

COMPENDIUM OF STATE LAWS GOVERNING FIREARMS



NRA-ILA

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The following chart lists the main provisions of state firearms laws as of the date of publication. In addition to the state provisions, the purchase, sale, and, in certain circumstances, the possession and interstate transportation of firearms are regulated by the Federal Gun Control Act of 1968 as amended by the Firearms Owners' Protection Act of 1986. Also, cities and localities may have their own gun ordinances in addition to federal and state restrictions. Details may be obtained by contacting local law enforcement authorities or by consulting your state's firearms law digest compiled by the NRA Institute for Legislative Action.

STATE	GUN BAN	EXEMPTIONS TO NICS ₂	STATE WAITING PERIOD - NUMBER OF DAYS		LICENSE OR PERMIT TO PURCHASE or other prerequisite		REGISTRATION		RECORD OF SALE REPORTED TO STATE OR LOCAL GOVT.
			HANDGUNS	LONG GUNS	HANDGUNS	LONG GUNS	HANDGUNS	LONG GUNS	
Alabama	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Alaska	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arizona	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arkansas	—	RTC ₃	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
California	X ₁	—	10 ₅	10 _{5,6}	X _{10,11}	—	X ₁₂	X ₁₃	X
Colorado	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Connecticut	X ₁	—	14 _{5,6}	14 _{5,6}	X _{9,11}	—	—	X ₁₃	X
Delaware	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Florida	—	—	3 ₆	—	—	—	—	—	—
Georgia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hawaii	X ₁	L, RTC	—	—	X _{9,11}	X ₉	X ₁₂	X ₁₂	X
Idaho	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Illinois	1,7	—	3	2	X ₉	X ₉	X ₁₄	X ₁₄	X
Indiana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Iowa	—	L, RTC	—	—	X ₉	—	—	—	—
Kansas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kentucky	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Louisiana	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Maine	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Maryland	X ₁	—	7 ₅	7 _{4,5}	X _{10,11}	—	—	—	X
Massachusetts	X ₁	—	—	—	X ₉	X ₉	—	—	X
Michigan	—	L	—	—	X _{9,11}	—	X	—	X
Minnesota	—	—	7 ₉	X ₉	X ₉	X ₉	—	—	—
Mississippi	—	RTC ₃	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Missouri	—	—	—	—	X ₉	—	—	—	X
Montana	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nebraska	—	L	—	—	X	—	—	—	—
Nevada	—	RTC	7	—	—	—	X ₇	X ₇	—
New Hampshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
New Jersey	X ₁	—	—	—	X ₉	X ₉	—	X ₁₃	X
New Mexico	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
New York	X ₁	L, RTC	—	—	X _{9,11}	X ₉	X	X ₁₅	X
North Carolina	—	L, RTC	—	—	X ₉	—	—	—	X
North Dakota	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ohio	7	—	7	—	X ₇	—	X ₇	—	7
Oklahoma	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Oregon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
Pennsylvania	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
Rhode Island	—	—	7 ₅	7 ₅	X ₁₁	—	—	—	X
South Carolina	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	X
South Dakota	—	—	2 ₆	—	—	—	—	—	X ₁₆
Tennessee	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Texas	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Utah	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vermont	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Virginia	X ₁	—	—	—	X ₁₀	—	—	—	—
Washington	—	—	5 ₈	—	—	—	—	—	X
West Virginia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wisconsin	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wyoming	—	RTC	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
District of Columbia	X ₁	—	—	—	X ₉	X ₉	X ₉	X	X

Since state laws are subject to frequent change, this chart is not to be considered legal advice or a restatement of the law.

All fifty states have sportsmen's protections laws to halt harassment.

STATE	STATE PROVISION FOR RIGHT-TO-CARRY CONCEALED	CARRYING OPENLY PROHIBITED	OWNER ID CARDS OR LICENSING	FIREARM RIGHTS CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION	STATE FIREARMS PREEMPTION LAWS	RANGE PROTECTION LAW
Alabama	M	X ₁₉	—	X	X	X
Alaska	R ₁₇	—	—	X	X	X
Arizona	R	—	—	X	X	X
Arkansas	R	X ₂₀	—	X	X	X
California	L	X ₂₁	—	—	X	X
Colorado	R	X ₂₂	—	X	X ₂₂	X
Connecticut	M	X	—	X	X ₂₄	X
Delaware	L	—	—	X	X	X
Florida	R	X	—	X	X	X
Georgia	R	X	—	X	X	X
Hawaii	L	X	X	X	—	—
Idaho	R	—	—	X	X	X
Illinois	D	X	X	X	—	X
Indiana	R	X	—	X	X ₂₅	X
Iowa	M	X	—	—	X	X
Kansas	R	—	—	X	X	X
Kentucky	R	—	—	X	X	X
Louisiana	R	—	—	X	X	X
Maine	R	—	—	X	X	X
Maryland	L	X	—	—	X	X
Massachusetts	L	X	X	X	X ₂₄	X
Michigan	R	X ₁₉	—	X	X	X
Minnesota	R	X	—	—	X	—
Mississippi	R	—	—	X	X	X
Missouri	R	—	—	X	X	X
Montana	R	—	—	X	X	X
Nebraska	R	—	—	X	—	—
Nevada	R	—	—	X	X	X
New Hampshire	R	—	—	X	X	X
New Jersey	L	X	X	—	X ₂₄	X
New Mexico	R	—	—	X	X	X
New York	L	X	X	—	X ₂₄	X
North Carolina	R	—	—	X	X	X
North Dakota	R	X ₂₁	—	X	X	X
Ohio	R	—	—	X	X	X
Oklahoma	R	X ₂₁	—	X	X	X
Oregon	R	—	—	X	X	X
Pennsylvania	R	X ₁₉	—	X	X	X
Rhode Island	L	X	—	X	X	X
South Carolina	R	X	—	X	X	X
South Dakota	R	—	—	X	X	X
Tennessee	R	X ₂₀	—	X	X	X
Texas	R	X	—	X	X	X
Utah	R	X ₂₁	—	X	X	X
Vermont	R ₁₇	X ₂₀	—	X	X	X
Virginia	R	—	—	X	X	X
Washington	R	X ₂₃	—	X	X	—
West Virginia	R	—	—	X	X	X
Wisconsin	D	—	—	X	X	X
Wyoming	R	—	—	X	X	X
District of Columbia	D	X	X	NA	—	—

With over 20,000 "gun control" laws on the books in America, there are two challenges facing every gun owner. First, you owe it to yourself to become familiar with the federal laws on gun ownership. Only by knowing the laws can you avoid innocently breaking one.

Second, while federal legislation receives much more media attention, state legislatures and city councils make many more decisions regarding your right to own and carry firearms. NRA members and all gun owners must take extra care to be aware of anti-gun laws and ordinances at the state and local levels.

Notes:

1. "Assault weapons" are prohibited in **Connecticut, New Jersey** and **New York**. Some local jurisdictions in **Ohio** also ban "assault weapons." **Hawaii** prohibits "assault pistols." **California** bans "assault weapons", .50BMG caliber firearms, some .50 caliber ammunition and "unsafe handguns." **Illinois**: Chicago, Evanston, Oak Park, Morton Grove, Winnetka, Wilmette, and Highland Park prohibit handguns; some cities prohibit other kinds of firearms. **Maryland** prohibits "assault pistols"; the sale or manufacture of any handgun manufactured after Jan. 1, 1985, that does not appear on the Handgun Roster; and the sale of any handgun manufactured after January 1, 2003 that is not equipped with an "integrated mechanical safety device." **Massachusetts**: It is unlawful to sell, transfer or possess "any assault weapon or large capacity feeding device" [more than 10 rounds] that was not legally possessed on September 13, 1994 and the sale of handguns not on the Firearms Roster. The City of Boston has a separate "assault weapons" law. The **District of Columbia** prohibits new acquisition of handguns and any semi-automatic firearm capable of using a detachable ammunition magazine of more than 12 rounds capacity and any handgun not registered after February 5, 1977. **Virginia** prohibits "Street Sweeper" shotguns. (With respect to some of these laws and ordinances, individuals may retain prohibited firearms owned previously, with certain restrictions.) *The sunset of the federal assault weapons ban does not affect the validity of state and local "assault weapons" bans.*
 2. **National Instant Check System (NICS) exemption codes:**
RTC-Carry Permit Holders Exempt From NICS
L-Holders of state licenses to possess or purchase or firearms ID cards exempt from NICS.
 3. **NICS exemption notes:** **Arkansas**: Those issued on and after 4/1/99 qualify. **Mississippi**: Permits issued to security guards do not qualify. **North Dakota**: Those issued on or after 12/1/1999 qualify.
 4. **Maryland** subjects purchases of "assault weapons" to a 7-day waiting period.
 5. Waiting period for all sales. **California**: 10 days; sales, transfers and loans of handguns must be made through a dealer or through a sheriff's office. **Maryland**: 7 days; purchasers of regulated firearms must undergo background checks performed by the State Police, either through a dealer or directly through the State Police. **Rhode Island**: 7 days; private sales can be made through a dealer or the seller must follow the same guidelines as a sale from a dealer.
 6. The waiting period does not apply to a person holding a valid permit or license to carry a firearm. In **Connecticut**, a certificate of eligibility exempts the holder from the waiting period for handgun purchases; a hunting license exempts the holder for long gun purchasers. **California**: transfers of a long gun to a person's parent, child or grandparent are exempt from the waiting period.
 7. In certain cities or counties.
 8. May be extended by police to 30 days in some circumstances. An individual not holding a driver's license must wait 60 days.
 9. **Connecticut**: A certificate of eligibility or a carry permit is required to obtain a handgun and a carry permit is required to transport a handgun outside your home. **District of Columbia**: No handgun may be possessed unless it was registered prior to Sept. 23, 1976 and re-registered by Feb. 5, 1977. A permit to purchase is required for a rifle or shotgun. **Hawaii**: Purchase permits are required for all firearms. **Illinois**: A Firearm Owner's Identification Card (FOI) is required to possess or purchase a firearm, must be issued to qualified applicants within 30 days, and is valid for 5 years. **Iowa**: A purchase permit is required for handguns, and is valid for one year. **Massachusetts**: Firearms and feeding devices for firearms are divided into classes. Depending on the class, a firearm identification card (FID) or class A license or class B license is required to possess, purchase, or carry a firearm, ammunition thereof, or firearm feeding device, or "large capacity feeding device." **Michigan**: A handgun purchaser must obtain a license to purchase from local law enforcement, and within 10 days present the license and handgun to obtain a certificate of inspection. **Minnesota**: A handgun transfer or carrying permit, or a 7-day waiting period and handgun transfer report, is required to purchase handguns or "assault weapons" from a dealer. A permit is valid for one year, a transfer report for 30 days. **Missouri**: A purchase permit is required for a handgun, must be issued to qualified applicants within 7 days, and is valid for 30 days. **New Jersey**: Firearm owners must possess a FID, which must be issued to qualified applicants within 30 days. To purchase a handgun, a purchase permit, which must be issued within 30 days to qualified applicants and is valid for 90 days, is required. An FID is required to purchase long guns. **New York**: Purchase, possession and/or carrying of a handgun require a single license, which includes any restrictions made upon the bearer. New York City also requires a license for long guns. **North Carolina**: To purchase a handgun, a license or permit is required, which must be issued to qualified applicants within 30 days. Persons with a Right-to-Carry license are exempt.
 10. A permit is required to acquire another handgun before 30 days have elapsed following the acquisition of a handgun. In **Virginia**, those with a permit to carry a concealed weapon are exempt from this prohibition.
 11. Requires proof of safety training for purchase. **California**: Must have Handgun Safety Certificate receipt, which is valid for five years. **Connecticut**: To receive certificate of eligibility, must complete a handgun safety course approved by the Commissioner of Public Safety. **Hawaii**: Must have completed an approved handgun safety course. **Maryland**: Must complete an approved handgun safety course. **Michigan**: A person must correctly answer 70% of the questions on a basic safety review questionnaire in order to obtain a license to purchase. **New York**: Some counties require a handgun safety training course to receive a license. **Rhode Island**: Must receive a state-issued handgun safety card.
 12. Every person arriving in **Hawaii** is required to register any firearm(s) brought into the State within 3 days of arrival of the person or firearm(s), whichever occurs later. Handguns purchased from licensed dealers must be registered within 5 days. California is sixty days.
 13. "Assault weapon" registration. **California** had two dates by which assault weapons had to be registered or possession after such date would be considered a felony: March 31, 1992 for the named make and model firearms banned in the 1989 legislation and December 31, 2000 for the firearms meeting the definition of the "assault weapons in the 1999 legislation. In **Connecticut**, those firearms banned by specific make and model in the 1993 law had to be registered by October 1, 1994 or possession would be considered a felony. A recent law requires registration of additional guns by October 1, 2003. In **New Jersey**, any "assault weapon" not registered, licensed, or rendered inoperable pursuant to a state police certificate by May 1, 1991, is considered contraband.
 14. Chicago only. No handgun not already registered may be possessed. Must get FOID card after receiving drivers' license.
 15. New York City only.
 16. Purchasers of handguns who do not possess a permit to carry a pistol must file an application for purchase, which will be retained by the chief of police or sheriff for one year. However state law prohibits the establishment of a centralized registry of gun owners.
 17. **Vermont and Alaska** law respect your right to carry without a permit. Alaska also has a permit to carry system to establish reciprocity with other states.
 18. A person with a concealed handgun license may transport a loaded handgun in a vehicle if it is in a holster.
 19. Carrying a handgun openly in a motor vehicle requires a license.
 20. **Arkansas** prohibits carrying a firearm "with a purpose to employ it as a weapon against a person." **Tennessee** prohibits carrying "with the intent to go armed." **Vermont** prohibits carrying a firearm "with the intent or purpose of injuring another."
 21. Loaded.
 22. Municipalities may prohibit open carry in government buildings if such prohibition is clearly posted.
 23. Local jurisdictions may opt of the prohibition.
 24. Preemption through judicial ruling. Local regulation may be instituted in **Massachusetts** if ratified by the legislature.
 25. Except Gary and East Chicago and local laws enacted before January 1994.
 26. Preemption only applies to handguns.
- Concealed carry codes:
- R: Right-to-Carry "Shall issue" or less restrictive discretionary permit system (Ala., Conn.) (See also note #21.)
M: Reasonable May Issue; the state has a permissive may issue law, but the authorities recognize the right to keep and bear arms.
L: Right-to-Carry Limited by local authority's discretion over permit issuance.
D: Right-to-Carry Denied, no permit system exists; concealed carry is prohibited.