



Constitutional Carry

Support HB 357

What is Constitutional Carry?

Constitutional carry is also called “cardless carry” or “permitless carry.” It affirms our right to carry a handgun openly or concealed without needing a license.

How does Texas compare to gun carry laws across the country?

Currently, 13 states recognize Constitutional Carry -- the ability to carry open or concealed without a permit. Over 30 states allow open carry without a permit. Texas is behind: we were the 45th state to pass *licensed open carry*.



FAQ

What about criminals such as felons or domestic abusers? Would this allow them to carry?

Those who are prohibited from possessing a firearm (such as felons and domestic abusers) would not be able to carry. This law would apply only to those who legally own a firearm.

Would it allow people to carry guns everywhere?

Constitutional Carry addresses *who* may carry a firearm, not *where* they may carry it.

Will it harm public safety?

No, it's more likely to improve public safety, since those who want to use guns for harm already carry them illegally without regard for the law; this could reduce barriers for would-be victims to defend themselves against those people. The Crime Prevention Research Center reports data that agrees: *“The five states in 2013 that allowed concealed carry without a permit had much lower murder and violent crime rates than the five jurisdictions with the lowest permit rates. Indeed, the murder rate was 33 percent lower in the states not requiring permits. The violent crime rate was 32 percent lower.”* (www.crimeresearch.org)

Will this get rid of licenses?

No! The license requirement will still be an option for anyone who would like it for gun purchase or reciprocity.

What type of carry is currently allowed in Texas without a license?

Currently in Texas, those who legally own a handgun may carry it openly or concealed on their own premises or premises under their control, and they may carry it concealed in their vehicles (provided they're not breaking other laws at the time). Those who legally own a rifle or shotgun may carry it in public except in specific places where firearms or unlicensed carry are prohibited by law.

Myths

Constitutional Carry increases firearm homicide rates: False! As shown in the chart below Arizona's rate went down in years after Constitutional Carry Passed.

Law Enforcement will not know who is armed and will treat everyone like they are armed: False! Officers are already trained to treat everyone like they are armed.

People will carry without being trained to do so: False! Currently Texas law requires a short class and minimal skills test to get a license to carry. This can create a false sense of readiness. In states that passed Constitutional Carry training and permits INCREASED overall.

Republican Party of Texas Legislative Priority:

“Pass constitutional carry while maintaining licensing as optional for reciprocity purposes.”

Not only is Constitutional Carry a priority of Texas Young Republicans, but for the past three sessions it has been the top legislative priority for the Republican Party of Texas. In the same time, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Missouri (overturning gubernatorial veto), New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, and West Virginia have passed similar legislation.

