

**45-8-315. Definition.** "Concealed weapon" means any weapon mentioned in [45-8-316](#) through [45-8-318](#) and [45-8-321](#) through [45-8-328](#) that is wholly or partially covered by the clothing or wearing apparel of the person carrying or bearing the weapon, except that for purposes of [45-8-321](#) through [45-8-328](#), concealed weapon means a handgun or a knife with a blade 4 or more inches in length that is wholly or partially covered by the clothing or wearing apparel of the person carrying or bearing the weapon.

**45-8-321. Permit to carry concealed weapon.** (1) A county sheriff shall, within 60 days after the filing of an application, issue a permit to carry a concealed weapon to the applicant. The permit is valid for 4 years from the date of issuance. An applicant must be a United States citizen who is 18 years of age or older and who holds a valid Montana driver's license or other form of identification issued by the state that has a picture of the person identified. An applicant must have been a resident of the state for at least 6 months. Except as provided in subsection (2), this privilege may not be denied an applicant unless the applicant:

- (a) is ineligible under Montana or federal law to own, possess, or receive a firearm;
- (b) has been charged and is awaiting judgment in any state or federal crime that is punishable by incarceration for 1 year or more;
- (c) has been convicted in any state or federal court of a crime punishable by more than 1 year of incarceration or, regardless of the sentence that may be imposed, a crime that includes as an element of the crime an act, attempted act, or threat of intentional homicide, violence, bodily or serious bodily harm, unlawful restraint, sexual abuse, or sexual intercourse or contact without consent;
- (d) has been convicted under [45-8-327](#) or [45-8-328](#), unless the applicant has been pardoned or 5 years have elapsed since the date of the conviction;
- (e) has a warrant of any state or the federal government out for the applicant's arrest;
- (f) has been adjudicated in a criminal or civil proceeding in any state or federal court to be an unlawful user of an intoxicating substance and is under a court order of imprisonment or other incarceration, probation, suspended or deferred imposition of sentence, treatment or education, or other conditions of release or is otherwise under state supervision;
- (g) has been adjudicated in a criminal or civil proceeding in any state or federal court to be mentally ill, mentally defective, or mentally disabled and is still subject to a disposition order of that court; or
- (h) was dishonorably discharged from the United States armed forces.

(2) The sheriff may deny an applicant a permit to carry a concealed weapon if the sheriff has reasonable cause to believe that the applicant is mentally ill, mentally defective, or mentally disabled or otherwise may be a threat to the peace and good order of the community to the extent that the applicant should not be allowed to carry a concealed weapon. At the time an application is denied, the sheriff shall, unless the applicant is the subject of an active criminal investigation, give the applicant a written statement of the reasonable cause upon which the denial is based.

(3) An applicant for a permit under this section must, as a condition to issuance of the permit, be required by the sheriff to demonstrate familiarity with a firearm by:

- (a) completion of a hunter education or safety course approved or conducted by the

department of fish, wildlife, and parks or a similar agency of another state;

(b) completion of a firearms safety or training course approved or conducted by the department of fish, wildlife, and parks, a similar agency of another state, a national firearms association, a law enforcement agency, an institution of higher education, or an organization that uses instructors certified by a national firearms association;

(c) completion of a law enforcement firearms safety or training course offered to or required of public or private law enforcement personnel and conducted or approved by a law enforcement agency;

(d) possession of a license from another state to carry a firearm, concealed or otherwise, that is granted by that state upon completion of a course described in subsections (3)(a) through (3)(c); or

(e) evidence that the applicant, during military service, was found to be qualified to operate firearms, including handguns.

(4) A photocopy of a certificate of completion of a course described in subsection (3), an affidavit from the entity or instructor that conducted the course attesting to completion of the course, or a copy of any other document that attests to completion of the course and can be verified through contact with the entity or instructor that conducted the course creates a presumption that the applicant has completed a course described in subsection (3).

(5) If the sheriff and applicant agree, the requirement in subsection (3) of demonstrating familiarity with a firearm may be satisfied by the applicant's passing, to the satisfaction of the sheriff or of any person or entity to which the sheriff delegates authority to give the test, a physical test in which the applicant demonstrates the applicant's familiarity with a firearm.

**45-8-316. Carrying concealed weapons.** (1) Every person who carries or bears concealed upon his person a dirk, dagger, pistol, revolver, slingshot, sword cane, billy, knuckles made of any metal or hard substance, knife having a blade 4 inches long or longer, razor, not including a safety razor, or other deadly weapon shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment in the county jail for a period not exceeding 6 months, or both.

(2) A person who has previously been convicted of an offense, committed on a different occasion than the offense under this section, in this state or any other jurisdiction for which a sentence to a term of imprisonment in excess of 1 year could have been imposed and who carries or bears concealed upon his person any of the weapons described in subsection (1) shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisoned in the state prison for a period not exceeding 5 years, or both.

**45-8-327. Carrying a concealed weapon while under the influence.** A person commits the offense of carrying a concealed weapon while under the influence if he purposely or knowingly carries a concealed weapon while under the influence of an intoxicating substance. It is not a defense that the person had a valid permit to carry a concealed weapon. A person convicted of the offense shall be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 6 months or fined an amount not to exceed \$500, or both.

**45-8-328. Carrying concealed weapon in prohibited place -- penalty.** (1) A person commits the offense of carrying a concealed weapon in a prohibited place if the person purposely or knowingly carries a concealed weapon in:

(a) portions of a building used for state or local government offices and related areas in the building that have been restricted;

(b) a bank, credit union, savings and loan institution, or similar institution during the institution's normal business hours. It is not an offense under this section to carry a concealed weapon while:

(i) using an institution's drive-up window, automatic teller machine, or unstaffed night depository; or

(ii) at or near a branch office of an institution in a mall, grocery store, or other place unless the person is inside the enclosure used for the institution's financial services or is using the institution's financial services.

(c) a room in which alcoholic beverages are sold, dispensed, and consumed under a license issued under Title 16 for the sale of alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises.

(2) It is not a defense that the person had a valid permit to carry a concealed weapon. A person convicted of the offense shall be imprisoned in the county jail for a term not to exceed 6 months or fined an amount not to exceed \$500, or both.

**45-8-329. Concealed weapon permits from other states recognized -- advisory council.** (1) A concealed weapon permit from another state is valid in this state if:

(a) the person issued the permit has the permit in the person's immediate possession;

(b) the person bearing the permit is also in possession of an official photo identification of the person, whether on the permit or on other identification; and

(c) the state that issued the permit requires a criminal records background check of permit applicants prior to issuance of a permit.

(2) The attorney general shall develop and maintain a list of states from which permits are recognized under this section for the use by law enforcement agencies in this state.

(3) A determination or declaration of a Montana government entity, official, or employee is not necessary to the existence and exercise of the privilege granted by this section.

(4) The governor shall establish a council, composed of interested persons, including law enforcement personnel and gun owners, to advise the governor on and pursue concealed weapon permit issues.

**45-8-325. Permittee change of county of residence -- notification to sheriffs and chief of police.** A person with a permit to carry a concealed weapon who changes his county of residence shall within 10 days of the change inform the sheriffs of both the old and new counties of residence of his change of residence and that he holds the permit. If his residence changes either from or to a city or town with a police force, he shall also inform the chief of police in each of those cities or towns that has a police force.

**45-8-323. Denial of renewal -- revocation of permit.** A permit to carry a concealed weapon may be revoked or its renewal denied by the sheriff of the county in which the permittee resides if circumstances arise that would require the sheriff to refuse to grant the permittee an original license.

**45-8-313. Unlawful possession of firearm by convicted person.** (1) A person commits the offense of unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted person if the person purposely or knowingly purchases or possesses a firearm after the person has been convicted of:

(a) a felony for which the person received an additional sentence under [46-18-221](#); or  
(b) an offense under the law of another state or of the United States that is equivalent to an offense that when committed in Montana is subject to an additional sentence under [46-18-221](#).

(2) A person convicted of unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted person shall be imprisoned in a state prison for not less than 2 years or more than 10 years.

(3) A person who has been issued a permit under [45-8-314](#) may not be convicted of a violation of this section.

**45-8-330. (Temporary) Exemption of concealed weapon permittee from federal handgun purchase background check and waiting period.** A person possessing a concealed weapon permit is:

(1) considered to have a permit constituting completion of the background check required by 18 U.S.C. 921 through 925A; and

(2) exempt from that act's 5-day waiting period for the purchase of a handgun.

*(Subsections (1) and (2) terminate on the elimination of federal statutory or case law requirements--sec. 5, Ch. 408, L. 1995.)*