
SENATE BILL 5444

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senator Valdez

1 AN ACT Relating to firearm sensitive places; and reenacting and
2 amending RCW 9.41.300.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 9.41.300 and 2021 c 261 s 1 and 2021 c 215 s 96 are
5 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

6 (1) It is unlawful for any person to enter the following places
7 when he or she knowingly possesses or knowingly has under his or her
8 control a weapon:

9 (a) The restricted access areas of a jail, or of a law
10 enforcement facility, or any place used for the confinement of a
11 person (i) arrested for, charged with, or convicted of an offense,
12 (ii) held for extradition or as a material witness, or (iii)
13 otherwise confined pursuant to an order of a court, except an order
14 under chapter 13.32A or 13.34 RCW. Restricted access areas do not
15 include common areas of egress or ingress open to the general public;

16 (b) Those areas in any building which are used in connection with
17 court proceedings, including courtrooms, jury rooms, judge's
18 chambers, offices and areas used to conduct court business, waiting
19 areas, and corridors adjacent to areas used in connection with court
20 proceedings. The restricted areas do not include common areas of
21 ingress and egress to the building that is used in connection with

1 court proceedings, when it is possible to protect court areas without
2 restricting ingress and egress to the building. The restricted areas
3 shall be the minimum necessary to fulfill the objective of this
4 subsection (1)(b).

5 For purposes of this subsection (1)(b), "weapon" means any
6 firearm, explosive as defined in RCW 70.74.010, or any weapon of the
7 kind usually known as slungshot, sand club, or metal knuckles, or any
8 knife, dagger, dirk, or other similar weapon that is capable of
9 causing death or bodily injury and is commonly used with the intent
10 to cause death or bodily injury.

11 In addition, the local legislative authority shall provide either
12 a stationary locked box sufficient in size for pistols and key to a
13 weapon owner for weapon storage, or shall designate an official to
14 receive weapons for safekeeping, during the owner's visit to
15 restricted areas of the building. The locked box or designated
16 official shall be located within the same building used in connection
17 with court proceedings. The local legislative authority shall be
18 liable for any negligence causing damage to or loss of a weapon
19 either placed in a locked box or left with an official during the
20 owner's visit to restricted areas of the building.

21 The local judicial authority shall designate and clearly mark
22 those areas where weapons are prohibited, and shall post notices at
23 each entrance to the building of the prohibition against weapons in
24 the restricted areas;

25 (c) The restricted access areas of a public mental health
26 facility licensed or certified by the department of health for
27 inpatient hospital care and state institutions for the care of the
28 mentally ill, excluding those facilities solely for evaluation and
29 treatment. Restricted access areas do not include common areas of
30 egress and ingress open to the general public;

31 (d) That portion of an establishment classified by the state
32 liquor and cannabis board as off-limits to persons under 21 years of
33 age; ((~~or~~))

34 (e) The restricted access areas of a commercial service airport
35 designated in the airport security plan approved by the federal
36 transportation security administration, including passenger screening
37 checkpoints at or beyond the point at which a passenger initiates the
38 screening process. These areas do not include airport drives, general
39 parking areas and walkways, and shops and areas of the terminal that
40 are outside the screening checkpoints and that are normally open to

1 unscreened passengers or visitors to the airport. Any restricted
2 access area shall be clearly indicated by prominent signs indicating
3 that firearms and other weapons are prohibited in the area;

4 (f) The premises of a library established or maintained pursuant
5 to the authority of chapter 27.12 RCW;

6 (g) The premises of a zoo or aquarium accredited or certified by
7 the American zoo and aquarium association or a facility with a
8 current signed memorandum of participation with an association of
9 zoos and aquariums species survival plan;

10 (h) The premises of a city's, town's, county's, or other
11 municipality's neighborhood, community, or regional park facilities
12 at which children and youth are likely to be present and at which
13 appropriate signage has been posted notifying the public that weapons
14 are not permitted on the park facility's premises. A city, town,
15 county, or other municipality shall designate the park facilities
16 within its boundaries where children are likely to be present and
17 post appropriate signage at reasonable intervals on the perimeter of
18 the park facility's premises to notify the public that weapons are
19 prohibited within the park facility. Park facilities where children
20 and youth are likely to be present include, but are not limited to,
21 park facilities that have: Playgrounds or children play areas; sports
22 fields, sports courts, or sports facilities; swimming or wading
23 pools; swim beaches or water play areas; teen centers, community
24 centers, or performing arts centers; skateboard parks; or other
25 recreational facilities likely to be used by children or youth;

26 (i) The premises of a transit station or transit facility
27 including all passenger facilities, structures, stops, shelters, bus
28 zones, and other properties that are owned, leased, held, or used by
29 a transit authority for the purpose of providing public
30 transportation services. "Transit authority" means a city transit
31 system under RCW 35.58.2721 or chapter 35.95A RCW, a county public
32 transportation authority under chapter 36.57 RCW, a metropolitan
33 municipal corporation transit system under chapter 36.56 RCW, a
34 public transportation benefit area under chapter 36.57A RCW, an
35 unincorporated transportation benefit area under RCW 36.57.100, a
36 regional transit authority under chapter 81.112 RCW, or any special
37 purpose district formed to operate a public transportation system; or

38 (j) The premises of a state or local public building. A "state or
39 public building" means a building or part of a building owned,
40 leased, held, or used by the governmental entity of a city, town,

1 county, or other municipality or by the state of Washington, if state
2 or local public employees are regularly present for the purposes of
3 performing their official duties and that is not regularly used, and
4 not intended to be used, by state or local employees as a place of
5 residence.

6 (2) (a) Except as provided in (c) of this subsection, it is
7 unlawful for any person to knowingly open carry a firearm or other
8 weapon while knowingly at any permitted demonstration. This
9 subsection (2) (a) applies whether the person carries the firearm or
10 other weapon on his or her person or in a vehicle.

11 (b) It is unlawful for any person to knowingly open carry a
12 firearm or other weapon while knowingly within 250 feet of the
13 perimeter of a permitted demonstration after a duly authorized state
14 or local law enforcement officer advises the person of the permitted
15 demonstration and directs the person to leave until he or she no
16 longer possesses or controls the firearm or other weapon. This
17 subsection (2) (b) does not apply to any person possessing or
18 controlling any firearm or other weapon on private property owned or
19 leased by that person.

20 (c) Duly authorized federal, state, and local law enforcement
21 officers and personnel are exempt from the provisions of this
22 subsection (2) when carrying a firearm or other weapon in conformance
23 with their employing agency's policy. Members of the armed forces of
24 the United States or the state of Washington are exempt from the
25 provisions of this subsection (2) when carrying a firearm or other
26 weapon in the discharge of official duty or traveling to or from
27 official duty.

28 (d) For purposes of this subsection, the following definitions
29 apply:

30 (i) "Permitted demonstration" means either: (A) A gathering for
31 which a permit has been issued by a federal agency, state agency, or
32 local government; or (B) a gathering of 15 or more people who are
33 assembled for a single event at a public place that has been declared
34 as permitted by the chief executive, sheriff, or chief of police of a
35 local government in which the gathering occurs. A "gathering" means a
36 demonstration, march, rally, vigil, sit-in, protest, picketing, or
37 similar public assembly.

38 (ii) "Public place" means any site accessible to the general
39 public for business, entertainment, or another lawful purpose. A
40 "public place" includes, but is not limited to, the front, immediate

1 area, or parking lot of any store, shop, restaurant, tavern, shopping
2 center, or other place of business; any public building, its grounds,
3 or surrounding area; or any public parking lot, street, right-of-way,
4 sidewalk, public park, or other public grounds.

5 (iii) "Weapon" has the same meaning given in subsection (1)(b) of
6 this section.

7 (e) Nothing in this subsection applies to the lawful concealed
8 carry of a firearm by a person who has a valid concealed pistol
9 license.

10 (3) Cities, towns, counties, and other municipalities may enact
11 laws and ordinances:

12 (a) Restricting the discharge of firearms in any portion of their
13 respective jurisdictions where there is a reasonable likelihood that
14 humans, domestic animals, or property will be jeopardized. Such laws
15 and ordinances shall not abridge the right of the individual
16 guaranteed by Article I, section 24 of the state Constitution to bear
17 arms in defense of self or others; and

18 (b) Restricting the possession of firearms in any stadium or
19 convention center, operated by a city, town, county, or other
20 municipality, except that such restrictions shall not apply to:

21 (i) Any pistol in the possession of a person licensed under RCW
22 9.41.070 or exempt from the licensing requirement by RCW 9.41.060; or

23 (ii) Any showing, demonstration, or lecture involving the
24 exhibition of firearms.

25 (4)(a) Cities, towns, and counties may enact ordinances
26 restricting the areas in their respective jurisdictions in which
27 firearms may be sold, but, except as provided in (b) of this
28 subsection, a business selling firearms may not be treated more
29 restrictively than other businesses located within the same zone. An
30 ordinance requiring the cessation of business within a zone shall not
31 have a shorter grandfather period for businesses selling firearms
32 than for any other businesses within the zone.

33 (b) Cities, towns, and counties may restrict the location of a
34 business selling firearms to not less than 500 feet from primary or
35 secondary school grounds, if the business has a storefront, has hours
36 during which it is open for business, and posts advertisements or
37 signs observable to passersby that firearms are available for sale. A
38 business selling firearms that exists as of the date a restriction is
39 enacted under this subsection (4)(b) shall be grandfathered according
40 to existing law.

1 (5) Violations of local ordinances adopted under subsection (3)
2 of this section must have the same penalty as provided for by state
3 law.

4 (6) The perimeter of the premises of any specific location
5 covered by subsection (1) of this section shall be posted at
6 reasonable intervals to alert the public as to the existence of any
7 law restricting the possession of firearms on the premises.

8 (7) Subsection (1) of this section does not apply to:

9 (a) A person engaged in military activities sponsored by the
10 federal or state governments, while engaged in official duties;

11 (b) Law enforcement personnel, except that subsection (1)(b) of
12 this section does apply to a law enforcement officer who is present
13 at a courthouse building as a party to an antiharassment protection
14 order action or a domestic violence protection order action under
15 chapter 7.105 or 10.99 RCW, or an action under Title 26 RCW where any
16 party has alleged the existence of domestic violence as defined in
17 RCW 7.105.010; or

18 (c) Security personnel while engaged in official duties.

19 (8) Subsection (1)(a), (b), (c), and (e) of this section does not
20 apply to correctional personnel or community corrections officers, as
21 long as they are employed as such, who have completed government-
22 sponsored law enforcement firearms training, except that subsection
23 (1)(b) of this section does apply to a correctional employee or
24 community corrections officer who is present at a courthouse building
25 as a party to an antiharassment protection order action or a domestic
26 violence protection order action under chapter 7.105 or 10.99 RCW, or
27 an action under Title 26 RCW where any party has alleged the
28 existence of domestic violence as defined in RCW 7.105.010.

29 (9) Subsection (1)(a) of this section does not apply to a person
30 licensed pursuant to RCW 9.41.070 who, upon entering the place or
31 facility, directly and promptly proceeds to the administrator of the
32 facility or the administrator's designee and obtains written
33 permission to possess the firearm while on the premises or checks his
34 or her firearm. The person may reclaim the firearms upon leaving but
35 must immediately and directly depart from the place or facility.

36 (10) Subsection (1)(c) of this section does not apply to any
37 administrator or employee of the facility or to any person who, upon
38 entering the place or facility, directly and promptly proceeds to the
39 administrator of the facility or the administrator's designee and

1 obtains written permission to possess the firearm while on the
2 premises.

3 (11) Subsection (1)(d) of this section does not apply to the
4 proprietor of the premises or his or her employees while engaged in
5 their employment.

6 (12) Government-sponsored law enforcement firearms training must
7 be training that correctional personnel and community corrections
8 officers receive as part of their job requirement and reference to
9 such training does not constitute a mandate that it be provided by
10 the correctional facility.

11 (13) Any person violating subsection (1) or (2) of this section
12 is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

13 (14) "Weapon" as used in this section means any firearm,
14 explosive as defined in RCW 70.74.010, or instrument or weapon listed
15 in RCW 9.41.250.

--- END ---