

School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design
 Standard Operating Procedures

TITLE: <p style="text-align: center;">Use of Replica Firearms & Weapons for Live Performance and Film Shoots</p>	
DATE CREATED: 2015	RE-EVALUATION DATE: January 28, 2025

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines to AMPD faculty, staff & students wishing to use replica firearms and weapons in a performance setting, a student film shoot or faculty research project. This document is based on current industry practice and related York University policy and procedures.

It's important to understand the safety measures that are required to allow these types of activities to take place safely. Any filming or live performance events involving use of audible gunfire sound effects or replica firearms and or weapons of any kind (including prop guns) visible to the public (whether fired or not), are needed as they can be mistaken for genuine weapons by members of the public. This poses potential risks for public safety. Police Services will respond to any reported incident under the assumption that the weapon is real and not authorized. If a police service responds, this could result in serious consequences including having the production shut down, serious injury, loss of life, criminal charges and or Ministry of Labour orders.

General

AMPD restricts the use of firearms to starter's pistols, non-functional toy and replica firearms. In the case of a firearm, it cannot be a real firearm that has been modified for a different purpose. Typical types of replica weapons utilized are, but not limited to, swords and daggers.

Definition

Replica firearm means a device or object that is not defined as a dangerous weapon, and that is a facsimile or toy version of, and reasonably appears to be a pistol, revolver, shotgun, sawed-off shotgun, rifle, machine gun, rocket launcher, or any other firearm.

All use of replica weapons for live performance and or film shoots must be pre-approved by the applicable department chair or faculty supervisor/course director, and the manager of Facilities, Health & Safety, and Technical Services as well as Security Services, Community Safety Department and relevant handling procedures strictly adhered to.

RESPONSIBILITY & DISTRIBUTION:

All AMPD students, staff and faculty are to adhere to all safety protocols contained in this SOP.

- Department of Theatre, Dance & Performance production faculty & staff
- Department of Cinema & Media Arts, Film Production Area

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- AMPD Teams FA-AMPD Standard Operating Procedures
- Film 411: <https://film411.ampd.yorku.ca/>

RELEVANT POLICIES:

York University: Firearms and Weapons (Policy)
<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/firearms-and-weapons-policy/>

York University: Firearms and Weapons (Procedures)
<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/firearms-and-weapons-procedure/>

PROCESS STEPS:

For Theatre-Live Performance Based Use

This SOP applies to all cast, crew, and faculty and staff involved in the theatre production where replica firearms and or weapons are used.

1. Faculty designate and Department Production Coordinator to meet with Director, and appropriate show managers to define type of use.
 - a. A thorough risk assessment for scenes, travel and storage involving replica weapons is scheduled and completed.
 - b. Mandatory safety training for all personnel handling or in proximity to replica weapons is scheduled and conducted.
2. Department of Theatre, Dance & Performance (TDP) designate contacts Security Services and the Manager, Facilities, Health & Safety, and Technical Services to gain permission to use the desired weapon on stage. Security Services may require inspection of proposed prop.
3. Once approval is granted, the prop is transported in a locked case to and from campus. (Dept. of TDP will provide a case if necessary). The replica weapon is to be kept in a locked

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case at all times when not in use. It will be stored in a locked room in the locked case at all times when not in use for the show.

4. Director or show manager informs Security Services once the replica weapon is on campus.
5. The prop should only remain on-campus for the required period of rehearsal and show calls (unless it is owned by the department, in which case it is locked in the department armory between uses).
6. Maintain care, custody and control of the replica weapon/container at all times, never leaving unattended. This must be outlined in a document that indicates duty of care for storage between uses, including when the replica weapon is transported in a locked case to the use and how it is to be secured before and after the use on stage. The weapon must be secured and maintained by a designated armourer before and after use in a secure and reasonable manner to ensure:
 - a. the security required is not diminished,
 - b. and the artistic integrity of the show is not overly hindered.
 - c. Never let anyone (other than those associated with the use of) see or handle under any circumstances.
7. A schedule of use, all specific safe handling methods and training regimen for all in contact and in the proximity of the use of the prop, must be shared with Security, the AMPD Manager, Facilities, Health & Safety, and Technical Services, and the Department of TDP.
8. While the replica is in use, signs must be posted to advise the public of their use and all windows must be covered up to help ensure casual observance of the weapon's use does not result in panic by a passerby.

Security and Access:

1. Long term storage of starter's pistol is in the Department of Theatre Armory lock-up.
2. A schedule of safe handling and use must be created to clearly outline duty of care for a given show.

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3. All choreography using a replica weapon must be blocked or developed by a recognized expert in fight choreography. This designate will help develop the specific safe handling protocol for a given show. Note: this does not apply to prop toys only replicas.

PROCESS STEPS

For CMA Film Shoot Use

This SOP applies to all cast, crew, and faculty and staff involved in a film shoot where replica weapons are used.

1. The student director or student cinematographer/DoP must make the request to their faculty supervisor/course director to determine scope and feasibility.
 - a. A thorough risk assessment for scenes, travel and storage involving replica weapons is scheduled and completed.
 - b. Mandatory safety training for all personnel handling or in proximity to replica weapons is scheduled and conducted.
2. If the Faculty Supervisor is satisfied, they contact Security Services and the Manager, Facilities, Health & Safety, and Technical Services to gain permission to use the desired weapon with details of dates, times, locations, type of replica, handling and storage provisions as provided by the student production manager. Security Services may require inspection of proposed prop.
3. Once approvals are granted, the replica is transported in a locked case to and from campus. When not in use, the replica prop is to be kept in a locked case at all times. If the replica is of such a size that it will not fit into a case, other alternatives will be required e.g. wrapped moving blankets etc.
4. The replica weapon should only remain on-campus for the required day of filming.
5. Maintain care, custody and control of the prop/container at all times (i.e. do not leave laying around unattended).
6. Filming using the replica must be done in a secure area (such as a studio) and be properly supervised at all times.

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- a. A TUUS application will be required and use of a replica weapon noted, where the location of the filming cannot be secured e.g. in public area such as a stairwell, hallway, building lobby, then a more rigorous security protocol will need to be established, which may include the hire (at the students expense) and placement of either York University Security Officials and/or Toronto Police. This is to be determined by Campus Safety.

- 7. Notify the Campus Security when the filming is taking place, so they can be prepared for any potential calls from the community expressing concern.

- 8. Ensure those involved in the filming (other actors, production staff or students in the area) are aware of its use and presence. Signage may be required if there is a chance that someone external to the group involved in the filming could inadvertently come into contact with it (i.e. student wanders into the studio without knowledge that filming is taking place).

- 9. It is recommended that gunshot sounds be added during post-production.

- 10. Notify Security Control when the filming is complete.

Resources

York University Firearms & Weapons Policy and Procedures

<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/firearms-and-weapons-policy/>
<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/firearms-and-weapons-procedure/>

City of Toronto: Plan Your Shoot - Use of Special effects Firearms Explosive Devices and Flammable Liquids

<https://www.toronto.ca/business-economy/industry-sector-support/film/plan-your-shoot/>

Canadian Actors' Equity Association: RAPIER WIT'S BEST PRACTICES – FIREARMS AND PROHIBITED DEVICES

<https://www.caesa.com/Portals/0/Documents/Governance/Stage%20Management%20Resources/RapierWitFirearmBestPractices.pdf?ver=2018-07-31-113835-703>

Government of Ontario: Guideline No. 39: Firearms Safety Guideline for the Film and Television Industry in Ontario

https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/filmguide/gl_39.php
<https://www.filmsafety.ca/>

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Canadian Restricted Firearms Safety Course: Firearms Safety Document which contains ACTS-Exerpts from The Canadian Restricted Firearms Course Booklet

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/CRFSCmanualV2.pdf>

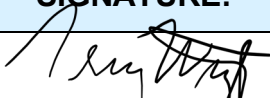
Government of Canada: Firearms Act (S.C. 1995, c. 39)

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/f-11.6/>

PREPARED BY:

NAME	JOB TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
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APPROVALS:

VERSION #	APPROVED BY: (Name/Title)	SIGNATURE:	DATE:
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