



Guns on Campus? When? Where?

On June 1, 2015, Governor Greg Abbott signed into law Senate Bill 11 (S.B.11), also known as the Campus Carry Law. **S.B. 11 allows Concealed Handgun License (CHL) holders or those Licensed to Carry (LTC) to carry a Concealed Handgun on the campus of an institution of higher education in Texas. The Campus Carry Law takes effect for Community Colleges on August 1, 2017; the law goes into effect for Texas Universities this year on August 1, 2016.** The Open Carrying (carrying of a handgun in plain sight) will still be prohibited on all community college and university campuses.

In the coming months we will be having a number of Forums, both campus-wide and community-wide, to discuss how we wish to regulate handguns on campus, in the classroom and in the dormitories, and to develop a policy regarding that regulation. Under S.B. 11, any rule or regulation enacted by the President must meet two tests: it must be reasonable and it must not have the effect of generally prohibiting license holders from carrying their handguns on campus.

The First Forum will be held Tuesday, February 16, 2016 in the Fine Arts Theater from 7:00pm – 8:30pm. This first forum is intended for WTC students, faculty & staff. Additional forums will be announced in the coming months.

House Bill 910: Open Carry Law

The **Open Carry Law** (HB 910) took effect January 1, 2016. Citizens with a Concealed Handgun License (CHL) or a License to Carry (LTC) are now able to legally carry a handgun **openly** or concealed. For a handgun to be **openly** carried, the following conditions must be met:

1. The individual must possess a valid license to carry.
2. The loaded or unloaded handgun must be in a belt or shoulder holster.

Specific locations where carrying a handgun is prohibited, regardless of whether the handgun is holstered, even when properly carried with a valid license, include:

- **A high school, college, or professional sporting event**
- **An institution of higher education**
- A room where a governmental entity subject to the Open Meeting Act is conducting a meeting if notice has been given that handguns are not allowed
- Physical premises of a school and grounds, school bus or any place where a school function is being conducted

- On any public or private driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage or other parking area of an institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education
- A Church, synagogue, or other place of worship
- A Secured area of an airport
- A polling or early voting location, while voting is in progress
- Premises of any government court or court office
- A business with a TABC (Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission) license that derives 51% or more of its income from the sale of alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption
- A hospital or nursing home
- A racetrack
- An amusement park

With the enactment of the Open Carry Law, it may become common to see individuals exercising their right to carry a handgun openly. Individuals should not necessarily be alarmed at the site of an armed individual.

Individuals carrying a handgun must present their license to carry to a peace officer in the event they are stopped or detained. Persons carrying openly should be prepared for the possibility of an officer to stop and verify they have a valid license to carry. Police officers also have the authority to temporarily disarm a person who is carrying a handgun.

Individuals who hold a valid CHL may continue to carry with a valid existing license. A separate license will not be required to open carry. No additional fee will be required. Individuals currently licensed will not be required to attend additional training.

Training curriculum for new applicants will be updated to reflect the new training requirements related to the use of restraint holsters and methods to ensure the secure carrying of openly carried handguns. The new curriculum will be required for all classes beginning January 1, 2016. DPS has updated their website and training materials to reference License to Carry (LTC) instead of Concealed Handgun License (CHL).

Changes to the laminated license have been implemented. New licenses will read "License to Carry Handgun" instead of "Concealed Handgun License." The eligibility criteria to obtain a license to carry has not changed.

Carrying of a gun while intoxicated is unlawful.

Businesses and property owners may prohibit concealed and/or open carry on their premises. Those businesses may post notice at the entrance to the property that prohibits carry. They may also give verbal notice that open or concealed carry is prohibited. It is unlawful to disregard either an "Open Carry of Handguns Prohibited" or "Handguns Prohibited" posted notice.

<https://www.txdps.state.tx.us/RSD/CHL/Legal/newlegislation.htm>