OPEN CARRYING OF HANDGUNS

The open carrying of any kind of firearm is prohibited, and no exception is made for permit-holders (except in Georgia and New Hampshire). In most states, it is legal for an individual to openly carry a loaded firearm in public without a permit. However, some states restrict open carry, either by placing few or no restrictions on it (e.g., California, Florida, New York, Illinois), or by requiring a permit or some other restriction (e.g., Texas, South Carolina).

OPEN CARRYING OF LONG GUNS

The open carrying of any kind of firearm is prohibited, and no exception is made for permit-holders (except in Georgia and New Hampshire). In most states, it is legal for an individual to openly carry a loaded firearm in public without a permit. However, some states restrict open carry, either by placing few or no restrictions on it (e.g., California, Florida, New York, Illinois), or by requiring a permit or some other restriction (e.g., Texas, South Carolina).

LOCATION RESTRICTIONS

Fifteen states require some form of license or permit in order to openly carry a handgun. These states include California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, Hawaii, District of Columbia, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. In addition, Virginia and Pennsylvania limit the ability to openly carry long guns in their jurisdictions.

RECENT CASES

Recent examples show that open carry laws can create confusion for law enforcement responding to shootings. In October 2015, a Colorado woman reported a man with a loaded long gun in a Walmart in Denver. Law enforcement struggled to distinguish between people legally carrying guns openly and the gunman who was shooting at victims. In February 2017, a Dallas police officer was shot at with a .45 caliber handgun while responding to a disturbance call. The shooter was wearing a white shirt and jeans, carrying a long gun, and had a Texas concealed carry permit. The shooter was later identified as a Mexican armed criminal who had been deported from the United States.

Researchers have shown that the presence of visible firearms may alter behavior and increase aggressive and violent behavior. For example, studies have shown that visible guns increase the risk of violent confrontations. Guns carried in public pose a danger to the public, and the threat of violence to the public rises alarmingly.

DIFFERENCES BY STATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States that Restrict, But Do Not Prohibit, the Open Carrying of Long Guns</th>
<th>States that Generally Prohibit Open Carrying of Long Guns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Alaska</td>
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<td>Arizona</td>
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SOURCES

1. Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence.