HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PERSONNEL POLICY

Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

Practical Exercises and Reality Based Training

Distribution:	All Personnel			Policy Number:	PER 0813
Responsible Unit:	Training Academy			Rescinds:	
Original Issued Date:	02/15/19	Revision #:	N/A	Latest Revision Date:	09/16/25
Required 3-yr. Review Completed:		09/16/25	Next Required 3-yr. Review Due:		09/30/28

1. **Purpose**

   To describe how practical exercises and reality-based training will be incorporated into Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) training.

2. **Policy**

   Practical exercises and reality-based training will be used to instruct and evaluate certain curricula.

3. **Definitions**

   INTERACTIVE TRAINING: any practical exercise or reality-based training used to give students hands on experience with a skill or how to apply knowledge in a real-life situation. Interactive training includes scenarios, role playing, and practical exercises.

   LEAD INSTRUCTOR: subject matter expert, regardless of rank, assigned for that class to manage the class, other instructors, and attendees.

   SAFETY OFFICER: agency member assigned by the Training Director or Lead Instructor to attend a training exercise to ensure safety procedures are followed.

4. **Procedures**

   A. Methods

      1. All interactive training will be included in the course's lesson plan and will be used to support the learning objectives of the course.

      2. The lesson plan will:

         a. State which objectives are met by the interactive training;

         b. Fully describe how the interactive training will be implemented;

         c. Include an assessment checklist for any high risk or potential high liability training; and

         d. Outline all equipment needed.

3. Interactive training may cover the main objectives for a specific course but can also cover peripheral objectives used to successfully complete a scenario.

4. Interactive training may be full scenarios where all aspects of the candidate's actions are evaluated from start to finish. Instructors may also use micro scenarios to evaluate a single skill or response.

B. Evaluations and Testing

1. Instructors are responsible for ensuring that any testing is based on performance objectives and is designed to measure skills, knowledge, or abilities for job-related tasks.

2. Tests in interactive training may include evaluation for demonstrated proficiency in curriculum topics such as:

   a. Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR);

   b. Baton;

   c. Defensive tactics;

   d. Application of criminal and traffic laws;

   e. Taking reports;

   f. Driver training;

   g. Firearms simulator;

   h. Firearms;

   i. Pepper spray;

   j. Physical training; and

   k. Personal protective equipment.

3. With the exception of firearms qualification, all practical exams will be graded on a PASS/FAIL basis unless otherwise approved by the Training Director.

4. Instructors should make sure all interactive training is structured to end logically and be designed to end successfully if the candidate performs all the objectives as taught.

C. Risk Mitigation

1. Prior to any high-risk training, the Safety Officer will:

   a. Work with the instructor to ensure all equipment has been inspected for safe operation;

   b. Ensure a risk assessment has been completed; and

   c. Ensure all instructors receive a safety briefing prior to commencing training.

D. Instructors and Role Players

1. There will be enough training staff on hand to oversee any interactive training. In certain instances, Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) mandates specific instructor-to-student ratios to maintain a safe and effective training environment.

2. To the greatest extent possible, instructors will attempt to use HCSO employees as role players during practical exercises and scenario-based training.

3. The Course Coordinator will brief all role players of how the interactive training will be conducted and how to address any unique issues that may arise.

4. The Course Coordinator is responsible for all role players involved in the interactive training.

E. Training Safety

1. All practical exercises and scenario-based training will be conducted in accordance with the HCSO Training Safety Policy (PER 0806).

5. Summary of Changes

A. On 09/16/25 the 3-year Agency policy review was conducted, and no changes were made.

Approved
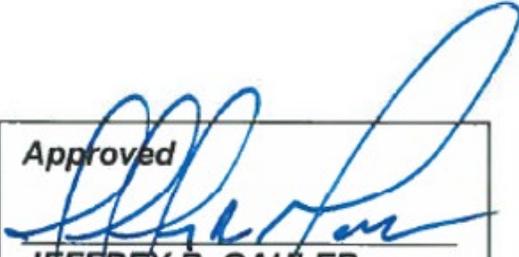
JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF

DATE 2/14/19