

Shooting ranges present a variety of risks for law enforcement agencies and their employees. Common sources of claims include trips and falls, injuries from ricochets (such as contusions or lacerations), and long-term exposure to lead, dust, and high noise levels. More serious incidents can occur due to inadequate security, poor access control, or lack of proper supervision. Agencies can significantly reduce these risks by following key shooting range safety fundamentals outlined below.

1

Facility Considerations: Outdoor ranges should be secured with complete perimeter fencing and strict access control to limit unauthorized entry. Protective berms must be properly designed and positioned to safely contain projectiles based on surrounding conditions. The National Rifle Association (NRA) Range Source Book provides detailed guidance for these considerations.

2

Operational Controls: Safety rules should be clearly posted and reviewed during every training session to reinforce expectations. Only authorized ammunition appropriate for the range design should be used, and agencies should maintain sign-in records and track rounds fired to support accountability and timely range maintenance.

3

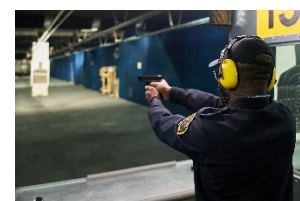
Participant Safety: Each training session should begin with a safety briefing and be supervised by a qualified firearms instructor. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including eye and ear protection and proper attire, should be required at all times. Participants should also follow lead exposure prevention practices, including proper hygiene and restrictions on food, drinks, and tobacco use.

4

Engineering and Construction Considerations: Berms and baffles should be designed and maintained to ensure projectiles remain within outdoor range boundaries. Routine inspection and maintenance, including berm cleanout, are essential to minimize ricochet hazards and maintain a safe shooting environment.

5

Environmental and Health Considerations: Indoor ranges must have adequate ventilation systems to reduce airborne contaminants. Agencies should also enforce procedures requiring participants to properly remove lead residue before leaving the range to minimize health risks. Eating and drinking should be prohibited to prevent the accidental ingestion of lead and other toxic residues that can settle on hands, food, and surfaces during shooting activities.



LEARN MORE WITH THESE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

1. [The NRA Range Source Book \(paid resource\)](#)
2. [OSHA Quick Card – Protecting Employees from Lead and Indoor Firing Ranges:](#)
3. [EPA Lead Best Practices](#)
4. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) – Lead Exposure Resources](#)
5. [NSSF | The Firearm Industry Trade Association](#)