

New Shooter Orientation & Safety Briefing

Welcome to *Tioga County Sportsmen's Association (TCSA)*!

A Safety Officer (SO) supervises the shooter during each stage. The SO has two main duties:

1. Primary - To oversee and command the shooter in the safe operation of their gun, mainly focusing on the gun & muzzle direction
2. Secondary - To assist the shooter (The SO is there to help you!)

Safety is our first concern. All TCSA events are run on a "cold" range:

1. **All guns are to be unloaded with empty mag-wells at all times & hammers down.**
2. You may not handle your gun at any time during the match unless you are under the supervision of an SO or in a Safe Area. If you don't know where the safe area is, ask. There is no handling of ammunition in the safe area. When in doubt, please ask someone before handling your firearm. Handling your firearm while not under the direct supervision of a SO or in the designated safe areas is grounds for immediate DQ.
3. You may only load your gun on the line at the command of an SO.
4. You may load your magazines behind the line at any time.
5. In addition to the gun handling rules, all of the common sense gun safety rules apply. Violation of the safety rules can and often does result in DQ.

Some examples of actions and behaviors that cause a DQ:

1. Unsafe and/or irresponsible behavior, such as arguing with an SO.
2. Crossing any portion of your body or anyone else's with the muzzle of a loaded or unloaded gun.
3. Firing any shot that goes over the berm or into the ground within 6 feet of the shooter.
4. Pointing the muzzle of the gun past the muzzle safe points.

5. Failure to follow the commands of the SO or Match Director (MD), or repeated safety violations or failure to correct "finger" or "muzzle" warnings.
6. Dropping a loaded firearm.

The SO or any member of the Board of Directors has the authority to disqualify an individual. While we never intend to disqualify anyone and certainly no one enjoys doing it, disqualification does happen. If you are DQ'ed, you will not be allowed to shoot the remainder of the match. We invite you to stay and observe, and you may return and participate in the future matches.

Safety Notes:

- **During a CoF if you (the shooter) drops a loaded gun: DO NOT** attempt to catch the gun or pick up the gun. The SO will take command of the gun in this case.
- Be aware of clothing materials when re-holstering. Catching part of a vest or shirt in the trigger guard while re-holstering a loaded gun can have catastrophic consequences.
- Always acquire a firm grip on the gun, with finger indexed, prior to drawing from the holster.

We enforce the 180° rule at all times. The 180° is side to side as well as up and down. Pointing your muzzle down at the ground or up at the sky is extremely dangerous. In some stages the 180° rule is superseded by muzzle safe points indicated by the SO or Match Director, if this is the case you will be instructed by the SO as to the muzzle safe points.

While under the direction of an SO: Please keep your firearm PARALLEL to the ground, pointed downrange, and your finger indexed (alongside the frame above the trigger) at all times when you are handling your firearm and not actively shooting.

Standard Commands:

- ***Make ready*** - announced when the SO is ready for you to load your gun. At this command you should face down range and begin the safe loading of your gun

- **Are you ready** - a preparatory command which allows the shooter the opportunity to announce that they are “Not ready”.
- **Standby** - a preparatory command announced just seconds after the shooter has indicated that he/she is ready. The shooter may not move until the start signal is given.
- **BEEP** - not a spoken command but it is the signal to commence actions to execute the stage. The timer beep is the shooter’s indication to safely draw their loaded gun and begin shooting the CoF.
- **If You Are Finished, Unload and show clear** - directs the shooter to unload the gun and show that the gun is clear of all ammunition. The shooter unloads the gun and holds open the action for inspection by the SO.
- **If Clear, Slide Forward, pull the trigger, holster** - the command given after the SO inspects the action, chamber, and magazine. The shooter releases the slide, pulls the trigger to release the hammer or striker, and then safely re-holsters the gun.
- **Range is clear** - instructs shooters to go forward of the shooting line to retrieve magazines, ammunition, but most importantly to help paste targets.

Safety Related Commands:

- **Finger** - a warning indicating that the shooter’s finger is on the trigger when it should be indexed on the side of the frame.
- **Muzzle** - a warning indicating that the shooter’s muzzle is pointed in or approaching an unsafe direction.
- **STOP** - an urgent command which may be given by anyone that the shooter should STOP AT ONCE, take his finger off the trigger, and not move. This command is usually given when there is imminent danger to the shooter or other match participants.

Shooter Responsibilities:

1. ALWAYS follow the four laws of gun safety.
2. ALWAYS be conscious of muzzle direction.

- 3.Refrain from having finger in the trigger guard when not actually engaging targets.
- 4.Exhibit safe gun handling at all times.
- 5.Assist in taping targets.
- 6.Be ready to shoot when called to the line (i.e., have appropriate ammo, etc.).
- 7.Be courteous and respectful to the match officials and other shooters. In addition, have fun, socialize, learn and improve your gun handling and shooting skills.

Although this is a timed sport and you may go as fast as you like while shooting safely, you are NOT being timed to **un-load, show clear, and re-holster**. Please take all the time you require to perform these tasks safely. Please holster your firearm at the request of the SO and wait for the “Range is clear” command before you retrieve any ammunition or magazines.

We hope you enjoy your first match & many more matches with TCSA