities for Enforcement

As with any UNA policy, the directors or administrative leaders of UNA departments and divisions are responsible for enforcing this policy as it relates to employees, faculty, and staff. The Vice President for Student Affairs (Office of Student Conduct) is responsible for enforcing the policy as it relates to students. UPD is responsible for enforcing the policy as it relates to contractors and visitors to the campus.

It is recognized that under certain circumstances enforcement of this policy may result in a volatile or dangerous situation or encounter. Therefore, the procedures listed below are included as a guide for handling enforcement of this policy. Questions concerning enforcement of the policy in volatile or dangerous situations or encounters should be directed to UPD.

Any questions concerning the administrative procedures for enforcing this policy should be directed to the Office of Human Resources or to one's supervisor. The Office of Human Resources will ensure consistent application of this policy to all employees across all areas of the campus.

IV. Procedures for Enforcement

1. This policy will be published in staff, faculty, and student handbooks of the University. Until such time those handbooks sufficiently incorporate the provisions of this policy, any stipulations in those handbooks which are contrary to the provisions of this policy are superseded by the wording of this policy.
2. Appropriate signs indicating that firearms are not allowed in UNA buildings will be placed in campus locations as deemed appropriate.
3. Persons who enter UNA buildings, or other facilities in possession of firearms, ammunition, or dangerous weapons should be made aware of this policy and must leave the premises immediately. They may return without the firearm, ammunition, or weapon.
4. Visitors to the campus who violate this policy and who refuse to leave the premises with their firearms, ammunition, or weapons are to be escorted from the premises by UPD. Staff members, faculty members, or students who violate this policy are to be disciplined and are required to turn over the firearms, ammunition, or weapons to UPD. If they refuse to do so, they are to be escorted from the premises by the UNA Police.

V. Corrective Action for Employees and Students

As indicated above, enforcement of this policy may result in a volatile or dangerous situation or encounter in which case UPD should be summoned. Once the immediate situation has been handled, violations of this policy should be handled accordingly, as outlined in this policy.

A violation of this policy by employees, faculty, or staff will result in corrective action up to and including termination.

A violation of this policy by students should be reported to the Office of Student Conduct for further adjudication of the students' nonacademic misconduct. It should be reported in the same manner in which other instances of nonacademic misconduct are reported and handled.

VI. Implementation

UPD is responsible for overseeing the implementation of procedures to enforce this policy as it relates to contractors and visitors. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for procedures to implement this policy as it relates to staff and faculty.

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs (Office of Student Conduct) is responsible for implementation of procedures which relate to enforcement of the policy with students and student organizations.

VII. Law Enforcement Procedures for Firearms on Campus

The University of North Alabama is a weapons-free campus. The following information will guide you, as police officers, on dealing with weapon situations that may arise. Keeping in mind that every situation cannot be addressed, this is an outline/guide for the areas that can be used to cover as many situations as possible. Regardless of the situation, Section 10 of the new gun law allows you, as police officers, to act accordingly for the protection of the public. Your safety should always be at the forefront of your approach and actions.

1) Non-Students on University property, not their own: The individual in question will be advised by the officer that the University of North Alabama is a weapons free campus. The officer will ask the individual to leave the premises immediately. If the individual refuses to comply with the request to leave the premises, they can be placed under arrest for trespassing.

2) Students: Prior to the law, possession of weapons by students has always been prohibited by the Code of Student Conduct. This provision remains in effect. No student is allowed to have a weapon, concealed or otherwise, *anywhere* on campus or properties operated by the University. Students are not allowed to have a firearm in their vehicles on campus.

If you come in contact with a student who has a weapon in their possession, advise the student that the University of North Alabama is a weapons-free campus.

- a) Give the student an opportunity to leave the premises and only to return when not in possession of the weapon.
- b) If they cannot leave to secure the weapon off campus, the student will be given an opportunity to sign a release that UPD shall hold the weapon for safe keeping until the student has an opportunity to leave campus with the weapon.
- c) If they will not cooperate with your directions, you shall arrest that student for criminal trespassing.

3) Employees of the University: The weapons-free campus includes all employees/contractors alike. The concern of employees having weapons in their vehicles is not a criminal offense but a civil issue between employee and employer. This decision will be addressed by University Administration. If you are advised by an administrator of this university that employees are not allowed to have a weapon in the vehicle, follow the guidelines that have been set forth in the above sections.

Concealment in privately-owned vehicles: At this time, the University of North Alabama does not restrict or prohibit the transportation or storage of a lawfully possessed firearm or ammunition in an employee's privately-owned motor vehicle while parked or operated in a public or private parking area of the University if the employee satisfies all of the following:

- 1) The employee either:
 - a) Has a valid concealed weapon permit; or
 - b) If the weapon is any firearm legal for use for hunting in Alabama other than a pistol:
 - i) The employee possesses a valid Alabama hunting license;
 - ii) The weapon is unloaded at all times on the property;
 - iii) It is during a season in which hunting is permitted by Alabama law or regulation;
- 2) The motor vehicle is operated or parked in a location where it is otherwise permitted to be
- 3) The firearm is either of the following:
 - a) In a motor vehicle attended by the employee, kept from ordinary observation within the person's motor vehicle.
 - b) In a motor vehicle unattended by the employee, kept from ordinary observation and locked within a compartment, container, or in the interior of the person's privately-owned motor vehicle or in a compartment or container securely affixed to the motor vehicle.
 - c) If the University believes that an employee presents a risk of harm to themselves or to others, the University may inquire as to whether the employee possesses a firearm in their private motor vehicle. If the employee does possess a firearm in their private motor vehicle on the property of the University, the University may make any inquiry necessary to establish that the employee is in compliance with subsection (b) of this section.

All incidents require written reports that will be filed at the University Police Department. All incidents involving students will be referred to the office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action and all employee incidents will be sent to the Office of Human Resources for further action.