



Connecticut

Summary of State Firearms Law

Last updated May 3, 2012

Overview

In its publication *Gun Laws Matter: A Comparison of State Firearms Laws and Statistics*, LCAV ranked each state based on a review of state laws in 25 different firearm-related policy areas. Connecticut ranked 5th out of 50 – having enacted some of the strongest gun violence prevention laws in the country. Among other things, Connecticut:

- Requires a background check prior to [the transfer of a handgun between private parties](#);
- Requires a background check for all firearm transfers at [gun shows](#) (but not for private transfers of long guns elsewhere);
- Requires [handgun dealers](#) to obtain a license, and handgun [purchasers to first obtain an eligibility certificate](#);
- Prohibits the transfer or possession of [assault weapons](#) and certain [50 caliber rifles](#), but not [large capacity ammunition magazines](#);
- Imposes a two-week [waiting period](#) on long gun transfers from licensed dealers;
- Acts as a “[point of contact](#)” state, conducting its own background checks, rather than relying on the FBI;
- Requires the [reporting of all individuals prohibited](#) from possessing firearms to the database used for firearm purchaser background checks;
- Requires firearm owners to [report the loss or theft](#) of their firearms;
- Allows [local governments to regulate](#) firearms and ammunition; and
- Allows local governments discretion to deny a [concealed weapons permit](#).

Connecticut does **not**, however,

- Limit [the number of firearms](#) that may be purchased at one time;
- Impose [design safety standards](#) or [microstamping](#) requirements on handguns; or
- [Regulate ammunition](#) sales.

Connecticut Statistics

Gun Deaths in Connecticut

In 2009, Connecticut had the fifth lowest rate of gun deaths per capita among the states. 173 people died from firearm-related injuries in Connecticut in that year.¹

Crime Guns in Connecticut

Mayors Against Illegal Guns recently developed web pages detailing [data about each state's crime gun imports and exports](#). Compared with other states, in 2009, [Connecticut](#) supplied the tenth lowest number of crime guns to other states per capita. Connecticut exports crime guns at a rate that is less than half the national average.²

Number of Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers in Connecticut

There are 397 federally licensed firearms dealers and pawnbrokers in Connecticut.³

¹ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *WISQARS Fatal Injury Reports, 1999-2009, for National, Regional, and States (RESTRICTED)*, at http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/dataRestriction_inj.html. (Jan. 2012).

² For a more comprehensive discussion regarding the patterns of gun trafficking across the states, see Mayors Against Illegal Guns, *Trace the Guns: The Link Between Gun Laws and Interstate Gun Trafficking* (Sept. 2010), at <http://www.tracetheguns.org/report.pdf>.

³ U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, *List of Federal Firearms Licensees* (Oct. 2011), at <http://www.atf.gov/about/foia/ffl-list.html>.

Connecticut “Right to Bear Arms”

The Connecticut Constitution provides for the keeping and bearing of arms, but permits broad firearm-related regulation for public health and safety purposes. See [LCAV’s State Right to Bear Arms Provisions](#) for more-detailed information.

Local Authority to Regulate Firearms in Connecticut

Connecticut has not preempted by statute the local regulation of firearms. Localities appear to have the authority to regulate guns and ammunition. See [LCAV's State Preemption/Local Authority to Regulate Firearms summary](#) for further information.

State Firearms Policies

Please note that many firearm-related laws have exceptions for military and law enforcement personnel.

Persons Prohibited from Firearm Possession

Connecticut Prohibited Purchasers Generally

[Federal law prohibits certain persons from purchasing or possessing firearms](#), such as felons, certain domestic abusers, and certain people with a history of mental illness. Connecticut has adopted other classes of prohibited persons, and incorporated some of the federal prohibitions as state offenses. State law provides that, subject to certain limited exceptions, no person shall possess a firearm if he or she:

- Has been convicted of a felony;
- Has been convicted as delinquent for the commission of a serious juvenile offense;
- Is subject to a restraining or protective order of any state court, after notice and an opportunity to be heard, or a foreign order of protection, in a case involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another person;
- Is subject to a firearms seizure order for posing risk of imminent personal injury to self or others issued after notice and an opportunity to be heard; or
- Is prohibited from shipping, transporting, possessing or receiving a firearm for mental health reasons pursuant to federal law.⁴

Connecticut law provides that, subject to certain limited exceptions, no person shall possess a handgun if he or she:

- Has been convicted of a felony (with limited exceptions) or of certain violent or intimidating misdemeanors;
- Has been convicted as a delinquent for the commission of a serious juvenile offense;
- Has been discharged from custody within the preceding 20 years after having been found not guilty of a crime due to mental disease or defect;
- Has been confined in a mental hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities within the preceding year by order of a probate court;
- Is subject to a restraining or protective order, after notice and an opportunity to be heard, in a case involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another person;

⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217(a).

- Is subject to a firearms seizure order, issued after notice and an opportunity to be heard, for posing a risk of imminent personal injury to self or others;
- Is prohibited from shipping, transporting, possessing or receiving a firearm for mental health reasons pursuant to federal law; or
- Is an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States.⁵

No person, firm, or corporation, including any private (unlicensed) seller, may transfer a handgun to an individual until the person, firm or corporation making such transfer obtains an authorization number from the Connecticut Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, who must perform a background check to determine whether the applicant is prohibited from possessing a handgun.⁶ Any person, firm or corporation wishing to sell a long gun at retail must verify through the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection that the transferee is eligible to possess a firearm.⁷

Private firearm transfers (i.e., transfers by individuals other than licensed dealers) of rifles and shotguns that do not occur at a gun show are not subject to background checks in Connecticut. See the [Connecticut Private Sales](#) and [Connecticut Gun Shows](#) sections.

In Connecticut, a state's attorney or any two police officers may file a complaint for seizure of a firearm when they have probable cause to believe that: 1) the person poses a risk of imminent personal injury to self or others; 2) the person possesses one or more firearms; and 3) the firearm is within or upon any place, thing or person.⁸ Probable cause may be based on:

- Recent threats or acts of violence directed towards self or others;
- Recent acts of cruelty to animals;
- Reckless use, display or brandishing of a firearm;
- A history of use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against others;
- Illegal use of controlled substances or abuse of alcohol; or
- Involuntary confinement to a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities.

For a list of persons prohibited from obtaining an eligibility certificate for a handgun, see the [Connecticut Licensing of Gun Purchasers/Owners](#) section.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Prohibited Purchasers](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217c(a).

⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(c).

⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37a.

⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(a).

Connecticut Minimum Age to Purchase / Possess

A person must be at least 21 years old to obtain an eligibility certificate for a handgun.⁹

Connecticut prohibits any person from selling, lending, giving, delivering or otherwise transferring any handgun to a person under age 21.¹⁰ A handgun may be transferred temporarily to a person under age 21 for target shooting or use on a shooting range if under the immediate supervision of a person eligible to possess a handgun.¹¹

There is no minimum age to possess a long gun. A “junior firearms hunting license” may be issued to a child between 12 and 16 years of age.¹²

Connecticut also prohibits any person from transferring, selling or giving a machine gun to a person under age 16, including the temporary transfer of a machine gun to such person for use in target shooting or on a firing or shooting range or for “any other purpose.”¹³

[Federal law](#) imposes additional limits.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Minimum Age to Purchase / Possess Firearms](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36f.

¹⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-34(b).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 26-27a(1).

¹³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202(c).

Domestic Violence and Firearms in Connecticut

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Connecticut does not prohibit individuals convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors from purchasing or possessing firearms or ammunition, unlike [federal law](#).

Firearm Prohibitions for Persons Subject to Domestic Violence Restraining/Protective Orders

Connecticut prohibits the possession of a firearm by a person who knows that he or she is subject to a restraining or protective order that was issued after notice and an opportunity to be heard in a case involving the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against another person.¹⁴

Connecticut makes a person ineligible for a certificate for a pistol or revolver if that person is subject to a domestic violence restraining or protective order (including an order issued without notice and a hearing) in a case involving the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against such person.¹⁵ Domestic violence is defined broadly.¹⁶

The restraining or protective order application form must allow the applicant, at the applicant's option, to indicate whether the respondent holds a permit to carry a pistol or revolver or possesses one or more firearms.¹⁷

For general information on the background check process and categories of prohibited purchasers/possessors, see the [Connecticut Prohibited Purchasers Generally](#) section.

Removal or Surrender of Firearms When Domestic Violence Restraining/Protective Orders Are Issued

See the section entitled [Disarming Prohibited Persons in Connecticut](#) regarding the firearm surrender requirements when a protective order is issued.

¹⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217(a)(3). *See also* Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217c(a)(5) for a similar prohibition for “criminal possession of a pistol or revolver.”

¹⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36f(b)(6).

¹⁶ Any family or household member who has been subjected to a continuous threat of present physical pain or physical injury, stalking or a pattern of threatening, by another family or household member may apply for a restraining or protective order. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-15(a). “Family or household member” means:

- Spouses and former spouses;
- Parents and their children;
- Persons 18 years or older related by blood or marriage;
- Persons 16 years or older not related by blood or marriage and presently residing together or who have resided together;
- Persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they are or have been married or have lived together at any time; and
- Persons who are in or have recently been in a dating relationship. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-38a(2).

¹⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-15(b).

Removal or Surrender of Firearms at the Scene of a Domestic Violence Incident

Whenever a peace officer determines that a “family violence crime” has been committed, such officer may seize any firearm at the location where the crime is alleged to have been committed that is in the possession of any person arrested for the commission of the crime or suspected of its commission or that is in plain view.¹⁸ The law enforcement agency must return the firearm to the rightful owner not later than seven days after the seizure, unless the person is ineligible to possess the firearm or otherwise ordered by the court.¹⁹

For general information on the background check process and categories of prohibited purchasers/possessors, see the [Connecticut Background Checks](#) and [Connecticut Prohibited Purchasers Generally](#) sections.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Domestic Violence and Firearms](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-38b(a).

¹⁹ *Id.*

Disarming Prohibited Persons in Connecticut

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Persons Falling into State Prohibited Categories

Whenever a person becomes ineligible to possess a firearm, he or she has two business days after the occurrence of the event making him or her ineligible to transfer any firearm in his or her possession to any person eligible to possess firearms.²⁰ The ineligible person may alternatively transfer the firearm(s) to the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection.²¹ However, pursuant to [a law Connecticut adopted in 2011](#), a person who becomes ineligible because of the issuance of a domestic violence protective order against him or her must transfer any firearm in his or her possession only to a federally licensed firearms dealer or to the Commissioner.²²

When an ineligible person has transferred a firearm to the Commissioner, he or she then has a year to sell or transfer the firearm to any eligible person, provided that all other legal requirements for the sale or transfer are met.²³ A domestic violence protective order defendant may only sell or transfer the firearm to a federally licensed firearms dealer, however.²⁴

Gun Possessors Posing Imminent Risk of Injury

In Connecticut, a state's attorney or any two police officers may file a complaint for seizure of a firearm when they have probable cause to believe that: 1) the person poses a risk of imminent personal injury to self or others; 2) the person possesses one or more firearms; and 3) the firearm is within or upon any place, thing or person.²⁵ Probable cause may be based on:

- Recent threats or acts of violence directed towards self or others;
- Recent acts of cruelty to animals;
- Reckless use, display or brandishing of a firearm;
- A history of use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against others;
- Illegal use of controlled substances or abuse of alcohol; or
- Involuntary confinement to a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities.²⁶

²⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36k(a).

²¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36k(a).

²² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36k(a).

²³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36k(b).

²⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36k(b).

²⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(a).

²⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(b). Any person whose firearms have been ordered seized under this statute, or his or her legal representative, may transfer the firearms in accordance with the provisions of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33 or other applicable state or federal law, to any person eligible to possess firearms. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(e).

The judge may then issue a warrant commanding a proper officer to search that person, place, or thing, and take any and all firearms into custody.²⁷ The court must hold a hearing no later than 14 days after execution of the warrant to determine whether the seized firearms should be returned to the person named in the warrant.²⁸ If the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the person poses a risk of imminent personal injury to himself or herself or others, it may order the state to continue to hold the firearms for up to one year.²⁹

²⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(a).

²⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(d).

²⁹ *Id.*

Sales & Transfers

Connecticut Background Checks

Federal law requires federally licensed firearms dealers (but not private sellers) to initiate a background check on the purchaser prior to sale of a firearm. Federal law provides states with the option of serving as a state “point of contact” and conducting their own background checks using state, as well as federal, records and databases, or having the checks performed by the FBI using only the federal National Instant Criminal Background Check System (“NICS”) database. (Note that state files are not always included in the federal database.)

Connecticut is a point-of-contact state for NICS. In Connecticut, all firearms transfers by licensed dealers are processed through the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (“DESPP”).³⁰

In Connecticut, a person, firm or corporation who seeks to sell a long gun at retail or a handgun (whether a licensed dealer or private seller) must:

- Have the transferee complete a written application and retain the application for at least 20 years or until he or she goes out of business;
- Make the application available for inspection during normal business hours by law enforcement;
- Transfer only to a transferee he or she knows personally or who presents appropriate identification (handguns only);
- Obtain an authorization number from DESPP; and
- Wait two weeks from the date of application before transferring the firearm (long guns only).³¹

DESPP must “make every effort,” including a search of NICS, to determine if the applicant is eligible to receive such firearm.³²

Unlicensed individuals also may not transfer a handgun until the person, firm or corporation making the transfer obtains an authorization number – following a background check on the prospective purchaser – from DESPP.³³ See the Connecticut Private Sales section. In addition, prior to the transfer of any firearm at a gun show, the transferee must undergo a background check.³⁴ See the Connecticut Gun Shows section for more information. Private transfers (*i.e.*,

³⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36l(d)(1). See also Federal Bureau of Investigation, *National Instant Criminal Background Check System Participation Map*, at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/nics/general-information/participation-map> (last visited Apr. 27, 2012).

³¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 29-33, 29-37a(a).

³² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37a(a).

³³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(c).

³⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37g(c).

transfers by individuals other than dealers) of rifles and shotguns are not otherwise subject to a background check requirement in Connecticut.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Background Checks](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Mental Health Reporting in Connecticut

Federal law prohibits possession of a firearm or ammunition by any person who has been “adjudicated as a mental defective” or involuntarily “committed to any mental institution.”³⁵ No federal law, however, requires states to report the identities of these individuals to the [National Instant Criminal Background Check System \(“NICS”\) database](#), which the FBI uses to perform background checks prior to firearm transfers.

In Connecticut, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection must report to the NICS’ Denied Persons File the name, date of birth and physical description of any person prohibited from possessing a firearm, pursuant to federal law.³⁶ Connecticut requires its Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Judicial Department to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the FBI for the purpose of implementing NICS.³⁷

The state Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection is required to verify that a person who seeks an eligibility certificate for a pistol or revolver has not been confined in a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities within the preceding 12 months by order of a probate court, by inquiring with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to receive a report limited to the commitment status of the person.³⁸

The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services must maintain information on commitment orders by a probate court and shall provide such information to the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection in fulfillment of his or her obligations under Connecticut’s gun laws.³⁹

[In 2011, Connecticut enacted a law](#) establishing a procedure for an individual prohibited from possessing firearms under federal law for mental health records to petition for relief from the federal prohibition. If the petition is granted, the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection must coordinate the removal or cancellation of the record in NICS, and notify the U.S. Attorney General that the basis of the record no longer applies.⁴⁰

For general information on the background check process and categories of prohibited purchasers or possessors, see the [Connecticut Background Checks](#) and [Connecticut Prohibited Purchasers Generally](#) sections.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Mental Health Reporting](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

³⁵ [18 U.S.C. § 922\(d\)\(4\)](#).

³⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36l(d)(2).

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38b(a).

³⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-500(b).

⁴⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 45a-100.

Multiple Purchases / Sales of Firearms in Connecticut

Connecticut imposes no restrictions on purchases or sales of multiple firearms.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Restrictions on Multiple Purchases or Sales of Firearms](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Retention of Sales / Background Check Records in Connecticut

Connecticut requires vendors of pistols and revolvers to maintain records of sales of such guns, including the name, address and occupation of the purchaser, as well as the date of sale and caliber, make, model and manufacturer's number of each pistols or revolver.⁴¹ The record must be signed by the purchaser and the seller, each in the presence of the other, and must be maintained for a minimum period of six years.⁴²

A separate recordkeeping provision requires any person, firm or corporation selling a pistol or revolver to give a receipt to the purchaser of the handgun containing the name and address of the purchaser, the date of sale, the caliber, make, model and manufacturer's number of the handgun, a general description of the handgun, the identification number of the purchaser's permit to carry a handgun, permit to sell a handgun at retail, or eligibility certificate for a handgun, the authorization number for the transfer issued by the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, and the purchaser's signature.⁴³ The seller must provide a copy of the receipt, within 48 hours of the sale, to the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection and local law enforcement. The seller must retain a copy of this receipt for a minimum period of five years.⁴⁴

For transfers of long guns (rifles and shotguns), the purchaser must sign in triplicate a receipt for the gun containing his or her name and address, the date of sale, the caliber, make, model and manufacturer's number of the long gun, and a general description of the gun.⁴⁵ The vendor must transfer one copy of the receipt to the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection and another receipt to the local law enforcement authority within 24 hours of delivery of the gun to the purchaser. The vendor must retain the final receipt with the original purchase application for at least five years.⁴⁶

Finally, any person, firm or corporation who seeks to sell a long gun at retail or a handgun (whether a licensed dealer or private seller) must have the transferee complete a written application and retain the application for at least 20 years or until he or she goes out of business, and must make the application available for inspection during normal business hours by law enforcement.⁴⁷

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Retention of Firearm Sales and Background Check Records*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁴¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-31.

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(e).

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37a(b).

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 29-33, 29-37a(a).

Connecticut Waiting Periods

Connecticut prohibits any person, firm or corporation from selling a long gun (rifle or shotgun) at retail until two weeks have passed after the date the purchase application is completed.⁴⁸ This waiting period does not apply, however, to holders of valid permits to carry handguns, holders of valid hunting licenses, or holders of valid handgun eligibility certificates.⁴⁹

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Waiting Periods*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁴⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37a(a).

⁴⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37a(b).

Gun Dealers & Other Sellers

Connecticut Dealer Regulations

In Connecticut, any person who sells ten or more handguns in a calendar year or is a federally licensed firearms dealer must have a state handgun permit to advertise, sell, deliver, or offer for sale or delivery, or possess with intent to sell or deliver, any handgun.⁵⁰ The chief of police, warden of a borough, or first selectman of a town may issue a permit to sell only if the applicant holds a valid state eligibility certificate for a handgun or a valid permit to carry a handgun and submits documentation sufficient to establish that local zoning requirements have been met for the location of the sale.⁵¹

Business organizations that sell firearms at retail must have a burglar alarm installed on their premises where 10 or more firearms are stored or kept for sale.⁵² The alarms must be connected directly to the local police department or a monitoring organization and must activate upon unauthorized entry or the interruption of the security system.⁵³

Any person, firm or corporation that engages in the retail sale of goods, where the principal part of such business is not firearms, may not employ a person to sell firearms in a retail store unless the person:

- Is at least age 18;
- Has submitted to state and national criminal history records checks which indicate he or she has not been convicted of a felony or a violation that would render her or him ineligible for a handgun certificate; and
- Has successfully completed a course or test approved by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection in firearms safety and statutory procedures relating to the sale of firearms.⁵⁴

A person may not sell a handgun anywhere except the room, store, or other place described in the permit for sale of handguns, and the person must display the permit for sale “exposed to view” in the location identified in the permit.⁵⁵

Retail sellers of handguns must, at the time of transfer of a handgun, provide a written warning to the purchaser, in block letters at least one inch in height, stating: “UNLAWFUL STORAGE OF A LOADED FIREARM MAY RESULT IN IMPRISONMENT OR FINE.”⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(a).

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37d.

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37f. Any employer who employs a person to sell firearms in violation of these provisions is liable for a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 per day for each violation. *Id.*

⁵⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-31.

⁵⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37b.

For laws:

- Applicable to both licensed and private firearm sellers, please see the [Connecticut Private Sales](#) section;
- Requiring firearms dealers to conduct background checks on purchasers, see the [Connecticut Background Checks](#) section;
- Requiring firearms dealers to maintain and report records of firearm sales, see the [Connecticut Retention of Firearm Sales/Background Checks Records](#) section.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Dealer Regulations](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Private Sales in Connecticut

Connecticut prohibits any person, firm or corporation from selling, delivering or otherwise transferring a handgun to any person prohibited by state law from possessing a handgun.⁵⁷ Handgun transfers may not be made until the person, firm or corporation making the transfer obtains an authorization number – following a background check on the prospective purchaser – from the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.⁵⁸ Moreover, the state prohibits any person, firm, or corporation from transferring a handgun unless the transferee has a permit to carry a handgun, a permit to sell handguns at retail, or a handgun eligibility certificate.⁵⁹ See the [Connecticut Licensing of Gun Owners or Purchasers](#) section.

Prior to the transfer of any firearm at a gun show, the transferee must undergo a background check.⁶⁰ See the [Connecticut Gun Shows](#) section for more information. Private transfers (*i.e.*, transfers by non-firearms dealers) of rifles and shotguns are not otherwise subject to a background check requirement in Connecticut.

In Connecticut, any person who sells, delivers or otherwise transfers a firearm to a person knowing that person is prohibited from possessing such firearm “shall be strictly liable for damages for the injury or death of another person resulting from the use of such firearm by any person.”⁶¹

For laws aimed at gun trafficking, see the section entitled [Firearms Trafficking in Connecticut](#).

For laws requiring the sale of a locking device to accompany the sale of a handgun, see the section entitled [Locking Devices in Connecticut](#). Handgun sellers must also provide the purchaser with a written warning stating that unlawful storage of a firearm may result in imprisonment or fine.⁶²

For laws requiring firearm sellers to retain records of sales, see the [Connecticut Retention of Firearm Sales/Background Checks Records](#) section.

See the [Connecticut Minimum Age to Purchase/Possess](#) section for age restrictions.

In addition, the state prohibits any person not authorized by law from conveying or passing any firearm to any inmate of a correctional or humane institution.⁶³

See [Regulating Guns in America: Private Sales](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁵⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(a). The possessor prohibitions under Connecticut General Statutes § 53a-217c are described in the [Connecticut Prohibited Purchasers Generally](#) section.

⁵⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(c).

⁵⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(b).

⁶⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37g(c).

⁶¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 52-571f.

⁶² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37b.

⁶³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-174.

Gun Shows in Connecticut

Connecticut defines a gun show as any event at which 50 or more firearms are offered or exhibited for sale, transfer or exchange to the public, or at which two or more persons are exhibiting one or more firearms for sale, transfer or exchange to the public.⁶⁴

At least 30 days before a gun show, the person who organizes, plans, promotes or operates the show must notify the chief of police, warden, or first selectman of the jurisdiction in which the show is to take place, of the date, time, duration and location of the gun show.⁶⁵

Connecticut prohibits any person, firm or corporation from selling, delivering or otherwise transferring any firearm at a gun show until the person, firm or corporation requests a background check for the prospective transferee and receives an authorization number approving the transfer from the state Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection.⁶⁶

See the [Connecticut Private Sales](#) section for state laws that apply at gun shows.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Gun Shows](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁶⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37g(a).

⁶⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37g(b).

⁶⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37g(c). For further details, *see* Conn. Gen. Stat. 29-36l.

Connecticut Immunity Statutes

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Connecticut exempts from criminal prosecution, and makes immune from civil liability, any owner, operator or user of a firing or shooting range operating on October 1, 1998, with respect to noise or noise pollution violations resulting from shooting activity on such range, provided the range was, at the time of its construction or operational approval by the municipality in which it is located, in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 442 and related regulations.⁶⁷ State law does not, however, limit the ability of a municipality to regulate an increase in noise attributable to a physical expansion of an existing firing or shooting range.⁶⁸

For detailed information about government and private party lawsuits against the gun industry, the status of litigation involving gun industry immunity statutes in various states, or pending gun industry immunity legislation, visit the [Brady Center's Legal Action Project](#) and the [Coalition to Stop Gun Violence's Gun Industry Immunity page](#).

See [LCAV's policy page on Immunity Statutes / Manufacturer Litigation](#) for further information.

⁶⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-74a(a).

⁶⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 22a-74a(c).

Gun Owner Responsibilities

Connecticut Licensing of Gun Owners or Purchasers

In Connecticut, a person may not purchase or receive a handgun unless he or she holds a valid permit to carry a handgun (see the [Connecticut Concealed Weapons Permitting](#) section), a valid permit to sell a handgun (see the [Connecticut Dealer Regulations](#) section), or a valid handgun eligibility certificate.⁶⁹ A person is entitled to a handgun eligibility certificate, issued by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection (“the Commissioner”), unless he or she:

- Has been convicted of a felony (with limited exceptions) or of certain violent or intimidating misdemeanors;
- Has been convicted as a delinquent for the commission of a serious juvenile offense;
- Has been discharged from custody within the preceding 20 years after having been found not guilty of a crime due to mental disease or defect under state law;
- Has been confined in a mental hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities within the preceding year by order of a probate court;
- Is subject to a restraining or protective order issued by a court in a case involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another person;
- Is subject to a firearms seizure order for posing risk of imminent personal injury to self or others issued after notice and an opportunity to be heard;
- Is prohibited from shipping, transporting, possessing or receiving a firearm for mental health reasons pursuant to federal law;
- Is an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States;
- Is less than 21 years of age; or
- Failed to successfully complete an approved course in the safety and use of handguns.⁷⁰

The Commissioner must require each applicant to submit to state and national criminal history records checks.⁷¹ The Commissioner is also specifically required to verify that a person who seeks an eligibility certificate for a pistol or revolver has not been confined in a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities within the preceding 12 months by order of a probate court,

⁶⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-33(b).

⁷⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36f.

⁷¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36g. Additional application procedures are detailed in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36g.

by inquiring with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to receive a report limited to the commitment status of the person.⁷²

Handgun eligibility certificates do not authorize the holder to carry a handgun upon the person.⁷³

Holders of handgun eligibility certificates are not subject to the state's waiting period upon sale of a rifle or shotgun.⁷⁴

An eligibility certificate is valid for five years.⁷⁵

The names and addresses of holders of handgun eligibility certificates are confidential.⁷⁶

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Licensing of Gun Owners or Purchasers*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁷² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38b(a).

⁷³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36g(f).

⁷⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37a(b).

⁷⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36h(b).

⁷⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36g(e).

Connecticut Registration of Firearms

In Connecticut, a person who lawfully possessed an assault weapon prior to October 1, 1993 was able to apply for a certificate of possession for the assault weapon by October 1, 1994.⁷⁷ Such certificates must contain a unique, detailed description of the firearm, including all identification marks, the name, address, date of birth and thumbprint of the owner, and any other information the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (“the Department”) may deem appropriate.⁷⁸ Such weapons may only be transferred to licensed firearms dealers or pass by bequest or intestate succession. In the latter case, the person obtaining title to the weapon must, within 90 days: 1) apply to the Department for a certificate of possession; 2) render the weapon permanently inoperable; 3) sell the weapon to a licensed gun dealer; or 4) remove the weapon from the state.⁷⁹

Connecticut has no other laws requiring the registration of firearms. See the section entitled [Retention of Sales / Background Check Records in Connecticut](#) for information about the reporting of firearm sales.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Registration of Firearms](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁷⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202d(a).

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ *Id.*

Reporting Lost or Stolen Firearms in Connecticut

Connecticut requires any person who lawfully possesses a firearm that is lost or stolen to report the loss or theft to the organized local police department for the town in which the loss or theft occurred or, if the town does not have an organized local police department, to the state police troop having jurisdiction for the town, within 72 hours of when the person discovered or should have discovered the loss or theft.⁸⁰

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Reporting Lost or Stolen Firearms*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

⁸⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202g(a).

Firearms in Public Places

Connecticut Concealed Weapons Permitting

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Carrying Concealed Weapons*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Connecticut requires any person that seeks to carry a pistol or revolver to obtain a permit.⁸¹ No permit is needed to carry a pistol or revolver within one's own "dwelling house or place of business."⁸²

Connecticut is a "may issue" state, meaning that local law enforcement has discretion in determining whether or not to issue a permit to carry a handgun to an applicant.⁸³

Connecticut's permitting law does not distinguish between carrying a handgun concealed and carrying openly. A chief of police, warden or selectman may issue a permit to carry a handgun to a person who:⁸⁴

- Has a bona fide residence or place of business within the jurisdiction in which he or she is applying;
- Intends to make only lawful use of the handgun for which the permit will be issued;
- Is a "suitable person" to receive a permit;
- Has successfully completed a course approved by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection in the safety and use of handguns;
- Has not been convicted of a felony or of a violation of:
 - Criminal possession of a narcotic substance;
 - Criminally negligent homicide;
 - Assault in the third degree or assault in the third degree of an elderly, blind, pregnant, or disabled person, or a person with an intellectual disability;
 - Threatening in the second degree;
 - Reckless endangerment in the first degree;
 - Unlawful restraint in the second degree;
 - Riot in the first or second degree or inciting to riot; or

⁸¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35(a).

⁸² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35(a).

⁸³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(b).

⁸⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(b).

- Stalking in the second degree;
- Has not been convicted as a delinquent for the commission of a serious juvenile offense;⁸⁵
- Has not been discharged from custody within the preceding 20 years after having been found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental disease or defect;⁸⁶
- Has not been confined in a hospital for persons with psychiatric disabilities within the preceding 12 months by order of a probate court;
- Is not subject to a restraining or protective order issued by a court in a case involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of physical force against another person;
- Is not subject to a firearms seizure order issued for posing risk of imminent personal injury to self or others after notice and a hearing;⁸⁷
- Is not prohibited from shipping, transporting, possessing or receiving a firearm pursuant to the mental health prohibitions under federal law;⁸⁸
- Is not an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States; and
- Is at least 21 years of age.

Any person violating the concealed weapons permitting provisions will, in addition to other criminal penalties, be forced to forfeit any handgun found in his or her possession.⁸⁹

Firearm Safety Training

Connecticut requires that applicants for a state concealed weapons permit first successfully complete a course approved by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection in the safety and use of pistols and revolvers including, but not limited to, a safety or training course in the use of pistols and revolvers available to the public offered by a law enforcement agency, a private or public educational institution or a firearms training school, utilizing instructors certified by the National Rifle Association or the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and a safety or training course in the use of pistols or revolvers conducted by an instructor certified by the state or the National Rifle Association.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ See Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-120.

⁸⁶ See Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-13.

⁸⁷ See Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38c(d).

⁸⁸ See [18 U.S.C. § 922\(g\)\(4\)](#) (persons who have been adjudicated as a mental defective or who have been committed to a mental institution).

⁸⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37(a).

⁹⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(b).

Duration & Renewal

A permit to carry a handgun is valid for up to five years from the date the permit became effective.⁹¹ Each renewal permit is valid for five years.⁹² [Connecticut enacted a law in 2011](#) allowing individuals to renew permits by mail.⁹³ There is no safety training requirement upon renewal.

Disclosure or Use of Information

Connecticut does not allow personal application or permit information of concealed weapons permit holders to be made public. The name and address of a person issued a state permit to carry a handgun or a local permit to carry a handgun issued prior to October 1, 2001 (the effective date of the law authorizing state-issue permits in place of local permits), may not be disclosed, except to:

- Law enforcement officials acting in the performance of their duties;
- Firearms transferors making requests for verification that such state, local or temporary state permit is still valid and has not been suspended or revoked; and
- The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services for persons subject to an order of mental health commitment.⁹⁴

Reciprocity

A bona fide resident of the United States who does not reside or work in Connecticut and holds a concealed handgun permit issued by another state may apply to the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection for a permit to carry a handgun in Connecticut.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-30(b).

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-30(f).

⁹⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(d).

⁹⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(f).

Open Carrying in Connecticut

Connecticut generally requires that any person seeking to carry a pistol or revolver, whether openly or concealed, obtain a state permit.⁹⁶ This requirement does not apply to possession within a person's dwelling or place of business.⁹⁷

Connecticut has no law that specifically restricts the open carrying of a long gun in public.

For a comprehensive discussion of this issue, see [LCAV's policy page on the Open Carrying of Firearms in Public](#).

⁹⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35(a).

⁹⁷ *Id.*

Location Restrictions

Guns in Vehicles in Connecticut

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Connecticut prohibits any person from knowingly having in a vehicle any firearm for which a proper permit has not been issued.⁹⁸ An exception is provided for the possession of unloaded BB guns stored in the trunk or a locked container other than the glove compartment.⁹⁹ This prohibition also does not apply to the interstate transportation of firearms through the state in accordance with federal law by any person who is not otherwise prohibited from shipping, transporting, receiving or possessing a firearm, provided that the firearm is unloaded and neither such firearm nor any ammunition is accessible from the passenger compartment of the vehicle.¹⁰⁰

A person may transport a handgun in a motor vehicle without a permit if it is unloaded, not readily accessible or directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the vehicle or, in a motor vehicle that does not have a compartment separate from the passenger compartment, contained in a locked container other than the glove compartment if the person is:¹⁰¹

- Carrying the handgun in the package in which it was originally wrapped at the time of sale and transporting it from the place of sale to the purchaser's residence or place of business;
- Removing his or her household goods or effects from one place to another;
- Transporting the handgun from his or her place of residence or business to the place where, or individual by whom, it is to be repaired, or while returning to the possessor's place of residence or business after the handgun has been repaired;
- Transporting the handgun in or through the state for the purpose of competitions, formal training, repair or any meeting or exhibition of an organized collectors' group if such person is a United States resident and is permitted to possess and carry a handgun in the state or subdivision of the United States in which such person resides;
- Transporting the handgun to and from a testing range at the request of a handgun permit issuing authority; or
- Transporting an antique handgun.

Connecticut also prohibits any person from possessing or carrying in any vehicle or snowmobile any shotgun, rifle or muzzleloader of any gauge or caliber while such long gun contains any loaded shell or cartridge capable of being discharged in the barrel, chamber or magazine or, for a

⁹⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38(a).

⁹⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38(b)(4).

¹⁰⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38d(a), (b) (referring to [18 U.S.C. §§ 926A](#) and [927](#)).

¹⁰¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35(a).

muzzleloader, when such firearm has a percussion cap in place or when the powder pan of a flintlock contains powder.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-205(a).

Guns in Schools in Connecticut

Connecticut prohibits any person from possessing a firearm, knowing that he or she is not licensed or privileged to do so: 1) in or on the real property comprising a public or private elementary or secondary school; or 2) at a school-sponsored activity.¹⁰³

This prohibition does not apply to gun possession:

- For use in a program approved by school officials in or on school property or at the school-sponsored activity;
- In accordance with an agreement entered into between school officials and the possessor or the possessor's employer; or
- While traversing school property for the purpose of gaining access to public or private lands open to hunting or for other lawful purposes, provided the firearm is not loaded and the entry on school property is permitted by the local or regional board of education.¹⁰⁴

Connecticut requires expulsion hearings for any student who: 1) possessed a firearm on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; 2) possessed a firearm off school grounds in violation of [Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35](#) (carrying a handgun without a permit); or 3) possessed and used a firearm in the commission of a crime.¹⁰⁵ If found to have possessed and/or used a firearm, the pupil will be expelled for one calendar year. The board of education or the hearing board may modify the period of expulsion for a pupil on a case-by-case basis.¹⁰⁶

See [LCAV's policy page on Guns in Schools](#) for further information.

¹⁰³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217b(a).

¹⁰⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217b(b).

¹⁰⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d(a)(2).

¹⁰⁶ *Id.*

Other Location Restrictions in Connecticut

A permit to carry a handgun does not authorize a person to carry a handgun on any premises where the possession or carrying of a handgun is prohibited by the person who owns or controls the premises.¹⁰⁷

Connecticut prohibits any person from possessing a weapon from which a shot may be discharged, either loaded or unloaded, within any building where:

- Either house of the General Assembly is located;
- Any committee, member, officer or employee of the General Assembly has an official office; or
- Any committee of the General Assembly is holding a public hearing.¹⁰⁸

Connecticut has no statutes prohibiting firearms in the following places, although administrative regulations may apply:

- Hospitals;
- Places of worship;
- Bars or restaurants where alcohol is served;
- Sports arenas;
- Gambling facilities; or
- Polling places.

¹⁰⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28(e).

¹⁰⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 2-1e(c).

Consumer & Child Safety

Connecticut Design Safety Standards for Handguns

Connecticut has no laws regulating so-called “junk guns” or “Saturday night specials.”

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Design Safety Standards for Handguns*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Locking Devices in Connecticut

In Connecticut, any person, firm or corporation engaging in the sale, other than at wholesale, of any handgun, must equip the handgun with a reusable trigger lock or gun locking device constructed of material sufficiently strong to prevent it from being easily disabled.¹⁰⁹ The lock must also have a mechanism accessible by key or electronic or mechanical accessory specific to the device to prevent unauthorized removal.¹¹⁰ [Federal law](#) also applies. Handgun sellers must also provide the purchaser with a written warning stating that unlawful storage of a firearm may result in imprisonment or fine.¹¹¹

State administrative regulations govern the storage of firearms in certain locations.

Connecticut does not require firearm owners to lock their weapons.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Locking Devices](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹⁰⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 29-33(d), 29-37b.

¹¹⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 29-33(d), 29-37b.

¹¹¹ *Id.*

Personalized / Owner-Authorized Firearms in Connecticut

Connecticut does not require firearms to be personalized.

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Personalized Firearms*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Child Access Prevention in Connecticut

Connecticut prohibits any person from storing a loaded firearm on his or her premises if he or she knows or reasonably should know that a minor (person under age 16) is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the minor's parent or guardian.¹¹² A person is not criminally liable for this prohibition if his or her firearm is securely locked in a box or other container in a location which a reasonable person would believe to be secure, or the person carries the firearm on his or her person or within such close proximity that he or she can readily retrieve and use it as if it were on his or her body.¹¹³ A person who violates this safe storage requirement shall be held strictly liable for damages when a minor obtains the unlawfully stored firearm and causes injury to or the death of any person.¹¹⁴

A person is liable for "criminally negligent storage of a firearm" when he or she does not comply with the aforementioned safe storage requirements and a minor (person under age 16) obtains the firearm and causes injury or death to himself, herself, or any other person.¹¹⁵

In 2011, Connecticut enacted a law specifically penalizing any parent or guardian of a minor child who, knowing that the child possesses a firearm and is ineligible to possess such firearm, fails to make reasonable efforts to halt such possession.¹¹⁶

For other measures related to child access prevention, see the [Connecticut Locking Devices](#) section.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Child Access Prevention](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹¹² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37i.

¹¹³ *Id.*

¹¹⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 52-571g.

¹¹⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217a(a). This prohibition does not apply if the minor gains access to the firearm via illegal entry of any premises where the gun is located by any person. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-217a(b).

¹¹⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-206f.

Classes of Weapons / Ammunition

Assault Weapons in Connecticut

Connecticut prohibits any person from possessing an assault weapon unless the weapon was possessed prior to July 1, 1994, and the possessor:

- Was eligible to apply for a certificate of possession for the assault weapon by July 1, 1994;
- Lawfully possessed the assault weapon prior to October 1, 1993; and
- Is not in violation of Connecticut General Statutes §§ 29-37j (purchase of firearm with intent to transfer to prohibited person), 53-202a to 53-202k (assault weapon regulations), and former 53a-46a(h) (committing a capital offense using an assault weapon).¹¹⁷

The state also prohibits persons from distributing, transporting, importing into the state, keeping, offering or exposing for sale, or giving an assault weapon to any person.¹¹⁸

Connecticut defines an “assault weapon” as:

- Any “selective-fire” firearm capable of fully automatic, semi-automatic or “burst fire” at the option of the user;
- Any of a [list of specified semi-automatic firearms](#);
- Any semi-automatic rifle that has an ability to accept a detachable magazine and has at least two of the following:
 - A folding or telescoping stock;
 - A pistol grip that protrudes conspicuously beneath the action of the weapon;
 - A bayonet mount;
 - A flash suppressor or threaded barrel designed to accommodate a flash suppressor; and
 - A grenade launcher;
- A semi-automatic pistol that has an ability to accept a detachable magazine and has at least two of the following:
 - An ammunition magazine that attaches to the pistol outside of the pistol grip;

¹¹⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202c(c).

¹¹⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202b.

- A threaded barrel capable of accepting a barrel extender, flash suppressor, forward handgrip or silencer;
- A shroud that is attached to, or partially or completely encircles, the barrel and that permits the shooter to hold the firearm with the non-trigger hand without being burned;
- A manufactured weight of 50 ounces or more when the pistol is unloaded; and
- A semi-automatic version of an automatic firearm; or
- A semi-automatic shotgun that has at least two of the following:
 - A folding or telescoping stock;
 - A pistol grip that protrudes conspicuously beneath the action of the weapon;
 - A fixed magazine capacity in excess of five rounds; and
 - An ability to accept a detachable magazine; or
- A part or combination of parts designed or intended to convert a firearm into an assault weapon named specifically in the statute or described in the statute, or any combination of parts from which an assault weapon may be rapidly assembled if those parts are in the possession or under the control of the same person.¹¹⁹

Any firearm that has been permanently rendered inoperable is not an assault weapon.¹²⁰

A person who lawfully possessed an assault weapon prior to October 1, 1993 may continue to possess the weapon if he or she obtained a certificate of possession.¹²¹

Connecticut prohibits the transfer of all or most grandfathered weapons.¹²² A person issued a certificate of possession may possess his or her registered assault weapon only at:

- His or her residence, property or business;
- Property owned by another with the owner's express permission;
- Certain target ranges or shooting clubs; and
- A firearms exhibition, display or educational project.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202a(a).

¹²⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202a(b).

¹²¹ See Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202d, Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 83-202d-1—53-202d-5, and the [Connecticut Registration of Guns](#) section for further information.

¹²² See Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202d(b), (c).

¹²³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202d(d).

A person may also possess a registered assault weapon while transporting the weapon to or from a permitted location or to a licensed gun dealer for repair.¹²⁴ When transported, an assault weapon must be unloaded and, if transported in a vehicle, kept in the trunk or in a case or container that is inaccessible to the operator or any passenger of the vehicle.¹²⁵

When a person wishes to dispose of a registered assault weapon, he or she may transfer the weapon only to a licensed dealer, a police department or the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.¹²⁶ A person who possesses a registered assault weapon must report the loss or theft of the weapon within 72 hours of the time the person discovered or should have discovered the loss or theft.¹²⁷

An assault weapon defined under [Connecticut General Statutes § 53-202a\(a\)\(3\) or \(4\)](#) (an assault weapon defined by criteria rather than specific name) is exempt from state transfer restrictions and registration requirements if it was legally manufactured prior to September 13, 1994.¹²⁸

Connecticut also allows possession of certain specified assault weapon models under certain circumstances. The state allows a person to possess an Auto-Ordnance Thompson type, Avtomat Kalashnikov AK-47 type, MAC-10, MAC-11 or MAC-11 Carbine type assault weapon if:

- It was obtained in good faith on or after October 1, 1993 and before May 8, 2002;
- The possessor is not prohibited from possessing the weapon under any other law; and
- The possessor has notified the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, prior to October 1, 2003, that he or she possesses the specified assault weapon.¹²⁹

Connecticut law provides that nothing contained in the state's assault weapon-related regulations should be construed to prohibit any person or corporation engaged in the business of manufacturing assault weapons from manufacturing or transporting assault weapons for sale: 1) within the state to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, law enforcement, the Department of Correction, or military or naval forces; or 2) for sale outside the state.¹³⁰

See [Regulating Guns in America: Assault Weapons](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹²⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202d(d)(6).

¹²⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202f.

¹²⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53-202d(4) and 53-202e.

¹²⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202g(a).

¹²⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202m.

¹²⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202n(a), (b).

¹³⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202i.

Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines in Connecticut

Connecticut has no law regulating large capacity ammunition magazines.

See [*Regulating Guns in America: Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines*](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

Fifty Caliber Rifles in Connecticut

Connecticut bans the possession, distribution, importation, transportation, and keeping, offering or exposing for sale of the “Barrett Light-Fifty model 82A1,” which is included in the state’s definition of assault weapon.¹³¹

For prohibitions on the knowing distribution, transportation, importation into the state, keeping, offering, or exposing for sale, or gift to any person of any “armor-piercing .50 caliber bullet” or “incendiary .50 caliber bullet,” see the [Connecticut Ammunition Regulation](#) section.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Fifty Caliber Rifles](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹³¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53-202a(a)(1), 53-202c, and 53-202b.

Machine Guns/Automatic Firearms in Connecticut

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Connecticut prohibits any person from: 1) possessing or using a machine gun for an offensive or aggressive purpose; or 2) transferring, selling or giving a machine gun to a person under age 16, including the temporary transfer of a machine gun to such person for use in target shooting or on a firing or shooting range or for any other purpose.¹³²

The possession or use of a machine gun is presumed to be for an offensive or aggressive purpose when:

- The machine gun is on premises not owned or rented, for bona fide permanent residence or business occupancy, by the person in whose possession the machine gun was found;
- In the possession of, or used by, an unnaturalized foreign-born person;
- In the possession of, or used by, a person convicted of a crime of violence in any state or federal court;
- The machine gun has been adapted to use projectiles of any caliber and has not been registered; or
- Empty or loaded projectiles of any caliber which have been or are capable of use in the machine gun are found in the immediate vicinity of such firearm.¹³³

Any machine gun adapted to use projectiles of any caliber must be registered in the office of the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection within 24 hours after its acquisition and, thereafter, annually, on July first.¹³⁴ The application must show the model and serial number of the gun, the name, address and occupation of the person in possession, and from whom and the purpose for which the gun was acquired. Any person who fails to register any gun as required hereby shall be presumed to possess the same for an offensive or aggressive purpose. The registration data shall not be subject to inspection by the public.¹³⁵

Manufacturers of machine guns must keep a register of all such firearms.¹³⁶ This register shall show the model and serial number, and the date of manufacture, sale, loan, gift, delivery or receipt of each machine gun, the name, address and occupation of the person to whom the machine gun was sold, loaned, given or delivered or from whom it was received, and the purpose

¹³² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202(c). “Machine gun” is defined as a weapon of any description, loaded or unloaded, which shoots, is designed to shoot or can be readily restored to shoot automatically more than one projectile, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger, and includes any part or combination of parts designed for use in converting a weapon into a machine gun, and any combination of parts from which a machine gun can be assembled if such parts are in the possession or under the control of a person. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202(a).

¹³³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202(d).

¹³⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202(g).

¹³⁵ *Id.*

¹³⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202(f).

for which it was acquired by the person to whom the machine gun was sold, loaned, given or delivered.¹³⁷

See [LCAV's policy page on Machine Guns](#) for further information.

¹³⁷ *Id.*

Non-Powder Guns in Connecticut

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Connecticut generally prohibits any person from carrying a “BB gun.”¹³⁸ Connecticut also generally bans the knowing possession of a BB gun in a vehicle.¹³⁹

See [Regulating Guns in America: Non-Powder Guns](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹³⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-206(a). An exception exists for possession on the person’s own property or on the property of another with authorization from that person or party. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-206(b)(6).

¹³⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38(a). This prohibition does not apply if the BB gun is unloaded and stored in the trunk of such vehicle or in a locked container other than the glove compartment or console. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38(b).

Connecticut Ammunition Regulation

Connecticut prohibits any person from knowingly distributing, transporting, importing into the state, keeping, offering, or exposing for sale, or giving any person any “armor-piercing .50 caliber bullet” or “incendiary .50 caliber bullet.”¹⁴⁰ An “armor-piercing .50 caliber bullet” is any .50 caliber bullet that is designed for the purpose of, held out by the manufacturer or distributor as, or generally recognized as having a specialized capability to penetrate armor or bulletproof glass, including, but not limited to, bullets designated as “M2 Armor-Piercing” or “AP,” “M8 Armor-Piercing Incendiary” or “API,” “M20 Armor-Piercing Incendiary Tracer” or “APIT,” “M903 Caliber .50 Saboted Light Armor Penetrator” or “SLAP,” or “M962 Saboted Light Armor Penetrator Tracer” or “SLAPT.”¹⁴¹

An “incendiary .50 caliber bullet” is defined as any .50 caliber bullet that is designed for the purpose of, held out by the manufacturer or distributor as, or generally recognized as having a specialized capability to ignite upon impact, including, but not limited to, such bullets commonly designated as “M1 Incendiary,” “M23 Incendiary,” “M8 Armor-Piercing Incendiary” or “API,” or “M20 Armor-Piercing Incendiary Tracer” or “APIT.”¹⁴²

The [federal prohibition on certain kinds of armor-piercing ammunition](#) also applies.

Connecticut does **not**:

- Require a license for the sale of ammunition;
- Ensure that sellers of ammunition maintain records of the purchasers;
- Require a license to purchase or possess ammunition; or
- Prohibit [persons who are ineligible to possess firearms under state law](#) from possessing ammunition, although the [federal ammunition purchaser prohibitions](#) apply.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Ammunition Regulation](#) for a comprehensive discussion of this issue.

¹⁴⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202I(b).

¹⁴¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202I(a)(1).

¹⁴² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202I(a)(2).

Crime Gun Investigation

Microstamping/Ballistic Identification in Connecticut

Connecticut requires that the Division of Scientific Services (Division) of the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection establish a firearms evidence databank.¹⁴³ The databank is a computer-based system that scans a “test fire” (discharged ammunition consisting of a cartridge case or bullet or fragment thereof containing sufficient microscopic characteristics to compare with other discharged ammunition) from a handgun and stores an image of the test fire in a manner suitable for retrieval and comparison to other test fires and other evidence in a criminal investigation.¹⁴⁴

The databank may be used to: 1) compare two or more cartridge cases, bullets or other projectiles submitted to the Division laboratory or produced at the laboratory from a handgun; or 2) verify by microscopic examination any resulting match upon the request of a police department as part of a criminal investigation.¹⁴⁵ Any image of a cartridge case, bullet or fragment of a cartridge or bullet that is not matched by a databank search shall be stored in the databank for future searches.¹⁴⁶

A police department shall submit to the laboratory any handgun that comes into police custody as the result of a criminal investigation, as found property, or for destruction, prior to the return or the destruction of the handgun.¹⁴⁷ The laboratory shall collect a test fire from each submitted handgun within 60 days of submission, and label the test fire with the handgun manufacturer, type of weapon, serial number, date of the test fire and name of the person collecting the test fire.¹⁴⁸ Police departments are required to collect a test fire from every handgun that is to be issued to an employee.¹⁴⁹

The Division may permit a police department that complies with all laboratory guidelines and regulations adopted by the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection regarding the operation of the databank to: 1) collect test fires from handguns that come into the custody of the police department; 2) set up a remote terminal to enter test fire images directly into the databank; and 3) search the databank.¹⁵⁰

The laboratory may share databank information with other law enforcement agencies, both within and outside Connecticut, and may participate in a national firearms evidence databank program.¹⁵¹

Connecticut has no laws regarding firearm microstamping.

¹⁴³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(b)(1).

¹⁴⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(a)(1), (5).

¹⁴⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(b)(2).

¹⁴⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(b)(3).

¹⁴⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(c)(1).

¹⁴⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(c)(2).

¹⁴⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(d)(1).

¹⁵⁰ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(b)(4).

¹⁵¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-7h(e). Additional requirements for submitting test fires and handguns to the database and for searching the database are detailed under Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 29-7h-1—29-7h-6.

See [Regulating Guns in America: Ballistic Identification](#) and LCAV's policy page on [Firearm Microstamping](#) for comprehensive discussions of these issues.

Firearms Trafficking in Connecticut

(This section was last updated April 19, 2011.)

Criminal Prohibitions

Connecticut prohibits any person from knowingly and intentionally, directly or indirectly, causing one or more firearms that the person owns, possesses or controls to come into the possession or control of another person whom the original owner knows or has reason to believe is prohibited from owning or possessing any firearm under state or federal law.¹⁵²

A related Connecticut law prohibits any person from purchasing a firearm with the intent to transfer it to any other person the transferor knows or has reason to believe is prohibited from purchasing or otherwise receiving such a firearm under state law.¹⁵³ The state bars any person who is prohibited from purchasing or otherwise receiving or possessing a firearm from soliciting, employing or assisting any person in violating this straw purchase-related prohibition.¹⁵⁴

Similarly, any person who sells, delivers or otherwise transfers a firearm to a person knowing that person is prohibited from possessing such firearm “shall be strictly liable for damages for the injury or death of another person resulting from the use of such firearm by any person.”¹⁵⁵ Connecticut also provides that any person who sells, delivers or provides any firearm to another person to “engage in conduct which constitutes an offense knowing or under circumstances in which he [or she] should know that such other person intends to use such firearm in such conduct shall be criminally liable for such conduct and shall be prosecuted and punished as if he [or she] were the principal offender.”¹⁵⁶

Connecticut also prohibits any person from making any false statement or giving any false information connected with any purchase, sale, delivery or other transfer of any pistol, revolver¹⁵⁷ or long gun.¹⁵⁸

Connecticut prohibits the removal, defacement, alteration or obliteration of the name of any maker or model or any maker’s number or other mark of identification on any firearm.¹⁵⁹ The possession of any firearm upon which any identifying mark, number or name has been removed, defaced, altered or obliterated shall be prima facie evidence that the person owning or in possession of such firearm has removed, defaced, altered or obliterated the information.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202aa(a). Any person who violates this prohibition shall be criminally liable for a class C felony if the person, on or after October 1, 2007, sells, delivers or otherwise transfers five or fewer firearms, and a class B felony if the person, on or after October 1, 2007, sells, delivers or otherwise transfers more than five firearms. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53-202aa(b).

¹⁵³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37j(a).

¹⁵⁴ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37j(b).

¹⁵⁵ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 52-571f.

¹⁵⁶ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-8(b).

¹⁵⁷ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-34(a).

¹⁵⁸ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-37e.

¹⁵⁹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-36(a).

¹⁶⁰ *Id.*

Law Enforcement Initiatives

Connecticut has created a statewide firearms trafficking task force for the “effective cooperative enforcement” of state laws concerning the distribution and possession of firearms.¹⁶¹ This task force, comprised of municipal and state law enforcement officers, is tasked with:

- Reviewing the problem of illegal firearms trafficking, including its effects on the public, and implementing solutions to address the problem;
- Identifying persons illegally trafficking firearms and focusing resources to prosecute such persons;
- Tracking firearms which were sold or distributed illegally and implementing solutions to remove such firearms from persons illegally in possession of them; and
- Coordinating its activities with other law enforcement agencies within and without the state.¹⁶²

The task force may enter into mutual assistance and cooperation agreements with other states pertaining to firearms law enforcement matters extending across state boundaries, and may consult and exchange information and personnel with agencies of other states with reference to firearms law enforcement problems of mutual concern.¹⁶³

See [LCAV's policy page on Firearms Trafficking](#) for further information.

¹⁶¹ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38e(a).

¹⁶² Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38e(b), (f).

¹⁶³ Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38e(d).

Connecticut State Links

[State of Connecticut Attorney General's Office](#)

[Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Boston Field Division \(CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT\)](#)

[Connecticut Against Gun Violence](#)

[Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)