

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1352

As of March 25, 1999

Title: An act relating to temporary emergency concealed pistol licenses.

Brief Description: Allowing temporary emergency concealed pistol licenses.

Sponsors: Representatives Carrell, Constantine, Sheahan, Koster, Dickerson, Mielke, Lambert, Fortunato, Lantz, D. Schmidt, Boldt, Kessler, Benson, McMorris, Mulliken, Wensman, Crouse, Hatfield, Gombosky, Talcott, DeBolt, Wood, Hurst, Anderson, Pflug, Mitchell, Dunn, Buck, Wolfe, G. Chandler, McDonald, Campbell, Alexander, Skinner, Thomas, Esser and Bush.

Brief History: Passed House 3/4/99, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 3/26/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Staff: Harry Steinmetz (786-7421)

Background: Persons are generally prohibited from carrying a concealed pistol in Washington without a concealed pistol license (CPL). A CPL is not required in a person's home or place of business. Carrying a concealed pistol without having been issued a CPL is a misdemeanor. Failure to carry a CPL in one's immediate possession while carrying a concealed pistol is a civil infraction.

Eligibility for a Washington State CPL. A person may apply to the city or county of his or her residence for a CPL. A person who applies for a concealed pistol license must pay a fee and undergo a state and federal criminal history background check, including fingerprinting. In order to be eligible a person must:

- be eligible to possess a firearm;
- be 21 or older;
- not be subject to an injunction regarding firearms;
- not be pending trial, appeal, or sentencing for a felony offense;
- not be subject to an outstanding arrest warrant for any crime; and
- not have been within the past year ordered to forfeit a firearm for possessing a concealed firearm while intoxicated in a place where a concealed pistol license is required.

A person is not eligible to possess a firearm, and therefore is not eligible for a CPL, if he or she has been convicted of any felony or convicted of certain misdemeanors committed against a family or household member, or if he or she has been involuntarily committed for mental health reasons. Restoration of rights is available under some circumstances and after varying periods of time for some of these disqualifying conditions.

Time Involved in Getting a CPL. A police chief or sheriff has up to 30 days to respond to an application for a CPL. However, if the applicant does not present a Washington driver's license or identicard, or has not been a Washington resident for at least 90 days, the police chief or sheriff may take up to 60 days to issue a CPL.

Temporary Emergency CPLs. For "good cause" a police chief or sheriff may issue a temporary emergency CPL pending the background check of an applicant for a license. Temporary CPLs must be easily distinguishable from a regular CPL, and a temporary CPL does not exempt a person from the background check requirements that apply to the purchase of a firearm. "Good cause" for purposes of getting a temporary emergency CPL is not defined in statute.

Effect of CPL on Firearms Purchases. Under state law, possession of a valid CPL exempts a person from an otherwise applicable background check and five-day waiting period for the purchase of a pistol. If Washington CPLs met the requirements of federal law, they would also exempt purchasers of pistols and other firearms from criminal background checks and waiting periods under federal law. However, at this time it appears that Washington State's requirements for a CPL may not qualify possessors of Washington CPLs for this exemption under the federal "Brady Law." All purchases of firearms now require a federal criminal background "instant check," which may take anywhere from minutes to three days. In addition, whether or not a person has a CPL, a local sheriff or police chief may put a hold of up to 30 days on the purchase of a pistol if there are reasonable grounds to believe the prospective purchaser is not eligible to possess a pistol.

Summary of Bill: For purposes of getting a temporary emergency CPL "good cause" is defined to include, but not limited to, the fact that the applicant:

- has obtained a no-contact, antiharassment, or protection order against another person; and
- has signed an affidavit that he or she is eligible to possess a firearm.

A temporary CPL issued on the basis of a no-contact, antiharassment, or protection order expires at the termination of the order or a determination that the applicant is not eligible for a CPL, whichever is earlier.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.