

# Regulation of Public Carry

State and local governments should curtail the risks posed by firearms in public by strengthening regulations on public carry. Concealed carry laws regulate who can carry a loaded, concealed handgun in public spaces. Open carry laws regulate who can carry guns that are visible to others in public spaces. Permissive open and concealed carry laws can increase gun violence and pose a serious threat to public health and safety.

## Key Takeaways

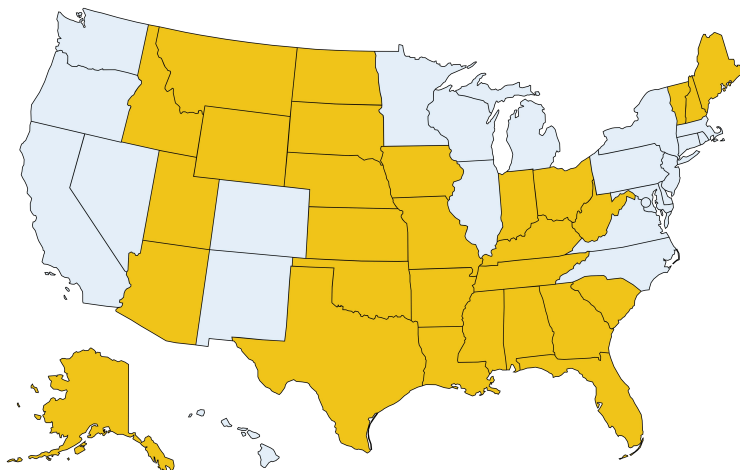
- Over the past several decades, states across the country have weakened their concealed carry laws, significantly expanding the number of firearms carried in public and resulting in increases of violent crime, firearm assaults, criminals' access to firearms through theft, and other undesirable outcomes.
- Permitless carry removes essential requirements, such as background checks and trainings on the safe handling and storage of firearms.

## Policy Recommendations

- ✓ Congress should oppose any legislation requiring concealed carry reciprocity between states given different permitting standards.
- ✓ States should regulate the open carrying of firearms in public places.
- ✓ States should have strong concealed carry permitting laws.



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## State Concealed Carry Permitting Status: 2025

-  **Permitless**
-  **Permitted**

## Research Highlights

States that weakened their concealed carry permitting requirements had a 9.5% increase in gun assaults and a 29% higher rate of firearm workplace homicides.<sup>1, 2</sup>

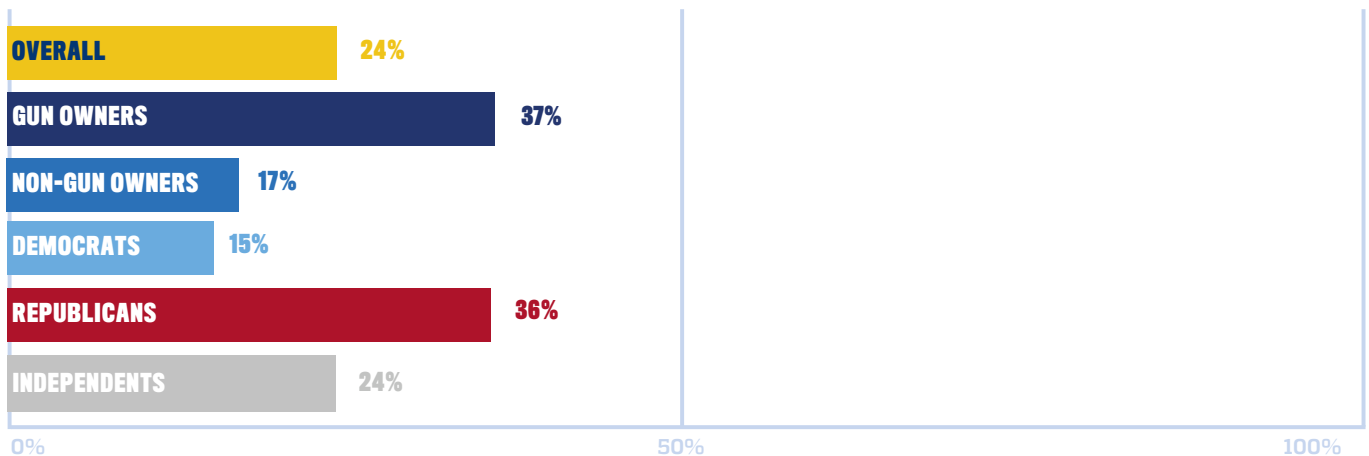
Ten years after states enacted shall-issue laws, they experienced violent crime rates 13-15% higher than what would have been expected if such a law was not enacted.<sup>4</sup>

States that passed permitless concealed carry weapon laws from 2014-2020 experienced a 12.9% increase in officer-involved shootings of civilians, compared to rates expected had they not adopted these laws.<sup>3</sup>

## Public Opinion Polling



Nationally, less than one in four adults approve of permitless carry policies.<sup>5</sup>



### Endnotes

1 Doucette M, McCourt A, Crifasi C, & Webster D. (2023). *Impact of Changes to Concealed-Carry Weapons Laws on Fatal and Nonfatal Violent Crime, 1980-2019. American Journal of Epidemiology.*

2 Doucette ML, Crifasi CK, & Frattaroli S. (2019). Right-to-carry laws and firearm workplace homicides: a longitudinal analysis (1992-2017). *American Journal of Public Health.*

3 Doucette M, et al. (2022). Officer-involved shootings and Concealed Carry Weapons permitting laws: analysis of Gun Violence Archive data, 2014-2020. *Journal of Urban Health.*

4 Donohue JJ, Aneja A, & Weber KD. (2019). Right-to-carry laws and violent crime: A comprehensive assessment using panel data and a state-level synthetic control analysis. *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies.*

5 2025 National Survey of Gun Policy