

**A. Purpose:**

To describe the safety rules for handling firearms in the Unit.

**B. Responsibility:**

Forensic Science Examiners and other laboratory personnel assigned to the Firearms Unit.

**C. Safety:**

1. Eye protection shall be worn when test firing a firearm.
2. Ear Protection – dual ear protection will be worn when firing weapons.

Refer to FA SOP 2A ‘Firearms Safety – Lead Conformance’ for further guidance.

**D. Procedure:**

1. General Safety Rules
  - a. All firearms handled in the laboratory will be treated as if they are loaded.
  - b. The muzzle of the firearm will always be pointed in a safe direction.
  - c. The analyst will keep their finger off of the trigger of a firearm until they are ready to fire.
  - d. Firearms will only be loaded in the designated safe areas: the water recovery tank room and the indoor range.
  - e. When test firing of weapons in the indoor range, a second person will be present in the range or outside of the room in the observation area to ensure the safety of the individual conducting the test fire.
  - f. If a person is accessing the basement area under the firing tank, a note (laminated placard) will be placed on the upstairs tank so that a test fire is not conducted at that time. This laminated placard is located on the ammunition cabinet in the firing tank room.
2. Loaded firearms submitted to the laboratory will first be transferred to the Firearms Unit to be rendered safe. The indoor range is the closest and most safe area to work. Once the firearm is unloaded, it may then be released to the appropriate unit for examination.
3. Evidence and/or destruction firearms
  - a. The safe condition of a firearm must be established upon completion of the examination.
  - b. The source of ammunition must be removed and the chamber(s) must be checked to ensure it is clear of ammunition.
  - c. The firearm will be then placed in its original submitted container. If desired, a zip tie may be placed through the action of the firearm.

*Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro*

4. For Work Practices, Engineering Controls, Housekeeping and PPE related to minimize lead exposure for activities in the Firearms Unit refer to FA SOP 2A 'Firearms Safety – Lead Conformance'.

**E. References:**

1. GL 2, Safety Manual
2. OSHA fact Sheet '[Protecting Workers from Lead Hazards at Indoor Firing Ranges](#)'
3. CFR29 1910.1025  
[https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_unique?p\\_table\\_name=STANDARDS&p\\_unique\\_file=1910\\_1025](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_unique?p_table_name=STANDARDS&p_unique_file=1910_1025)