

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 501

(Senator McKay)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

Handguns - Wear, Carry, and Transport Laws - Handbook Publication

This bill requires the Secretary of State Police, in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), by October 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, to publish a handbook summarizing the State laws that apply to the wearing, carrying, and transporting of a handgun in public in the State. The Secretary must (1) draft the handbook in plain language that can be easily understood without any special knowledge of the laws of the State; (2) make copies of the handbook available to members of the public in printed and electronic form, accessible on the Department of State Police’s (DSP) website; and (3) each time an updated version of the handbook is published, promptly notify, by email, each current holder of a handgun permit that a new version of the handbook has been published and how to obtain the handbook.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by at least \$118,000 in FY 2025. Future year expenditures reflect inflation and minimum ongoing costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	118,000	119,200	120,400	121,600	122,800
Net Effect	(\$118,000)	(\$119,200)	(\$120,400)	(\$121,600)	(\$122,800)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 651 of 2023 requires DSP to transmit a summary of each new law or change to each existing law pertaining to firearms that was passed by the General Assembly during each legislative session to each email address on file with the department that is associated with (1) the purchaser or transferee of a regulated firearm or (2) a person who has registered a regulated firearm with the department. The summary must be transmitted (1) within 45 days after the General Assembly adjourns *Sine Die* in a legislative session; (2) 30 days before the effective date of the act, for each act establishing a new law or change to an existing law pertaining to firearms; and (3) as soon as practicable if an act is designated as an emergency act.

In addition, a handgun permit applicant must successfully complete, prior to the application and each renewal, a firearms training course approved by the Secretary of State Police that includes (1) for an initial application, a minimum of 16 hours of instruction by a qualified handgun instructor, or 8 hours of instruction for a renewal application; (2) classroom instruction on State and federal firearm laws, home firearm safety, handgun mechanisms and operations, conflict de-escalation and resolution, anger management, and suicide prevention; and (3) a firearm qualification component that includes live-fire shooting exercise on a firing range and requires the applicant to demonstrate safe handling of a handgun and shooting proficiency with a handgun.

An applicant for a permit is not required to complete a certified firearms training course if the applicant:

- is a law enforcement officer or a person who is retired in good standing from service with a law enforcement agency of the United States, the State, or any local law enforcement agency in the State;
- is a member, retired member, or honorably discharged member of the U.S. Armed Forces or the National Guard;
- is a qualified handgun instructor; or
- has completed a firearms training course approved by the Secretary.

State Expenditures: In 2023, DSP received 64,724 new applications for handgun permits and 13,682 handgun permit renewal applications. As of January 1, 2024, there are approximately 175,662 active handgun permits in the State; therefore, this analysis assumes that DSP needs to publish at least 200,000 copies of the handbook to ensure sufficient copies for members of the public. Accordingly, general fund expenditures increase by at least \$118,000 in fiscal 2025 for DSP to publish and make available approximately 200,000 copies of the required handbook. This minimum estimate assumes

that the handbook is published in English; however, to the extent that DSP must publish the handbook in other languages, general fund expenditures increase further.

As the State laws that apply to the wearing, carrying, and transporting of a handgun in public in the State may change each year, this analysis assumes that DSP needs to update and publish new copies of the handbook annually. Accordingly, future year expenditures reflect inflation and minimum ongoing costs to publish 200,000 copies of the handbook each year. Actual expenditures in any given year could vary depending on the demand for the handbook and the need to publish the handbook in languages other than English.

OAG can consult with DSP to publish the required handbook using existing budgeted resources.

Additional Comments: The bill takes effect October 1, 2024, but requires the Secretary of State Police to publish and make copies of the handbook available to the public on the same date.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 1166 (Delegate Hinebaugh) - Judiciary.

Information Source(s): Office of the Attorney General; Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 7, 2024
km/lgc Third Reader - March 13, 2024
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 13, 2024

Analysis by: Shirleen M. E. Pilgrim

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510