

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>