



Chan Centre Production Dept.

Blank-Firing and Replica Firearms/Weapons Props Handling Policy

The Chan Centre's Policy for the use of these items as props for performances or events anywhere within the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts is based on commonly accepted professional practice in the live theatre, movie, television, and video industries. Please consult the Chan Centre Production Department for specific enquiries; we will be happy to explain these rules in detail.

Definitions:

Designated Weapons Handler – A member or members of the crew of your show who are given the authority by your Producer or Technical Director to be the individual(s) responsible for the weapons. They should be the only persons handling the weapons other than the performers who use them. The Handler(s) must be designated in writing in advance to the Chan Centre and be fully aware of applicable federal, provincial, and local regulations with respect to the weapons; and be in possession of such valid training and permits as are required. If for any reason the Designated Handler is changed, the Chan Centre must be informed.

Replica Firearms – “means any device that looks exactly or almost exactly like a firearm, but is not a firearm. Most replicas cannot discharge projectiles at all, or discharge only harmless projectiles. Devices that discharge projectiles that can cause serious bodily injury are not replicas.”

Rules for Handling Blank-Firing Stage Weapons:

1. No functional firearms may be brought into The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts.
2. No ammunition other than commercially-manufactured blank may be brought into The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts.
3. You are responsible for being fully aware of all pertinent legislation and regulations, and in possession of such valid permits as are needed to legally hold, transport, and utilize these devices.
4. Blank ammunition may be handled **only** by your Designated Weapons Handlers.
5. Blank-firing weapons may be handled **only** by your Designated Weapons Handlers and Performers using the props in their performance. All must be appropriately trained in safe handling procedures.
6. Weapons must **never** be visible to members of the public except when in actual use on the stage. **This is very important.**
7. Blank-firing weapons must be handled and stored as though they are real functional firearms. This means:
 - a) A trigger lock must be used when prop not immediately in use.
 - b) Transportation in an appropriate locked box. If left in a vehicle it must be locked in the trunk.
 - c) Storage in a secure, immovable locker backstage when not immediately in use.
 - d) When not in storage, weapon must be handled within a previously specified “chain of responsibility”. This means:
 - i. The Designated Weapons Handler remains the same person throughout a series of rehearsals and performances – the same person should always handle the same weapons in the same fashion each time they are used.
 - ii. When the Designated Weapons Handler removes the weapon from storage, it stays within his/her “immediate supervision” until it is handed to a performer who is about to enter with it.
 - iii. “Immediate supervision” means within ten feet of and in the eyesight of the Designated Weapons Handler. The weapon can’t be left unattended backstage, such as on a props table; don’t turn your back on it. It may be preset on stage, but a crew person (preferably the Handler) should be detailed to watch it when the performance is not in progress.

- iv. Weapon is to be *checked* (for any foreign objects in barrel and breech or anything that might prevent weapon from firing correctly and safely) and loaded by Designated Weapons Handler **only** immediately prior to handing it to performer or presetting on stage.
 - v. Performer to use weapon as directed and return to Designated Weapons Handler as soon as possible after use.
 - vi. Designated Weapons Handler must *check and unload* weapon upon receiving it back from the performer, keeping it in his/her immediate supervision. When the weapon is no longer required it should be returned to the secure storage by the Designated Weapons Handler as soon as possible.
 - vii. Weapons must be handled **as if loaded** at all times.
 - viii. Except when necessary for the performance, weapons must never be pointed in the direction of any person. This should include members of the audience while performer is onstage.
 - ix. **There must be no “horseplay” and no unauthorized handling of such blank-firing firearms properties.**
- e) **Challenge** people in the vicinity of your weapons whom you do not recognize to be associated with your production and may not have a valid reason to be there.

Replica Firearms and Other Weapons Props

For “Replica Firearms” and other Weapons props, the same general concepts apply as for blank-firing firearms, with certain exceptions. Other Weapons props should be considered to be items such as cross- and long-bows, swords, machetes, axes, etc. The general criteria is, “Could the prop cause alarm or panic if you were to walk around in public carrying it?” The idea behind the handling rules is to eliminate the possibility of theft or careless display of the prop causing an incident that could end up involving Emergency Services response or other public disturbance. We must be especially vigilant while working with these props on a University campus.

Rules for Handling of Replica Firearms and other Weapons Props:

1. Weapons Handlers must be designated in advance to be responsible at all times for the weapons props.
2. Storage and “chain of responsibility” should be the at the same level as for blank-firing firearms, omitting issues of ammunition and “checking” as described above.
 - a) Storage must be in a secure locker backstage when not immediately in use.
 - b) The weapons should be handled only by Designated Weapons Handler when taken from storage, and kept in “immediate supervision” until given to the performer before entering, or preset on stage.
 - i. “Immediate supervision” means within ten feet of and in the eyesight of the Designated Weapons Handler. The weapon shouldn’t be left unattended backstage, such as on a props table; don’t turn your back on it. It may be preset on stage, but a crew person (preferably the Handler) should be detailed to watch it when the performance is not in progress.
 - ii. Remember -- there is always the possibility of a stranger entering your backstage area looking for opportunities. Weapons props left unattended are prime targets for theft.
 - c) Performer to use weapon as directed and return to Designated Weapons Handler as soon as possible after use.
 - d) When the weapon is no longer required, it should be returned to the secure storage by the Designated Weapons Handler as soon as is practical.
 - e) Except when necessary for the performance, replica firearms should never be pointed in the direction of any person. This should include members of the audience while performer is onstage.

- f) **There must be no “horseplay” and no unauthorized handling of such replica firearms or weapons properties.**
- g) **Challenge** people in the vicinity of your weapons whom you do not recognize to be associated with your production and may not have a valid reason to be there.

Following this section is an excerpt from the Canadian Firearms Centre’s information bulleting regarding Replica Firearms. This information is included for your reference and defines the nature of a “replica firearm” and the requirements for possession and storage of these devices under the regulation.

Replica Firearms

(excerpt from Canadian Firearms Centre bulletin)

This fact sheet is of interest to you if you have any device that:

Looks exactly (or almost exactly) like a firearm, but is not a firearm; and, cannot discharge projectiles at all, or discharge only harmless projectiles.

Devices that discharge projectiles that can cause serious bodily injury, such as the penetration of an eye, are not replicas.

General Prohibition

Under Part III of the Criminal Code, a replica firearm, except for a replica of an antique firearms, is considered a prohibited device. This means that as of December 1, 1998 the import, manufacture and sale of replica firearms is illegal (except under certain regulated circumstances).

The prohibition of replica firearms is aimed at precision models made of wood, metals or moulded rubber that are made to look identical to the firearm they represent.

Exceptions to General Prohibition

Not all imitation firearms are prohibited as replicas. Replicas of antique firearms are allowed. So are most toy guns for the simple reason that they are now usually made of plastic and produced in bright colours, or have some other characteristic such as size that distinguishes them from real firearms.

Individuals

You can keep any replica firearms that you owned on December 1, 1998, when the Firearms Act came into effect. You are not required to get a firearms license nor are you required to register your replicas.

When you transport your replica firearms, you must ensure that: they are securely locked in a trunk or compartment (if possible), and if the vehicle does not have a lockable trunk or compartment, the replica firearms must not be visible from outside the vehicle and the vehicle, or the part of the vehicle that contains the replicas, must be securely locked.

Note: If you transport your replica firearms out of Canada for any reason, you will be prohibited from bringing them back again.

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Businesses

To get a firearms license authorizing it to possess replica firearms, a business must show that it needs to possess them for a "prescribed purpose"; for example, display in a museum or use in movie, television, video and theatrical productions.

Storing Replica Firearms

If you are an individual who possesses a replica firearm as of December 1, 1998, the Firearms Act and regulations do not set out any specific storage requirements.

If you are a business licensed to possess replica firearms, you must ensure that they are stored: either in a vault, safe or room that has been specifically constructed or modified for the replica's secure storage and that is kept securely locked, and on premises where there is an electronic burglar alarm system and every window that can be opened, and every exterior door, can be securely locked, or under security measures that are equal or superior to those set out above and that are approved in writing by the Chief Firearms Officer who issued a license to your business.

Lending and Borrowing Replica Firearms

The Firearms Act and its regulations allows replica firearms to be temporarily given to certain individuals who do not have a license; for example, Canadian Firearms Safety Course instructors and people in the motion picture, television, video, theatrical, and publishing industries. Records, including the quantity and a description of the replicas, must be kept by both lenders and borrowers.

For more information, or to order a copy of the Firearms Act, its regulations, application forms and other CFC publications, contact us at:

1 800 731-4000 (Toll Free)

e-mail: cfc-cafc@cfc-cafc.gc.ca

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