

Fredericksburg Police Department

FIREARMS UNIT OPERATIONAL GUIDE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to establish policy and procedure concerning firearms training, weapon proficiency, and the inspection and issuance of Department firearms and holsters.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Fredericksburg Police Department that all personnel shall follow the procedures listed in this operational guide.

FIREARMS OVERVIEW

Every police officer shall receive the minimum training necessary to handle, carry, and use the issued duty weapon and other approved weapons, and shall have obtained a passing grade for all written tests concerning each specific authorized weapon and shall have obtained a qualifying score for each weapon as authorized by this department by actually firing the weapon or weapons on an approved indoor/outdoor range.

To effect additional safety practices, the inspection and issuance of all Department firearms and holsters shall be conducted by the Head Department Armorer or Head Range Officer before such weapons and equipment are put into service.

ORGANIZATION

Firearms Instructors and Department Armorer are ancillary positions. Firearms Instructors and Department Armorer have a primary obligation to an operational division and must consider training and Armorer duties as secondary to their primary duty, though no less important.

Firearms instructors function under the Training Section as the Firearms Unit. The Support Services Division Commander is responsible to select personnel to function as a firearms' Instructor, with the concurrence of the appropriate Division Commander.

The Chief of Police appoints one member of the Firearms Unit as the Head Range Officer to oversee the Firearms Unit.

The Training Manager is responsible for the general instructor functions of Firearms instructors.

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Annually, the Head Range Officer shall review the performance, participation and continuing training of each Firearms Instructor to ensure that officers selected for this assignment continue to meet the department's requirements as a Firearms Instructor. Together with the department Training Manager, make recommendations to the Support Services Division Commander of the retention or removal of a Firearms Instructor whose training ability and/or delivery ability fails to meet department standards.

TRAINING

Candidates shall successfully complete the firearms instructor course as approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) prior to appointment.

The firearms instructor candidate shall serve in a six (6) month apprenticeship and shall demonstrate an acceptable ability to instruct classroom and range classes. The candidate must demonstrate a basic knowledge of weapon malfunction and remedy. Upon completion of the apprenticeship phase, the head range officer will make a written recommendation to the Support Services Division Commander indicating approval or disapproval of the candidate's appointment to the Firearms Training Section.

All firearms instructors shall attend a certified Armorer school for the issued service weapon as scheduled by the Training Manager. In addition, instructors may also be trained in a variety of technical courses pertaining to weapons as appropriate to the needs of the police department.

All firearms instructors will train and qualify with all weapons utilized by members of this department or used in training and familiarization with the exception of sharpshooter/counter-sniper weapons and SETT rifles.

OPERATIONS

This operational guide requires Department DCJS certified Firearms Instructors to provide all Fredericksburg Police Department personnel authorized to carry a lethal force weapon a copy of the Use of Force, Lethal and Less Lethal Directive Sections before being authorized to carry a weapon. The issuance and instruction shall be documented. [1.3.12]

Proficiency Training and Qualification - All sworn personnel shall receive firearms training with the issued service weapon. Such training shall be conducted semi-annually and on dates and times scheduled by the Head Range Officer. The continuity of the training will serve to ensure the re-qualification of department officers on a sustained basis. The program is part of the police department's in-house training requirements.

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In addition to qualifying with the issued service weapon, the semi-annual firearms training program shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- Instruction in the Department's Use of Force policy
- Range and firearms safety rules
- Liability consequences
- Legal updates
- Diverse shooting programs that utilize live fire practices on both indoor and outdoor firing ranges

All firearms training, range rule reviews, and proficiency testing will be documented. All forms, including a lesson plan, will be completed by a DCJS certified firearms instructor and forwarded to the Training Manager in a timely manner. A qualifications report shall be forwarded, through the chain of command to the Chief of Police. [1.3.11, b]

All proficiency training will be instructed and monitored by a DCJS certified firearms instructor. [1.3.11, a]

A written evaluation for each officer shall be prepared by the officer's assigned firearms instructor on the form provided, and the report forwarded to the Training Bureau to be maintained in the officer's permanent training file.

Remedial Weapons Training

If an officer fails to meet the firearms qualification scoring standards as required by the DCJS, the officer shall be provided remedial assistance and additional coaching in an effort to improve the officer's firearms proficiency.

An officer who fails to qualify after 2 attempts shall be provided assistance and instruction by the firearms instructor. A total of 3 qualification attempts in one day is permitted. If the officer fails the final attempt to qualify (score less than 70%), the firearms instructor shall proceed as follows:

- Advise the officer that he or she has failed to meet DCJS firearms qualifications. Relieve the officer from any further firearms training until proper authority provides further direction.
- Immediately contact the on-duty Watch Commander and the officer's immediate supervisor, and advise them of the officer's inability to meet DCJS firearms qualifications. The Watch Commander shall notify the officer's Division Commander.
- Prepare a written memorandum directed to the Chief of Police and the officer's Division Commander indicating the officer's failure to meet DCJS firearms standards.

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- All firearms records concerning the officer, including the firearms instructor's memorandum, will be provided to the Chief of Police for review.

The affected officer may retain possession of his or her service weapon until such time as the matter of the officers' failure to meet DCJS firearms standards has been resolved.

The officer shall be scheduled for remedial training and re-tested on the next available range date. Remedial training will continue as described in the paragraph above until the employee successfully completes qualification or a total of 9 qualification attempts have been made.

If the officer is still not able to meet qualification standards, the firearms instructor shall forward all relevant firearms records and a written memorandum documenting the qualification attempts to the Chief of Police through the chain-of-command.

Officers who do not meet qualification standards after remedial training are subject to procedures described in the Code of Virginia § 9.1-115, however the Chief of Police will determine the appropriate course of action and final disposition.

Upon examination of all information and documents, the Chief of Police will provide a final resolution to the matter. [1.3.11, c]

Department Authorized Qualification Requirements - Only Department personnel who demonstrate proficiency in the use of agency-authorized weapons will be allowed to carry such weapons. Courses and minimum qualification scores are listed below: [1.3.10]

Firearms Proficiency Required For Use Of Agency-Issued Weapons - The following is a description of the qualification course for the Department issued duty weapon:

Using the VA TAC 50 qualification course (DCJS approved qualification course) the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services requires a minimum qualification score of 175 points out of a possible 250 points, or 70%. The Fredericksburg Police Department scoring requirements mirror that of DCJS and require a minimum score of 70% to qualify. A qualifying score of 70% must be achieved before an officer is eligible to receive and carry an agency owned and authorized weapon. A qualifying score of 70% must be maintained, bi-annually, to be eligible to maintain possession of an agency owned and authorized weapon.

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Firearms Proficiency Required For Use Of Agency-Authorized Weapons -

The Department of Criminal Justice Services does not have a mandated firearms training requirement for off-duty and back-up weapons or guidelines for weapon type approval. Additionally, there are no requirements for the selection of ammunition. A qualifying score is required before any officer may carry their off-duty or back-up weapon. The following is a description of the qualification course for off-duty and back-up weapon requirements.

This is a 30 round course of fire done from the ready gun position using the FBI Q-target:

- From the 7 yard line – 2 shots in 2 seconds for a total of 10 rounds, standing position; 2 shots in 2 seconds for a total of 10 rounds, kneeling position
- From the 15 yard line – 2 shots in 2 seconds for a total of 10 rounds, standing position

Scoring:

- In the bottle = 10 points
- In the gray = 5 points
- Off the paper = 0 points

A minimum of 210 points or 70% is necessary to qualify

Firearms Proficiency Required For Use Of Agency-Issued Shotguns - The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services does not mandate shotgun training as part of their basic certification or re-certification requirements. The Police Department does require this training for all personnel, with the exception of the Command Staff, and provides a qualification course establishing minimum standards for the shotgun. The class of ammunition utilized in this program is the 12-gauge rifled slug. In addition, the 12-gauge slug will also be issued for tactical use. All shotgun training will be conducted on an outdoor range and utilizing the official "Q" target. A minimum score of 70% is required before any officer is eligible to carry a shotgun. The Shotgun qualification course is described below:

Stage One - Twenty Five (25) yard line: On command, the shooter will assembly load four (4) rounds and shoot two (2) rounds standing on the right target, assume a kneeling position and shoot two (2) rounds on the left target. Time period allowed - 45 seconds.

Stage Two - Fifteen (15) yard line: On command, the shooter will assembly load four (4) rounds and shoot two (2) rounds standing, one (1) round on the right target and one (1) round on the left target. Assume the kneeling position and shoot one (1) round on the right target and one (1) round on the left target. Time period allowed - 30 seconds.

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Stage Three - Ten (10) yard line: On command, the shooter will combat load three (3) rounds and shoot three (3) rounds standing on the right target. Assume a kneeling position, combat load three (3) rounds and shoot three (3) rounds kneeling on the left target. Time period allowed - 40 seconds.

Stage Four – Seven (7) yard line: On command, the shooter will load six (6) rounds in the magazine (not timed). The shooter will assume the "Standing Low Ready Position". On command, the shooter will chamber a round and shoot two (2) shots to the body and one (1) shot to the head of the right target. Transferring to the left target, shoot two (2) shots to the body and one (1) shot to the head of the target. Time period allowed - 15 seconds.

.223 PATROL RIFLE - 40 ROUND QUALIFICATION COURSE – The following qualification course is for the Patrol Rifle Operator:

50 YARD LINE

BEGIN IN STANDING POSITION....ON BUZZER KNEEL AND SHOOT (4)
ROUNDS....RELOAD....TRANSITION TO SITTING POSITION....SHOOT (4)
ROUNDS...TRANSITION TO PRONE....SHOOT (4) ROUNDS
TOTAL ROUNDS: (12)
TIME LIMIT: 1 MINUTE 25 SECONDS

25 YARD LINE

BEGIN IN STANDING POSITION....ON BUZZER SHOOT (4)
ROUNDS....RELOAD....TRANSITION TO KNEELING POSITION....SHOOT (4)
ROUNDS....TRANSITION TO SITTING POSITION SHOOT (4) ROUNDS
TOTAL ROUNDS: (12)
TIME LIMIT: 42 SECONDS

15 YARD LINE

FROM A STANDING POSITION....ON BUZZER SHOOT (4)
ROUNDS....RELOAD....SHOOT (4) ROUNDS
TOTAL ROUNDS: (8)
TIME LIMIT: 20 SECONDS

7 YARD LINE

FROM A STANDING POSITION....ON BUZZER SHOOT (4) ROUNDS
RELOAD SHOOT (4) ROUNDS
TOTAL ROUNDS: (8)
TIME LIMIT: 16 SECONDS

Qualification Standards:

- Target is the FBI "Q" target
- Scored (5) points in the bottle and (0) points outside the bottle.
- Maximum possible score (200)

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Qualification score: 180 points or better - (90%)

200=100%	185=92.5%	170=85.0%	155=77.5%
195=97.5%	180=90.0%	165=82.5%	150=75.0%
190=95.0%	175=87.5%	160=80.0%	145=72.5%

Firearms Proficiency Required For Use Of Agency-Issued Scoped Rifles -

The Department of Criminal Justice Services does not provide a training course for handling and utilizing rifles. Below is a course specific for department owned and issued sniper rifles:

FPD Sniper Qualification Course:

Start at the 100 yard line from a standing position – on the buzzer take a prone position and shoot 3 rounds into the target.

Move to the 75 yard line and shoot 3 rounds into the target.

Move to the 50 yard line and shoot 3 rounds into the target.

Move to the 25 yard line and shoot 3 rounds into the target.

- 4 minute time limit from start to finish.
- Total of 12 rounds.
- All shooting is from the prone position.

Qualifying score is 100%.

Firearms Proficiency Required For Use Of Agency-Issued Automatic Weapons -

The Department of Criminal Justice Services does not provide mandatory training standards for automatic weapons. The police department provides a training and certification course for the automatic weapons assigned to officers who are on the SETT.

Fully automatic weapons and other medium and large bore rifles are fired on an outdoor rifle range. Fully automatic weapons are fired from four different distances: The 50-yard firing line, the 25-yard firing line, the fifteen-yard firing line, and the 7-yard firing line. At least 40 rounds of ammunition are used for this training. Targets utilized are the F.B.I. "Q" target. The target is scored as follows: 5 points inside the bottle and 0 points outside the bottle. To successfully pass this course, the shooter must obtain 90% of the total points allowed for this course.

Procedure for review, inspection and approval of all weapons: [1.3.9, c]

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- The department Armorer or designated assistant, in accordance with recommended guidelines as set forth by the weapon's manufacturer, shall conduct weapons inspections. All handguns and other weapons shall be inspected semi-annually after re-qualification or the initial qualification. All inspections shall be documented on forms designated by the department and maintained on file as long as the weapon remains in use with the department.
- Weapons deemed to be defective or unsafe will be removed from service and properly repaired or replaced without delay. [1.3.9, d]
- A continuous inspection program has been established for all weapons issued or authorized for use by police officers of this department. The inspection program is not designed to be a weapons cleaning function, but to ensure the readiness of all weapons issued or authorized.
- Weapon inspections and maintenance or repairs shall include front and rear sight alignment or replacement, and other miscellaneous repairs and cleaning. All inspections and repairs shall be documented utilizing the forms designated by the department. Completed forms shall be forwarded to the Armorer for review and retention.
- The Armorer shall prepare an annual report directed to the Support Services Division Commander reporting total inspections, maintenance and repairs conducted and the name of replacement parts used, as well as any other weapon problems discovered.
- Service weapons issued by this department shall be inspected prior to issue or re-issue. Service weapons inspected and found to be ready for issue or re-issue shall be identified by tagging the weapon with an appropriate label reflecting "*ready for issue*". Any weapon failing inspection or waiting repairs will be "red tagged" to signify "*out of service condition*".
- All sworn officers are responsible for ensuring that weapons assigned to them are properly maintained. All weapons that are assigned on a temporary basis such as shotguns, rifles and other shoulder weapons shall be visually inspected prior to shift or operational duty. Any deficiencies that are noted will be reported to the Section or Bureau supervisor, and the weapon will be removed from service until replaced or properly repaired by a department Armorer.
- Weapons that are not permanently assigned and designated for common use, such as shotguns and other shoulder weapons, will be maintained within the Division to which they are assigned. The department Armorer or designated assistant Armorer shall remove, visually inspect, clean and lubricate these weapons. This activity shall be documented and maintained by the Armorer.

Process to remove unsafe weapons: [1.3.9, d]

The department Armorer or an assistant Armorer shall remove, visually inspect, clean and lubricate department owned stored weapons every ninety (90) days.

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This activity shall be documented by the Armorer and forwarded to the Support Services Division Commander. Annually, on an agreed date, but no later than September 1st, the Armorer and the Range Officer shall conduct a documented inspection of all issued weapons for safety and functionality. Weapons that are found to be defective or unsafe will be removed from service and properly repaired or replaced. A report of these findings will be prepared and forwarded to the Services Division Commander no later than December 31 of the same year.

Procedure for maintaining a record on each weapon approved by the agency for official use: [1.3.9, e]

The assigned Armorer will maintain an inventory of Departmental firearms that are approved by this agency for official use. The inventory will include the type, model, and serial number of each firearm as well as the identity of each assignee. Service and other weapons that are not assigned to an individual officer will be maintained and stored in the department armory. Shotguns and other shoulder weapons may be assigned to the Patrol and Detective Divisions and assigned to an individual officer as requested or needed. Annually, The Armorer will supply the Services Division Commander a complete updated list of these weapons and where they are assigned.

Each weapon approved and purchased for use by the Fredericksburg Police Department will be documented on a master weapons inventory maintained by the Supervisory Armorer. The inventory will include the type, model and serial number of each firearm as well as the identity of each assignee. A firearms unit instructor must visually inspect each issued weapon during qualification. The inspection shall include confirmation of the serial number of the weapon issued to each officer.

Service and other weapons that are not assigned to an individual officer will be maintained and stored in the department armory. Shotguns and other shoulder weapons may be assigned to the Patrol and Detective Divisions and assigned to an individual officer as requested or needed.

Guidelines for the safe and proper storage of agency authorized firearms: [1.3.9, f]

It is the responsibility of those sworn officers who are assigned a department issued weapon to properly care for and safely secure the weapon. The Commanding Officers of each Division will be responsible for weapons that are assigned to the Division for common use amongst sworn officers. When not in use, these weapons will be properly secured in safes, rooms, or racks designed for secure storage. Access to these weapons will be restricted to sworn officers or personnel assigned to either transport or maintain the weapons.

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X26 Taser User Certification - The requirements set forth in this guide are deemed to be the minimum requirements to obtain a manufacturer's User Certification. These requirements are considered to be the basis for a sound understanding of how and when to use the X-26 and shall be completed prior to deployment by an officer. A copy of each User Certificate and certification test results shall be maintained in the individual officer's training records.

Certification Requirements - Complete minimum four (4) hours of instruction:

- The User shall have completed a minimum of four (4) hours of instruction under the guidance of a manufacturer certified instructor. Course work shall include all topics in the Instructor Lesson Plan including all drills and functional demonstrations as appropriate.
- The User must pass the written examinations with a score of 80% or greater.
- The User must pass all functional tests listed at the end of the Certification Test except for the following option: The TASER manufacturer policy has been amended with regards to one of the functional requirements. Quote: "We strongly recommend, but do not require that students take a sample hit from the X-26."
- The User must fire a minimum of four (4) Air Cartridges to both familiarize the User with the functions of the system as well as to test aptitude. The User should fire one (1) Air Cartridge during the instruction phase and three (3) Air Cartridges during the final test. The User must be able to hit the target from eight (8) feet without the laser sight and must be able to hit the target from eight (8) feet using the laser sight and firing two (2) Air Cartridges within ten (10) second time limit. Students who do not hit the target should be run through the aiming drills and made to fire again. User shall not be qualified until they have passed both firing tests.

Certification - Certification is valid for a period of one (1) year. Users shall re-qualify once each year during firearms qualification.

Re-certification – The following must be completed for re-certification:

- The User must pass a written examination with a score of 80% or greater.
- The User must pass all functional tests listed at the end of the re-certification test except for the following option: Quote: "We strongly recommend, but do not require that students take a sample hit from the X=26."
- The User must fire a minimum of four (4) Air Cartridges to both familiarize the User with the functions of the system as well as to test aptitude. The User should fire one (1) Air Cartridge during the instruction phase and three (3) Air Cartridges during the final test. The User must be able to hit the target from eight (8) feet without the laser sight and must be able to hit the target from eight (8) feet using the laser sight and firing two (2) Air Cartridges within ten (10) second time limit. Students who do not hit the

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target should be run through the aiming drills and made to fire again. Students shall not be qualified until they have passed both firing tests.

Additional Information – The following topics shall also be covered in Taser X-26 training sessions:

- Function of the Taser X-26
- Manufacturer warnings and precautions
- Use of the Taser X-26 on animals
- Removal of probes from subjects
- Data port and cartridge care

PepperBall System Training

PepperBall Technologies has developed a wide variety of PepperBall projectiles to create realistic training and role-play scenarios. PepperBall projectiles are available in inert scented powder, and inert liquid versions, making it possible to conduct both indoor and outdoor live-fire training without contaminating an area with PAVA powder. There is no substitute for realistic training allowing the “suspect” to shoot back at officers. The inert water training projectiles are an ideal solution for training realism with minimum cleanup.

Before using the PepperBall System tactical weapon, selected personnel shall be trained by a firearms instructor and will demonstrate proficiency for use of the weapon. This training shall occur annually during firearms training and qualifications and will be documented.

FIREARMS UNIT SELECTION PROCESS

Criteria for selection to the Firearms Unit - Vacancies for the Firearms Unit will be announced by posting the opening, qualifications, and selection process within the Department. Criteria includes:

- Before any officer is authorized to attend the firearms instructor school, he or she must demonstrate proficiency with the issued duty weapon to the Head Range Officer. This is accomplished by: firing two consecutive qualification courses and obtaining a score of at least 90 percent of the total available points on each course.
- Candidates for firearms instructor shall have successfully completed the general instructor course as approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services prior to appointment.
- After completing the firearms instructor class, the Firearms Instructor candidate shall serve in a six (6) month apprenticeship and shall demonstrate an acceptable ability to instruct classroom and range classes. The candidate must demonstrate a basic knowledge of weapon

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malfunction and remedy. Upon completion of the apprenticeship phase, the Head Range Officer will make a written recommendation to the Support Services Division Commander indicating approval or disapproval of the candidate's appointment to the Firearms Training Unit.

LEAD POISONING SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AND TESTING

When utilizing an indoor or outdoor range:

- Don't smoke on the range.
- Don't eat on the range.
- Don't collect spent brass in baseball caps or other clothing items.
- Be aware that the face, hands and clothing are covered with lead contaminants.
- Do not forget that hair and clothes are still contaminated.
- Remove range shoes before entering residence.
- Avoid physical contact with family members until a shower, shampoo and change of clothing is made.

Range officers instructors and armorers shall:

- Take necessary precautions to eliminate the possibility of lead poisoning by wearing special safety garments such as disposable coveralls, shoe coverlets and head gear as a shield from lead contamination.
- Practice a cleansing regimen.
- Participate in periodic medical tests to determine the lead content of the body.
- The range officer shall ensure that scheduled cleansing of the indoor range is maintained in an effort to maintain low levels of lead contaminants.
- Range Officers instructing shall rotate range duties in order to minimize the amount of time spent exposed to contaminants.
- Female Range Officers or Armorers instructing and/or working with firearms, who become pregnant must consider the risk of lead contaminants affecting the fetus and should suspend range activities until after delivery.

Range Officers and Armorers shall practice the following procedures:

- Wear protective garment over uniform or street clothing when instructing for extended period of time.
- Wash the hands and other exposed body parts with cold water and soap.

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- After instructing leave the range and remove disposable coveralls and shoe coverlets and place in a clearly marked biohazard waste container.
- In the event protective garments were not worn, the range officer should place all outer clothing in a plastic bag and take the bag and clothing home to be laundered.
- Prior to changing into fresh clothing the range officer should shower before leaving the building.

Testing for lead poisoning will involve the following:

- All active Range Officers and Armorer shall be tested annually for lead content.
- To maintain a base-line test level, five officers will be selected randomly on an annual basis to be tested for lead content.
- Female range officers who become pregnant should suspend all indoor range activities. If testing reveals a significant level of lead (*15 micrograms per deciliter of blood*) in the female range officer's system, suspension from range activity is mandatory until the end of the pregnancy term.
- If any officer who is tested for lead content and the level of lead is at least 25 micrograms per deciliter of blood, the officer will retest in thirty (30) days.
- If a second test reveals a rise in the lead content above 30 micrograms, the officer will be removed from further range activity until the lead level has fallen below the minimum allowable level.
- If any officer has a blood level of over 40 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood, a physician should see him/her.
- If a Range Officer or any officer who utilizes the indoor firing range frequently, and suffers a bone break, should be tested for lead poisoning within one to three weeks.
- If testing reveals an officer has an elevated level of 70 or more, should be treated for lead poisoning.

EQUIPMENT

Only Department issued or approved firearms and ammunition will be used by Fredericksburg Police Department personnel in the performance of duty or while acting under the authority of a law enforcement officer. When practicing, qualifying or carrying a personally owned back-up or off-duty weapon personnel will use only Department approved and issued ammunition. Additionally, all Department-issued weapons meant to be holstered will be carried in Department issued holsters. Any personally owned back-up or off-duty firearms must also be carried in an approved holster (approved by the Supervisory Armorer or designee). [1.3.9]

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