



## Oppose Permitless Carry in Florida

**Bottom Line:** Permitless carry legislation would allow people to carry firearms, openly or concealed, in public places without a permit, criminal history check, or safety training, dismantling Florida's system of responsible gun ownership. Permitless carry would also overturn Florida's longstanding prohibition on openly carrying firearms, including assault rifles, in public.

- ❑ **Florida's concealed weapon license requires training on how to carry firearms responsibly in public. Permitless carry would strip away this critical safety component.**
  - Florida, like most states, currently requires completion of a firearm safety course before a person can get a concealed weapon license.<sup>1</sup> Importantly, this training involves the live firing of a gun. Safety training ensures that permit holders are aware of responsible practices for handling and carrying guns in public. Permitless carry would remove these requirements.
- ❑ **Permitless carry would remove safeguards that help ensure only responsible gun owners carry firearms in public, allowing carry by people who currently cannot get a permit.**
  - **Violent criminals:** Under current Florida law, people who have recently been convicted of violent misdemeanor crimes cannot get a concealed weapon license.<sup>2</sup> Under permitless carry, these criminals would be able to carry firearms in public.
  - **Teenagers:** Florida law generally requires a person to be 21 years old to get a concealed weapon license.<sup>3</sup> Under permitless carry, people as young as 18 years old would be able to carry firearms throughout Florida.
  - **No criminal history check:** To obtain a permit, a person is required to pass a criminal history check.<sup>4</sup> Because Florida does not require background checks on unlicensed firearm sales, this background check might be the only one a person receives before carrying a gun.
- ❑ **Permitless carry would also eliminate Florida's prohibition on openly carrying firearms.**
  - Florida prohibits the open carry of handguns, rifles, and shotguns in public and has for 30 years.<sup>5</sup> Permitless carry would allow the open carry of loaded firearms, including assault weapons, in public places, such as parks, on crowded city streets, and in public buildings.
  - Research indicates that open carry can increase the likelihood of violence. Multiple studies have found that the presence of a visible gun makes people more aggressive.<sup>6</sup> With the likelihood of aggressive behavior elevated, open carry makes it more likely that disagreement will become a violent conflict.<sup>7</sup>
- ❑ **States that have weakened their handgun permitting systems have seen an increase in firearm crimes.**
  - States that have weakened their firearm permitting system have experienced an 11 percent increase in handgun homicide rates.<sup>8</sup> States that have weakened their firearm permitting system have also experienced a 13–15 percent increase in violent crime rates.<sup>9</sup>
  - Conversely, states that provided law enforcement discretion to issue carry permits saw 11 percent lower homicide rates compared to states that did not have that discretion.<sup>10</sup>
  - Adopting a permitless law increased the number of officer-involved shootings in the state on average by 12.9% above what was expected ( $p = .003$ ).<sup>11</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> Fla. Stat. §§ 790.01; 790.06.

<sup>2</sup> Fla. Stat § 790.06(3).

<sup>3</sup> Fla. Stat § 790.06(2)(b).

<sup>4</sup> Fla. Stat § 790.06(6)(a); Fla. Stat. § 943.045(12).

<sup>5</sup> Fla. Stat. § 790.053.

<sup>6</sup> Arlin James Benjamin Jr et al. "The weapons priming effect," *Current Opinion in Psychology*, Volume 12, (December 2016) 45-48, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352250X16300495>

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Michael Siegel et al., "Easiness of Legal Access to Concealed Firearm Permits and Homicide Rates in the United States," *American Journal of Public Health* 107, no. 12 (December 1, 2017): 1923-29, <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304057>.

<sup>9</sup> John J. Donohue, Abhay Aneja, and Kyle D. Weber, "Right-To-Carry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive Assessment Using Panel Data and a State-Level Synthetic Control Analysis," NBER Working Papers (National Bureau of Economic Research, November 2018).

<sup>10</sup> Michael Siegel and Claire Boine, "What Are the Most Effective Policies in Reducing Gun Homicides?" (Rockefeller Institute of Government, March 29, 2019), <https://rockinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/8-13-19-Firearm-Laws-Homicide-Brief.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Mitchell Doucette et al., "Officer Involved Shootings and Concealed Carry Weapons Permitting Laws, 2014-2020.," Joyce Foundation Lunch and Learn Webinar Series (2022), <https://www.joycefdn.org/webinars/lunch-learn-webinar-series-on-emerging-research-in-gun-violence-prevention> . (Accessed November 2022)