



# Issue, Carriage and Use of Firearms Policy

<b>Effective Date</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
<b>Version No.</b>	1.0
<b>Approved by</b>	Garda Executive
<b>Introduced by</b>	HQ Directive 034 / 2026
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Assistant Commissioner, Garda National Crime and Security Intelligence Service

## 1. Purpose

It is the aim of An Garda Síochána to uphold and protect the human rights of all by providing a high quality, effective policing service in partnership with the community and in co-operation with other agencies. In light of this commitment, An Garda Síochána recognises that an individual's right to life and the safety of the public is the overriding consideration when dealing with duties relating to the issue, carriage and use of firearms by its members. It is in this context that this policy and its associated procedure document embed the nine pillars of conduct and practice set out in the '[Code of Ethics](#)'. These documents also have the common thread of the vindication of human rights and the very highest ethical standards running throughout, thus ensuring that the operational delivery of these services always protect and respect these rights.

## 2. Scope and Compliance

Compliance with this document and all associated documentation is mandatory for all An Garda Síochána personnel as defined by Section [44](#) of the [Policing, Security and Community Safety Act, 2024](#). This includes Garda Trainees, other persons seconded to An Garda Síochána and Police Officers from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and in accordance with Sections [53](#), [93](#) and [94](#) of the [Policing, Security and Community Safety Act, 2024](#) respectively.

## 3. Policy Statement

The issue, carriage and use of firearms by members of An Garda Síochána will at all times be carried out under the rigorous standards of robust governance including authorisation, training and oversight. This policy and its accompanying procedure document establish standards, processes as well as roles and responsibilities that will aid in ensuring accountability in respect of this area within the organisation. An Garda Síochána 'Human Rights Framework' ([HQ Directive 19/2019](#)) is a key reference point regarding every facet of these documents. This aims to ensure that Garda personnel are fully aware of the human rights standards which must be protected and respected by An Garda Síochána in the performance of their duties including the carriage and use of firearms and operational decision making.

This policy and accompanying procedure document must also be utilised in conjunction with the '[Overarching Use of Force](#)' policy which is designed to ensure that any action, including force, is legal, proportionate, reasonable, necessary (absolute necessity in terms of lethal force) and accountable, and that only the minimum, least invasive and intrusive amount of force should be used in the relevant circumstance. These actions must be carried out transparently and in a non-discriminatory manner. The 'Garda Decision Making Model' (GDMM) ([HQ Directive 37/2019](#)) shall always be used for decision making purposes and it sets out the process by which a measured and appropriate response should be made to any situation which may involve conflict while having constitutional rights, human rights and the [code of ethics](#) at its core.

## 4. Legal & Human Rights Screening

This document has been Legal and Human Rights screened in terms of the respective obligations placed on An Garda Síochána for the subject area concerned.

This human rights based approach to the issue, carriage and use of firearms is required to ensure a professional, lawful, transparent and accountable organisation that respects and values the communities in which we serve while effectively combating crime and maintaining order. It will help to enhance safety and security while putting the rights of individuals and protected groups, as enshrined by law, central to every action carried out to protect and fulfil these rights.

## 5. Ethical Standards & Commitments

An Garda Síochána Personnel must observe and adhere to the standards and commitments set out in the [Code of Ethics for An Garda Síochána](#) and uphold and promote this Code throughout the organisation.

## 6. Post-Implementation Review

This document and all associated documentation will be reviewed twelve months from its date of effect and every three years thereafter or as appropriate.

## 7. Disclaimer

This document is not intended to, nor does it represent legal advice to be relied upon in respect of the subject matter contained herein. This document should not be used as a substitute for professional legal advice.

## 8. Data Protection

All Garda Personnel will process personal data for legitimate business purposes only and in line with a clearly defined lawful basis under the [General Data Protection Regulation \(\(EU\) 2016/679\)](#) and/or [Data Protection Acts 1988-2018](#), as applicable. All necessary measures will be put in place to ensure the personal data is kept safe and secure and only authorised personnel shall have access to personal data. Only relevant personal data will be processed, and will not be retained for longer than is necessary. All personnel are required to ensure that individual's data protection rights are adhered to and to identify and mitigate against any suspected data breaches.

