

Q&A ABOUT CONCEALED-WEAPONS LAW (HB 12)

Q. Where do I apply for a permit?

A. At the sheriff's department where you reside or in an adjacent county.

Q. When can I apply?

A. The law goes into effect April 8, but the Ohio Attorney General's office must submit rules governing the permit process within 30 days after that to the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review. Within 30 days of the rules taking effect, the application form, instructional pamphlet and license form must be available to county sheriffs.

Q. Do I have to get a permit before I get training?

A. No. In fact, it's recommended that people get training now.

Q. If I have been trained already, do I have to do it again?

A. No, as long as the training occurred within three years of your application for a permit and it was done by a certified instructor.

Q. How much training do I need?

A. A minimum of 12 hours, including two hours on a firing range.

Q. Can I get certified training or a permit from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources?

A. Only active and retired law enforcement and military personnel can get certified training from the Department of Natural Resources Peace Officer Training School.

Non-military and non-law enforcement can get certified training only from instructors certified by the Ohio Peace Officers Training Commission and the National Rifle Association.

Q. How do I find a licensed instructor?

A. You may contact your local firing range or the National Rifle Association at <http://www.nra.org>, for certified training.

Q. How do I know if someone is certified?

A. Ask to see their certificate.

Q. Is cost of training part of the permit fee?

A. No.

Q. What does the permit cost?

A. The law says up to \$45. However, if a federal criminal history check is made of an applicant who has been an Ohio resident for less than 5 years, the fee can be the actual cost of the federal check, plus up to \$45

Q. Once I start the process, how long before I get my permit?

A. Because they expect a high demand initially, it could take 21 to 28 days, “even if you’re first in line.” At this time next year, the process could take as little as seven days.

Q. What takes so long?

A. In addition to high demand, it takes time to check background, fingerprints, addresses, criminal records and mental competency.

Q. Aren’t mental competency records confidential?

A. The Attorney General’s office and the Buckeye State Sheriffs’ Association are working on how that information can be protected while using it to meet the requirements of the law.

Q. Who keeps all this information and is it public?

A. The county sheriff keeps permit information. Once a permit is issued, supporting documentation, which is not a public record, must be destroyed within 20 days. The permit and the information on it is a public record, which can be accessed by journalists. The Attorney General’s office must keep statistical information about permits. The first report will be issued no later than July 8, 2005.

Q. Do I have to carry the permit with me?

A. Yes, as long as you have the gun with you, either on your person or in your vehicle.

Q. Do I have to tell a police officer I have a concealed weapon?

A. Yes, if you are stopped by an officer, you must announce that a weapon is in the vehicle or on your person. Officials recommend that anyone, with a weapon or not, put their hands on the steering wheel of their vehicle. Do not reach for anything. Doing so may suggest to an officer that you are reaching for a gun.

Q. Should I bring my gun with me when I apply for a permit at the sheriff’s office?

A. No. You cannot carry a gun into a sheriff’s office. Leave it at home or in your vehicle.

Q. Can I carry the gun concealed everywhere else?

A. No. Weapons are prohibited at some locations such as schools and government buildings. Also, local businesses will decide whether to allow guns on their property. And employers will decide whether employees can bring guns to work.

Q. How will I know?

A. Those who prohibit guns must post a sign at the entrance of their facility.

For the full Concealed-Carry Weapons law, go to <http://www.ag.state.oh.us>.