



## Law Enforcement Officers Flying Armed

### Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service

The Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service maintains oversight of the Law Enforcement Officers flying armed program under [Title 49 Code of Federal Regulation \(CFR\) § 1544.219](#) [1] Carriage of Accessible Weapons.

To qualify to fly armed, Federal Regulation states that an officer must meet the following basic requirements:

- Be a Federal Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) or a full-time municipal, county, or state LEO who is a direct employee of a government agency.
- Be sworn and commissioned to enforce criminal statutes or immigration statutes.
- Be authorized by the employing agency to have the weapon in connection with assigned duties.
- Have completed the training program, "Law Enforcement Officers Flying Armed."

In addition to the above requirements, the officer must need to have the weapon accessible 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 must be determined by the employing agency, department, or service and be based on one of the following:

- The provision of protective duty, for instance, assigned to a principal or advance team, or on travel required to be prepared to engage in a protective function.
- The conduct of a hazardous surveillance operation.
- On official travel required to report to another location, armed and prepared for duty.
- Employed as a Federal LEO, whether or not on official travel, and armed in accordance with an agency-wide policy governing that type of travel established by the employing agency by directive or policy statement.
- Control of a prisoner, in accordance with [Title 49 CFR § 1544.221](#) [2], or an armed LEO on a round trip ticket returning from escorting, or traveling to pick up a prisoner. Please note: In 2014, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Air Transportation Association (IATA) ruled that Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW), such as TASERs, are considered Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) due to their chemical composition. These items are prohibited from carriage on board or in checked luggage on any aircraft.

Examples of positions or travel that have been determined to **NOT** meet the threshold for carriage of accessible weapons are:

- Retired, Contract, Reserve, Auxiliary or Annuitant LEOs
- LEOs who do not have general arrest authority and are limited expressly to governmental facilities.
- Any LEO who is employed by a department, agency, or service that is not fully taxpayer funded. (e.g. part of all paid by private or public corporation)
- Attendance of non-operational or enforcement related activities (e.g. Police Week, Memorial Services, training, conferences, etc.)

State, Local, Territorial, Tribal, and approved Railroad LEOs flying armed must submit a National Law

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Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) message prior to travel. The NLETS message replaces the Original Letter of Authority, commonly referred to as the “Chief’s Letter.” Failure to use the NLETS message will result in denial to the sterile area for failure to comply with the “Letter of Authority.” More information on this procedure is contained in the training program.

The Law Enforcement Officers Flying Armed training is a 1.5 to 2 hour block of instruction that is comprised of a structured lesson plan, slide presentation, FAQs, NLETS procedures, and applicable codes of federal regulation. This material is provided to Federal, State, Local, Territorial, Tribal, and approved Railroad Law Enforcement agencies and departments to properly instruct their officers on the subject of flying on board commercial aircraft while armed. The training includes protocols in the handling of prohibited items, prisoner transport, and dealing with an act of criminal violence aboard an aircraft.

The program training material may be obtained by emailing the Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service, Office of Training and Workforce Programs, at [leofatrn.trn@dhs.gov](mailto:leofatrn.trn@dhs.gov) [3]. To request this training material you must:

- Be a full-time law enforcement officer meeting the instructor qualification standards of the agency, academy, or department in which you are employed.
- Send the request from a governmental email address.
- Include the following information in the body of the email:

Your name and contact information.

Your department’s name and address.

Your supervisor’s name and contact information.

If you are not a qualified instructor, please request a member of your training staff to contact us by email.

For general questions or guidance related to Law Enforcement Officers flying armed or for time sensitive training requests, please contact the Office of Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service at (855) FLY-LEOS (359-5367) or [LEOFA@dhs.gov](mailto:LEOFA@dhs.gov) [4].

The links on this web page should only be used by law enforcement agencies and departments who are seeking information on the subject of flying on board commercial aircraft while armed. **Please do not submit inquiries about employment opportunities to the above e-mail addresses.**

## Prohibited Items

We would like to remind federal officers and agents, whether on official or non-official travel, and state and local officers and agents on official travel not to [transport prohibited items](#) [5], which are not necessary for the performance of their official duties, through security checkpoints or onboard aircraft while traveling armed. Regulations surrounding prohibited carry-on items and associated security checkpoint procedures are covered in the training material. Particular attention should be given to the prohibition against carrying hazardous materials, such as pepper spray or mace, in carry-on bags. For more information [read our prohibited items section](#) [5].

## Paperwork Reduction Act Statement



An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Transportation Security Administration estimates that the average burden for collection is 5 minutes per response. You may submit any comments concerning the accuracy of this burden estimate or any suggestions for reducing the burden to: TSA-11, Attention: PRA 1652-0034 601 South 12th Street, Arlington, VA 20598.

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**Links**[1] <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=844a9df23aefefa9ef5ce70f74444319&rgn=div8&view=text&node=49:9.1.3.5.11.3.10.11&idno=49>  
[2] <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=844a9df23aefefa9ef5ce70f74444319&rgn=div8&view=text&node=49:9.1.3.5.11.3.10.12&idno=49>  
[3] <mailto:leofatrn.trn@dhs.gov>  
[4] <mailto:LEOFA@dhs.gov>  
[5] <http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/prohibited-items>

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