

# George Ranch

## WEAPONS POLICY 2024

The George Ranch lays out the following weapon guidelines to ensure a safe and secure environment for re-enactors and visitors. We ask that each participating re-enactor sign this document as acknowledgement that you have read, understand and agree to abide by the following safety regulations. **Each Company will appoint a designated Safety Officer to ensure general and weapons safety.**

### TEXIAN AND CIVIL WAR:

#### **Camp Safety:**

- Firearms must remain unloaded and secured at all times while in camp.
- No weapons are to be discharged within camp boundaries with the exception of weapons inspection under supervision of the unit safety officer or commanding officer and approved demonstrations in designated safe zones.
- Re-enactors should not allow visitors to handle their weapons without direct supervision. Re-enactors should strive to keep one guiding hand on the weapon at all times if they choose to let a guest hold their weapon for a short period of time. Guests should NEVER be allowed to fire a weapon.
- If the firearm is not in direct possession of a re-enactor it must be safeguarded with measures such as locked in a lock box, under guard in camp or rendered inoperable.
- Firearms will be inspected at the start of the day and must be in a clean, safe and serviceable manner.
- Mounted personnel are not authorized to travel through the camps. If, for some reason, this cannot be avoided, the mounted soldier should dismount and lead his mount until clear of the camp.
- NO black powder weapons of any kind will be carried or fired by any participant less than 16 years of age. Participants 16-18 years old must have parental supervision.

#### **Weapons Safety:**

- No live ammunition will be allowed at reenactment sites.
- Black powder is the only acceptable cartridge item and all cartridges will be checked to ensure that other items are not present. The following restrictions apply to ALL cartridges:
  - The amount of powder used in a cartridge may not exceed the prescribed load for that caliber of weapon. (For example: .45-.50 caliber – 70 grains; .54-.62 caliber – 80 grains; .69-.75 caliber – 120 grains, slightly more may be added for flint-lock priming. All cartridges are subject to inspection.
  - Only FFG or FFFG black powder will be used - NO Pyrodex. NOFFFFG (4F) powder will be used except for priming.
  - Cartridges must be made with period construction materials. No penny wrappers, staples, wads, or tape may be used in cartridge construction.
  - All cartridges should be made up prior to the event. In the case of a prolonged event or unexpected firing activities, cartridges may be made at a designated safety area only, not in camp or near exposed flames or visitor's cigarettes. No staples will be used in any cartridge. Nails, vent picks, etc. should be kept out of the cartridge box to avoid accidentally dropping any of these objects into a muzzle.
  - Powder will only be carried in the form of cartridges.
  - Ramrods are drawn only in camp for weapons inspection and weapon cleaning.
  - NO black powder weapons of any kind will be carried or fired by any participant less than 16 years of age. Participants 16-18 years old must have parental supervision. Children under age 13 are not permitted on the field during the reenactments.
  - NO non-period weapons.
  - NO non-combatant weapons.
  - Side arms are to be carried ONLY by officers and cavalry (mounted or dismounted) in civil war reenactments. Different rules may apply for other historical time periods.
  - Cartridges will not be carried anywhere on the person except in a hard cartridge box unless they are securely wrapped in tin foil and carried in a secure location.

## Battle Safety:

- Unit formations will be held prior to each battle, where weapons, accessories and cartridges will be inspected. Those failing this inspection will not be allowed to carry the failing firearms onto the field.
- A full safety inspection should be held by each unit commander prior to the event.
- Each unit commander is responsible for the conduct of his men (this includes women and children). The commander is responsible to make sure that his personnel and those assigned to him are aware of the safety rules and that they understand and abide by them.
- Bayonets are not to be fixed on the field unless given prior approval by the Site Contact. Scabbards must have appropriate tips.
- NO edged weapon or tomahawk should be carried onto the field without an edge guard or scabbard. Edged weapons are not to be drawn on the field unless given prior approval from the safety officer and the site manager.
- No weapons are to be discharged within 25 yards of the “enemy”; remember to always elevate when firing.
- No tampions taken to the field. Ramrods can be carried but are not to be drawn on the field and used under any circumstance. If ramrods are drawn, you will be asked to give up your weapon.

## Horses:

- ALL equestrian issues will fall under the purview of the appropriate Commanders and their Cavalry commander to include Cavalry, Staff, Mounted Artillery and Civilian.
- ALL horses brought to the site are required to have a current Coggins certificate.
- Horses should be trained to gunfire and battle BEFORE THE EVENT. Do not bring untrained horses to the event.
- Horses WILL NOT be ridden or led through the infantry camps, artillery camps, and sutler areas or in spectator areas.
- All horses will be dismounted prior to entering any authorized camp area and led to the designated picket area. With the exception of designated combat areas, absolutely no mounted individual will allow a horse to enter a camp area above the gait of a controlled walk.
- No person under the age of 16 will mount a horse as a combatant or serve in a mounted capacity. Determination of a qualified rider will be made by the respective Cavalry Commander or Site Contact.
- Horses will be ridden on event grounds only by troopers or staff. Spectators, children, and visitors will absolutely not be allowed to mount any horse.
- Period civilians wishing to portray a mounted impression will apply to the appropriate Cavalry Commander who will then determine the qualifications of the rider(s) and will also determine when and where they may ride. Mounted cavalry escort may be required at the discretion of the Cavalry Commander. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Violators will be expelled from the event.
- Stallions will not be permitted on the event site.

## WORLD WAR II:

- The George Ranch lays out the following weapon guidelines to ensure a safe and secure environment for re-enactors and visitors. We ask that each participating re-enactor sign this document as acknowledgement that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by the following safety regulations. **Each Company will appoint a designated Safety Officer to ensure general and weapons safety.**

## Firearms Rules:

- **There will be NO LIVE AMMUNITION at The George Ranch.**
- All ammunition will be inspected before display or demonstrations by each top commander/Safety Officer of each group.
- All firearms will be inspected for safety violations.
- At all times, firearms are to be secured by the reenactors and under no circumstances will the public be allowed to handle, pick up, or use a re-enactors firearm or other weapon.
- Reenactors will not leave their firearms where someone from the public may pick them up.
- All firearms and blank ammunition not in use will always be placed in a safe and secure area.
- Blank ammunition will not be loaded except by prior approval of the Safety Officer/Supervisor and only in the “safe zone” designated by site staff.

- Extreme care will be taken to see that demonstration firing of blanks will be done in a controlled “safe zone” and in a safe direction.
- At no time will pistols be loaded or drawn without the Safety Officer or Safety Supervisor’s approval.
- At no time will a reenactor aim at another person. They will always aim to the side when working in a skit or reenactment. At no time will a weapon, loaded or unloaded, be aimed at a visitor.
- There is a 20-yard rule in effect. If a person you are shooting at is closer that distance, there is a chance of injury.
- The only ammunition that the public will be allowed to touch will be the “movie props,” and the Safety Officer must inspect them beforehand.
- When pistols are used, care will be taken to see that there is nobody standing within 20 feet to the side of the cylinder where injury could happen.
- When not on a firing demonstration, all pistols are to be kept in the holster with the flap or tie down in the lock position unless on display. The pistol will be always under the direct control of the exhibitor and kept where visitors cannot handle the weapon.
- Cannon black powder will be kept in a locked and guarded container. There will be no smoking in the area where the black powder is stored or used.
- Empty brass from expended blanks will be retrieved by the commander for disposal after firing demonstrations.
- A “fire in the hole” or Test Fire call will be made to visitors and participants when firing any weapons, or pyrotechnics.

### **ARTILLERY:**

- Artillery is defined as any form of cannon, howitzer, mortar, or other firearm whose original (full-size) bore is greater than 1.5 inches.
- All artillery pieces and units must preregister with the Event Coordinator prior to the event and arrival on site. Artillery pieces must have a minimum crew of three persons to fire. When possible the larger guns should have a crew of six. The need for a larger crew will be determined jointly by the Battery Commander and the Safety Officer
- All artillery must have the required equipment on site to assure it is in a safe condition prior to firing. Improperly equipped or unsafe artillery (inspected by the Safety Officer, Event Coordinator, and Artillery Commander) will be removed from event. Required equipment includes red flags, water buckets, and the proper loading and unloading tools for the artillery piece.
- No projectile of any kind is to be fired on site property at any time. Wadding may only be fired in weapons which require it to operate and with the express permission of the Event Coordinator.
- Charges will consist of no more than two (2) ounces of cannon powder per inch of bore. Charges will be inspected prior to each event by the Artillery Commander and the Safety Officer jointly.
- The artillery ammunition box will be placed 25 feet to the rear of the respective cannon and a minimum of 25 feet from the spectator's line. The lid hinge must be nearest the cannon and the opening will be away from the artillery piece. The artillery ammunition box is to be constantly manned whenever unlocked. When the box is not in use it is to be removed from the field and placed in a secure location. Ammunition boxes must be fitted with self-closing lids. Lids may not be fitted with any type of hold-open device nor may they be propped open by any external means, such as a stick, branch, etc. Boxes will be labeled to prevent mixing of different types of ammo.
- Artillery powder charges are to be kept in individual safety containers within the ammunition box or a designated safety area approved by the Event Coordinator. When ready to transport a charge from the ammunition box or safety area to the cannon breach each charge must be removed from the safety container and handled by only qualified crew members. The charges are then carried to the cannon and prepared for the demonstration.
- The safe placement of artillery is the joint responsibility of the Artillery Commanders, Safety Officers, and the Event Coordinator.
- Artillery batteries will place range markers at 75 feet down range and 50 feet wide, forming a safety box to mark the no-fire zone for non-artillery crew reenactors and the public. The type of range marker used may be determined by the Event Coordinator. Battery Commanders, Safety Officers, and the Event Coordinator will jointly inspect for the location of the range markers and any necessary crowd control personnel before a gun will be allowed to fire.
- Crowds should also be kept back a minimum of 50 feet behind each cannon. Artillery will not be fired towards a building unless the building is in excess of 100 feet away. All artillery should be fired at more than a 45-degree angle to historical buildings or site property. At no time will artillery be aimed at a parking lot or any other public areas where there will be people.

- There must be a minimum distance of 20 feet, hub to hub, between artillery pieces. The rate of fire for artillery pieces will not exceed one round per 3 minutes while on site at the event.
- Rope barriers should be placed at 75 feet down range and 50 feet wide on spectator sides and monitoring personnel should be used to assure crowd control as possible, if at any time ropes are not available, event staff, members of WWII ABN Command, or Law Enforcement may be used in its place. At the end of each firing demonstration the Safety Officer and Artillery Commander will inspect guns to assure that they are not loaded and in safe condition.
- The Event Coordinator may add to these restrictions of these rules at any time.

**Additional Guidelines:**

- NO PETS will be allowed at this event under any circumstances. Only service animals are permitted.
- All re-enactors must meet accepted standards for authenticity. In case of dispute, all decisions will be made by the respective commanders in coordination with the appropriate TGR Representative.

Please sign below as acknowledgement that you have read and agree to abide by the following policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (as legally signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Company/Regiment

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coggins Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Blood Drawn