

SS HS HCS HB 349, 120, 136 & 328 -- CONCEALED FIREARMS

This bill allows individuals to carry concealed firearms. The bill establishes a procedure for obtaining an endorsement on a person's driver's license that entitles the person to carry a concealed firearm. Sheriffs will issue certificates of qualification to applicants who meet the requirements for obtaining the endorsement, which include training in the use of firearms, a background check, and the payment of a fee. The bill also creates the county sheriff's revolving fund, in which the fees for these endorsements will be deposited. Any money in a county sheriff's revolving fund may be expended at the direction of the sheriff without prior approval of the governing board of the county.

The bill sets forth the qualifications necessary to acquire a certificate of qualification and a procedure by which the certificate must be granted by county sheriffs to anyone meeting the qualifications. The Department of Revenue will issue a new driver's or nondriver's license containing the concealed firearms endorsement to the applicant. Concealed carry endorsements will be valid for three years.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OBTAINING A CONCEALED CARRY ENDORSEMENT

To qualify for the certificate needed to acquire a concealed carry endorsement, individuals must:

- (1) Be at least 23 years of age;
- (2) Be a citizen of the United States;
- (3) Have resided in Missouri for at least six months or be a member of the military, or the spouse of a member, stationed in Missouri;
- (4) Not have been found guilty of a felony;
- (5) Not have been found guilty, in the five years preceding the application, of a misdemeanor involving a crime of violence or two misdemeanors involving either alcohol-related driving offenses or possession of a controlled substance;
- (6) Not be a fugitive from justice;
- (7) Not be currently charged with a felony;
- (8) Not be dishonorably discharged from the armed forces;
- (9) Not have engaged in a pattern of behavior, documented in

public records, that causes the sheriff to have a reasonable belief that the applicant presents a danger to himself, herself, or others;

(10) Not have been adjudged mentally incompetent or released from a mental health facility for five years prior to the application;

(11) Not be the respondent in a valid full order of protection currently in effect;

(12) Be fingerprinted;

(13) Clear a criminal background check by the state and the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and

(14) Comply with training requirements established by the bill.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for a concealed carry endorsement must complete a firearms safety course provided by an instructor certified by a state or federal law enforcement agency or the National Rifle Association. The bill specifies the required curriculum, which includes classroom work and live firing exercises. The bill specifies the training required for the certification of a firearms safety instructor. Instructors must keep their course records available for at least four years. Instructors who provide false information about the performance of an applicant in the training program are guilty of a class C misdemeanor.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Sheriffs in first classification counties may authorize police chiefs in the municipalities within their county to process applications for certificates of qualification. Sheriffs must reimburse the municipalities for the reasonable expenses incurred as a result.

Sheriffs must request the criminal background check within three working days of the submission of the completed application and must issue a certificate of qualification to the applicant within three days of the receipt of the completed background check. Sheriffs must issue a certificate without a federal criminal background check if the background check has not been received within 45 days. Sheriffs may deny an application if there is reason to believe an applicant lied on the application. Denials must be communicated in writing, state the grounds for denial, and inform the applicant of the right to amend and resubmit the application for a 30-day period. The bill specifies an appeal

form and a process by which the sheriff will re-examine an amended application and, if still not approved, the applicant may appeal through the small claims court. Sheriffs must keep records of all applications and report the issuance of all certificates of qualification to the Missouri Uniform Law Enforcement System (MULES). Application fees may not exceed \$100, and renewal fees may not exceed \$50.

The application must contain a conspicuous warning that false statements will constitute perjury, a class D felony. Endorsements issued to anyone who later fails to meet any of the requirements will be suspended or revoked. An endorsement holder must notify the Department of Revenue within 30 days of changing his or her name or address. Endorsement holders who have their endorsement revoked may petition the small claims court for reinstatement. Any person aggrieved by a final decision in small claims court may petition the associate circuit court for a trial de novo. The court, upon a finding that a plaintiff brought an action against an endorsement holder without a reasonable basis and with an intent to harass the endorsement holder, may assess all costs and fees to the plaintiff, including attorney fees, which are presumed to be \$150 per hour.

LIMITATIONS ON WHERE CONCEALED FIREARMS MAY BE CARRIED

Endorsements to carry a concealed firearm are not valid in many places, including: police stations (without the consent of the chief law enforcement officer); polling places on election day; correctional facilities; courthouses; airports; bars; schools (without the consent of school officials); child care facilities (without the consent of the facility manager); hospitals; stadiums; amusement parks; gambling facilities (without the consent of the manager); churches (without the consent of the minister); any place where the carrying of a firearm is prohibited by federal law; the meeting place of any elected officials (except for the elected officials themselves who have endorsements); or any privately owned property where the owner has posted that the premises are off-limits to concealed firearms. The bill also allows governmental units to limit concealed firearms in their public buildings. Violating prohibitions on carrying concealed firearms in certain locations is grounds for being denied access to or being removed from the premises. Frequent violators are subject to monetary penalties and endorsement suspensions.

UNLAWFUL USE OF A WEAPON

The bill also changes the crime of unlawful use of a weapon. The bill:

- (1) Removes the prohibition on the carrying of a firearm or other weapon capable of lethal use into any public gathering;
- (2) Adds coroners and medical examiners to the list of officials who are exempt from certain parts of the crime;
- (3) Exempts persons with a valid concealed firearm permit from Missouri or another state from certain acts that constitute the crime;
- (4) Clarifies that peace officers are exempt from certain acts that constitute the crime when off duty or outside of their jurisdiction;
- (5) Allows a person who is at least 21 years of age and who lawfully possesses a concealable firearm to transport the firearm in the passenger compartment of a motor vehicle;
- (6) Increases the penalty for possessing a firearm while intoxicated. Under current law, it is class B misdemeanor. The bill makes it a class A misdemeanor if the gun is not loaded and a class D felony if it is loaded; and
- (7) Allows certain acts that would constitute the crime if those acts are a lawful act of defense.