

**Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons and Permit to Acquire a Pistol or Revolver  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Regarding Weapons Permit Law Changes in 2017**

**LAW CHANGES - QUESTION:** I have heard that there are changes to Iowa weapons permit laws occurring in 2017. What are the topics of the law changes?

**ANSWER:** House File 517 was passed by the Iowa General Assembly during the 2017 legislative session and was signed into law on April 13, 2017. The law changes relate to weapons permits and other topics, including but not limited to possession of certain firearms, supervised possession of handguns by minors, government authority relating to firearms, and self-defense.

**EFFECTIVE DATES - QUESTION:** When do the changes in Iowa law take effect?

**ANSWER:** Most of the law changes in HF 517 have an effective date of July 1, 2017, however, two provisions have an effective date of April 13, 2017. It is important to note that one provision of HF 517 related to uniform permit cards cannot be fully implemented on July 1, 2017. Often when a new law takes effect, it is necessary for affected units of government to adopt new rules, develop new procedures, reprogram computer systems, and sometimes purchase new equipment and materials, and then implementation of the law change follows after the effective date of the law change. This is the case for the uniform permit card provisions of HF 517.

**IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATES - QUESTION:** Which are the two law changes that have an effective date of April 13, 2017?

**ANSWER:** One provision relates to supervised possession of a handgun by a minor. For many years, Iowa law has required that a person under the age of 21 must, in most circumstances, have parent or guardian approval and supervision to possess a handgun. The minimum age for supervised possession of a handgun by a minor had been 14. The new law eliminates the minimum age provision, and more explicitly states that the required supervision must be direct supervision, and the person who is supervising possession of a handgun by a minor must not be intoxicated or impaired by alcohol or drugs. The second provision relates to permit confidentiality. Under prior law, most permit related information, including the application form, was a public record. The new law makes permit information confidential and therefore not available for general release to the public.

**UNIFORM PERMIT CARDS - QUESTION:** What is the "uniform permit card" provision of HF 517?

**ANSWER:** The new law requires that weapons permits be of uniform appearance, size, and content. For decades, Iowa's standard permits have been large paper tear-off forms that are not durable or convenient to carry. A number of years ago, rules adopted by the Iowa Department of Public Safety allowed Sheriffs Offices to develop and print wallet size permit cards of their own design and content. While this allowed many counties to develop better quality permits, it also resulted in wide variation in permit appearance and type. In passing HF 517, Iowa's elected officials established a requirement that permit cards be standardized.

**PERMIT CARD AVAILABILITY - QUESTION:** When will the new cards be available?

**ANSWER:** As soon as HF 517 was signed into law, work began to identify the options to have truly uniform, durable, and secure permit cards. The Iowa Department of Public Safety has been working closely with Iowa's 99 Sheriffs Offices to identify a method to generate uniform permit cards, while still allowing Sheriffs Offices to use their existing systems and procedures for processing applications, issuing permits, and storing permit records. To become operational with a system to print uniform permit cards, it is necessary to design the various permit card types (permit to acquire, nonprofessional permit to carry, professional permit to carry, etc...), acquire printing services and materials, provide measures to protect confidential permit related data, and develop rules and procedures for issuance of the permits. Despite the complexity of the initiative, DPS and Sheriffs Offices have been working diligently to become operational with a new permit printing system in just a few months following the law change. Though Sheriffs Offices and DPS are working cooperatively on the uniform permit card project, ultimately, each individual Sheriffs Office will have to proceed according to the statewide roll-out schedule specified by DPS. When the new permit cards are available, a public announcement will be made.

**VALIDITY OF CURRENT PERMITS - QUESTION:** I have a weapons permit (carry or acquire) issued before the law changes take effect, or before the law changes are fully implemented – do I have to get a new permit card when they are ready?

**ANSWER:** No, a permit issued prior to the change in law or during the transition period to the new cards will remain a valid permit, unless suspended, revoked, or cancelled as provided by law.

**DUPLICATES - QUESTION:** I lost my permit, my permit was damaged beyond recognition, or I have an older style of permit. Can I obtain a duplicate of a current permit, but printed on the new uniform wallet size card?

**ANSWER:** Yes, once the printing of NEW and RENEWAL uniform permit cards becomes operational, a person who wishes to obtain a duplicate can do so for a fee set by law at \$25. **However, for a person who is issued a permit ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 2017, but before the new uniform permit cards are available for printing, a person will be given the opportunity to exchange their permit for a new card at no fee.** Steps are being taken to ensure that the new card printing system will be able correctly process a "no fee" card exchange for those people issued permits on or after July 1 but before the uniform permit cards are available.

**WEAPONS PERMITS & DL/ID RECORDS - QUESTION:** Instead of developing new uniform permit cards, and all the systems necessary to print the cards, could the information simply be added to my driver's license or non-operator ID file?

**ANSWER:** The new law does not provide for integrating weapons permit issuance with driver's license or non-operator IDs, and doing so would have presented a number of issues, including the fact that there are people who are eligible for certain types of weapons permits, but who are not required to have an Iowa driver's license or non-operator ID card. Iowa's weapons permit information will remain separate from driver's license and non-operator ID information.

**APPLICATION PROCESS - QUESTION:** How do I apply for a new, renewal, or duplicate Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons?

**ANSWER:** Under Iowa law, the Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons is issued to residents of Iowa by the Sheriff of the applicant's county of residence. Several Iowa Sheriff's Office (including Black Hawk, Dallas, Dubuque, Polk, and Scott Counties) are using an online version of the application form. An applicant should check with the Sheriff's Office of the applicant's county of residence to obtain details about the application procedure, including hours of operation, office location, and forms of payment accepted.

**RENEWALS - QUESTION:** I have a Permit to Carry Weapons that will be expiring soon. What do I need to do to renew the permit?

**ANSWER:** Effective July 1, 2017, there is a 60 day renewal window. A person wishing to renew a Permit to Carry Weapons must apply within 30 days before the permit expires, or within 30 days after the permit expires, otherwise the higher NEW permit fee must be charged. Please note that while a permit can be renewed within 30 days after it expires, a person whose permit has expired should not go armed in a fashion that requires a permit until a person has renewed their permit.

**TRAINING FOR RENEWALS - QUESTION:** Do I need to complete another training course to renew my Permit to Carry Weapons?

**ANSWER:** No. A person who holds (or held) a permit issued on or after 1/1/2011 is not required to complete another training course to renew or obtain a new permit to carry weapons, however, please note that even though re-training is not required, completing another training course or taking other steps to learn about law changes could be highly beneficial to a person who intends to go armed.

**MOVE WITHIN IOWA - QUESTION:** I have moved since my permit was issued or will be moving soon. Am I required to notify anyone of the change of address and am I required to obtain an permit showing my new address?

**ANSWER:** Iowa DPS has long been recommending that a person notify the Sheriff's Office that issued a permit when a person has a change of address. However, if a person moved from one county to another, a person has needed to start over to get a permit showing their new address, as the Sheriff of the new county of residence cannot issue a duplicate or renew a permit that the Sheriff did not issue. Under the new law, there will be a procedure to allow a person to transfer their permit from one county to another after a move. This transfer process is currently being developed and should be available once the new permit cards are available.

**TEXT OF NEW LAWS - QUESTION:** I want to read the new law and understand the many different provisions of this law. How can I get a copy of the law and where can I learn more about the law?

**ANSWER:** Most of the changes were made in House File 517. However, there were also some highly technical changes made in another bill, Senate File 516. To see the actual wording of the new laws, it would be necessary to read both House File 517 and Division V of Senate File 516. Both bills are available online at the following web addresses:

- HF 517: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=hf517>
- SF 516: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=87&ba=sf516>

## **Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

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### **DISCLAIMER**

The Iowa Department of Public Safety is not qualified or authorized to provide legal advice. This FAQ should not be construed as legal advice. Any person seeking legal advice should consult with an attorney licensed to practice law in Iowa. This document only reflects the DPS understanding of common issues and questions related to weapons permits in our administrative role relating to weapons permits.

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### **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

**QUESTION:** How do I apply for a new, renewal, or duplicate Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons?

**ANSWER:** Under Iowa law, the Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons is issued to residents of Iowa by the Sheriff of the applicant's county of residence. In most counties, the applicant will need to either complete a paper application at the Sheriff's Office or print a blank application (available on the DPS website), complete it, and bring it to the Sheriff's Office. Several Iowa Sheriff's Office (including Black Hawk, Polk, and Scott Counties) are using an online version of the application form. An applicant should check with the Sheriff's Office of the applicant's county of residence to obtain details about the application procedure, including hours of operation, office location, and forms of payment accepted.

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### **PERMIT ELIGIBILITY**

**QUESTION:** How do I know if am eligible for a Permit to Carry Weapons?

**ANSWER:** When a person applies for a Permit to Carry Weapons, the Issuing officer will run a NICS check to determine if the applicant is eligible for a Permit to Carry Weapons. The applicant must also complete an application that asks questions pertaining to eligibility. Falsification of an application is a criminal offense that could result in prosecution, so an applicant should take great care in completing the application. This FAQ does NOT attempt to describe in all necessary detail each and every type of firearm and weapons permit prohibitor, but a simplified description of circumstances that result in ineligibility for a Permit to Carry Weapons is as follows:

- Federal firearm prohibitors:
  - Felony conviction (a conviction for a crime punishable by more than one year, excluding a crime classified as a misdemeanor punishable by up to two years)
  - Fugitive from justice (active warrant)
  - Unlawful user of or addicted to a controlled substance
  - Adjudicated Incompetent or committed to mental institution by a lawful authority, such as a District Court (Includes committal for substance abuse)
  - Certain aliens (unlawful aliens and nonimmigrant aliens admitted under a visa)
  - Dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces
  - Person who has renounced US Citizenship
  - Subject to a qualifying domestic protection order/restraining order
  - Conviction for a "Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence" (MCDV)
  - Under Indictment or information for a felony
- State firearm prohibitors:
  - Felony conviction (Includes aggravated misdemeanor involving a firearm or explosive)
  - Juvenile adjudication for a felony
  - Conviction for a "Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence" (MCDV)
  - Subject to a qualifying domestic protection order/restraining order
- Additional prohibitors for the Permit to Carry Weapons:
  - Alcohol addiction
  - Any serious or aggravated misdemeanor conviction under Iowa Code Chapter 708 (assault, harassment, stalking, etc...) not involving a firearm or explosive within the last three years
  - Probable cause exists to believe, based upon documented specific actions of the person, where at least one of the actions occurred within two years immediately preceding the date of the permit application, that the person is likely to use a weapon unlawfully or in such other manner as would endanger the person's self or others.
- A person must be 21 years of age or older to obtain a Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons, and 18 years of age or older to obtain a Professional Permit to Carry Weapons.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS WITHIN IOWA**

**QUESTION:** I have moved since my permit was issued. Am I required to notify anyone of the change of address and/or am I required to obtain an updated permit showing my new address?

**ANSWER:** There is no specific requirement in Iowa Code Chapter 724 that a person update their weapons permit upon a change of residential address within the state (or upon a change of a mailing address). Given that there is no specific requirement to update a residence and/or mailing address on a "Permit to Acquire a Pistol or Revolver" or a "Permit to Carry Weapons," it is our view that a permit remains valid until the expiration date or until the permit is suspended or revoked for cause.

However, a licensed gun dealer, a law enforcement officer from another state, or some other party who is shown the permit may question the validity of the permit if it shows an out of date address. Though DPS is aware of no provision of law that requires notification or updating of a permit after a move, many people who have a permit with an out of date address may want to obtain a permit showing the new address. If a person has moved within the same county, the address change can be handled as a duplicate (updated to show the new address). If a person has moved from one county to another, the address change can only be handled as a "new" permit application.

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## **RELOCATION FROM IOWA TO ANOTHER STATE**

**QUESTION:** I hold a Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons, but since the permit was issued, I have moved out of Iowa. Is my permit still valid?

**ANSWER:** Iowa law does not address this question. Though there is nothing that specifies that a permit is no longer valid if a person moves out of state, in order to be eligible to be issued a Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons, a person must be an Iowa resident. As such, it seems possible that a court could conclude that a permit is no longer valid after a move out of state, but Iowa DPS is not aware of any cases addressing this issue. The most cautious course of action for a permit holder who moves out of state would be to assume the permit is not valid. By making this assumption, a person would not get the benefit of the remaining period of validity, which may be a lesser concern than assuming a permit remained valid, but having a court rule otherwise.

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## **RELOCATION TO IOWA FROM ANOTHER STATE**

**QUESTION:** I am moving to Iowa from another state. Can I transfer my permit from another state to Iowa?

**ANSWER:** Iowa law does not provide a mechanism to transfer another state's permit for an Iowa permit upon establishing residency in Iowa. As such, a person relocating to Iowa will simply apply for a new Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons at the Sheriff's Office of the person's new county of residence. However, it is possible that the training completed for the permit from another state might satisfy the training requirement for the Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons. Under Iowa law, a person must complete any handgun safety training course utilizing an NRA certified instructor or a state law enforcement certified instructor. Additionally, a person can use military small arms training to satisfy the training requirement if the person had an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions. If a person has documentation of training and the instructor was NRA or law enforcement certified, or if a person has military small arms training, then that training will satisfy the requirement for Iowa.

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## **NAME CHANGES**

**QUESTION:** I recently had a change in marital status, and I changed my legal name as a result. Do I need to obtain an updated permit showing my new legal name?

**ANSWER:** There is no specific requirement in Iowa Code Chapter 724 that a person update their weapons permit upon a change of name. Given that there is no specific requirement to update a permit after a name change, it is the DPS view that a permit remains valid until the expiration date or until the permit is suspended or revoked for cause.

However, a person may encounter difficulty using a permit with an old name to acquire a firearm, and given the concern that others may question the validity of the permit, we have previously suggested that permit holders might wish to obtain a new permit from the sheriff of the county where the person now resides. If a person has changed names and moved to a different county, then it will be necessary to apply for a new permit. If a person has changed names and not moved (or moved within the same county) the request should be processed as a duplicate application filed with the Sheriff's Office that issued the original permit.

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## RECOGNITION/RECIPROCITY

QUESTION: I live in another state. Will Iowa honor my weapon permit issued in another state?

ANSWER: Iowa has what we commonly call "universal recognition." As a matter of law, any permit or license to carry issued by another state is recognized as if it were an Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons, but only if such permit or license is held by a person who is NOT an Iowa resident.

QUESTION: My state requires a reciprocity agreement before it can recognize an out-of-state permit. Will Iowa enter into such a reciprocity agreement?

ANSWER: No. Iowa law does not provide for entering into reciprocity agreements with states that require them. Instead, Iowa has "universal recognition."

QUESTION: I live in Iowa and hold a Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons. Which states recognize the Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons?

ANSWER: Iowa DPS does not maintain a list of states that honor/recognize the Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons, in large part because any attempt to do so could result in Iowa residents acting on incomplete or out-of-date information. Additionally, it is not enough to simply know if a state recognizes the Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons. A person wishing to carry in another state should also be aware of any limitations or restrictions on carrying (even with a permit). Some states have special restrictions that apply in bars or restaurants that serve alcohol. Others have restrictions that apply to churches, government property, etc... Some states, such as Iowa, invalidate a permit if a person is intoxicated, while others do not permit carrying while a person is consuming alcohol (even if they are not to the point of intoxication). Iowa DPS encourages permit holders to contact the state(s) where they will be traveling to get current information from the people/agencies that are in the best position to know and fully understand the laws of that state. When a person contacts another state, the person may get more information than simply whether a state honors the Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons.

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## TRAINING

QUESTION: What are the training requirements for a new Permit to Carry Weapons?

ANSWER:

- Completion of any National Rifle Association (NRA) handgun safety training course.
- Completion of any handgun safety training course available to the general public offered by a law enforcement agency, community college, college, private or public institution or organization, or firearms training school, utilizing instructors certified by the National Rifle Association or certain other firearms training certifying bodies (such as the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy).
- Completion of any handgun safety training course offered for security guards, investigators, special deputies, or any division or subdivision of a law enforcement or security enforcement agency approved by the Iowa Department of Public Safety.
- Completion of small arms training while serving with the armed forces of the United States as evidenced by any of the following:
  - For personnel released or retired from active duty, possession of an honorable discharge or general discharge under honorable conditions.
  - For personnel on active duty or serving in one of the national guard or reserve components of the armed forces of the United States, possession of a certificate of completion of basic training with a service record of successful completion of small arms training and qualification.
- Completion of a law enforcement agency firearms training course that qualifies a peace officer to carry a firearm in the normal course of the peace officer's duties.

QUESTION: Can there be additional training requirements imposed by the Iowa Department of Public Safety or a Sheriff's Office for a new or renewal Permit to Carry Weapons?

ANSWER: An issuing officer cannot impose additional training requirements in excess of those identified in Iowa law.

QUESTION: What documentation of training is acceptable for the application for a new Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons? Can I still use the Iowa firearms safety training program Form WP-0?

ANSWER: As of January 1, 2011, Iowa law no longer authorizes the Iowa Department of Public Safety to publish the Form WP-0. The following documentation will be acceptable:

- A photocopy of a certificate of completion or any similar document indicating completion of any course or class identified above.
- An affidavit from the instructor, school, organization, or group that conducted or taught a course or class identified above attesting to the completion of the course or class by the applicant.
- A photocopy of a DD-214 or other documentation showing honorable or general discharge under honorable conditions from military service.

## **USE OF PERMIT TO CARRY WEAPONS AS A PERMIT TO ACQUIRE A PISTOL OR REVOLVER**

QUESTION: I hold an Iowa Permit to Carry Weapons and want to acquire a handgun. Do I also need to obtain a Permit to Acquire a Pistol or Revolver?

ANSWER: No. In most cases a person acquiring a handgun is required to hold a Permit to Acquire a Pistol or Revolver, but there are exceptions. One such exception is granted to a person who holds a Permit to Carry Weapons. As such, DPS commonly says that a Permit to Carry Weapons is "recognized" as a Permit to Acquire a Pistol or Revolver as shorthand to describe this exception.

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## **DUTY TO CARRY PERMIT**

QUESTION: When I am going armed, do I need to carry my permit on my person, or can law enforcement simply run a check to see if I hold a valid permit?

ANSWER: There is no central database for the Permit to Carry Weapons. As such, a person who goes armed should carry their permit on their person. A person who goes armed with a concealed handgun and who holds a Permit to Carry Weapons, but does not have it on their person, commits a simple misdemeanor.

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## **PERIOD OF PERMIT VALIDITY**

QUESTION: How long will my Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons be valid?

ANSWER: The Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons is valid for five years, unless suspended or revoked for cause.

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## **PERMIT RESTRICTIONS AND PERMIT VALIDITY**

QUESTION: Can my permit be restricted?

ANSWER: No. Permits issued after January 1, 2011, are valid statewide except where carrying or possession of a firearm is prohibited by state or federal law. Permits cannot be further restricted by the issuing officer.

QUESTION: I understand that my permit is valid statewide, but are there places or circumstances where my permit is not valid?

ANSWER: A Permit to Carry Weapons is valid statewide, except where carrying or possession of a firearm is prohibited by state or federal law. A simplified list of circumstances and places where a permit may not be valid under state law is as follows:

- During any period of intoxication by alcohol, drugs, or a combination of alcohol and drugs
- K-12 school grounds
- State Board of Regents institutions (University of Iowa, Iowa State University, University of Northern Iowa)
- State licensed casinos
- State capitol complex buildings
- State fairgrounds
- State parks and preserves (only use is prohibited, not carrying/possession)
- State game refuge
- While riding in ATV
- While riding a snowmobile
- While bowhunting

QUESTION: Can the owner of private property (to include businesses/employers) regulate the carrying of weapons on their private property?

ANSWER: The topic of firearms restrictions on private property and in the workplace is not addressed in Iowa firearms law.

## **DECLARATION UPON CONTACT WITH A PEACE OFFICER**

**QUESTION:** If I am stopped by a law enforcement officer in Iowa, am I required to declare that I am carrying a loaded firearm?

**ANSWER:** No, but it is really good idea. Iowa law does not require such a declaration; however, as a safety measure for both the permit holder and the officer, making such a declaration voluntarily is recommended and encouraged.

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## **OTHER QUESTIONS**

**QUESTION:** Will my Iowa driver's license be flagged to indicate that I have an Iowa permit to carry?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** Can fingerprints be collected in conjunction with submittal of an application for a permit?

**ANSWER:** If an Issuing officer encounters a situation that involves a dispute related to the identity of an applicant or a conviction that is attributed to an applicant, the submission of fingerprints may be the most expedient method to clear up the dispute regarding identity or criminal history. Fingerprints might also help to accelerate the process of an appeal to the FBI of a denial based on a NICS check.

**QUESTION:** I live in another state. Can I get an Iowa Nonprofessional Permit to Carry Weapons?

**ANSWER:** No. Iowa nonprofessional permits to carry weapons will only be issued to qualified Iowa residents. Nonresidents will still be able to apply for professional permits to carry weapons if needed for employment related reasons.

**QUESTION:** If my permit application is denied, or my permit is suspended or revoked, and I wish to appeal the denial, how would I do that?

**ANSWER:** A denial, suspension, or revocation based solely on the results of a NICS check must be appealed to FBI NICS. Any other denial, suspension, or revocation may be appealed to an Administrative Law Judge. Information about appealing to an Administrative Law Judge is available in a separate [FAQ](#).

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