

**GUIDELINES RELATED TO CARRYING OF CONCEALED
FIREARMS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND CONGREGATION
ON A CHURCH'S PROPERTY
(November 2018)**

The following are guidelines regarding the carrying of concealed firearms by members of the public and the congregation on Church property.

If the vestry or bishop's committee approves these guidelines for the Church or creates a policy from the guidelines, it would be appropriate to create signature lines to evidence the approval of the governing body with the signatures of the rector/vicar and the senior warden. These guidelines should then be copied separately and available for individual congregants to sign to show their review and agreement to comply with the guidelines, as shown below.

The following are the guidelines of the (NAME OF CHURCH) regarding the carrying of concealed firearms by persons at (NAME OF CHURCH).

These guidelines are intended to balance the lawful rights of the individual under state and federal law regarding the carrying of a concealed firearm and the lawful rights of this Church as a private property entity for the purpose of maintaining a safe environment for all persons on the Church property. In the event of an active assailant incident, it is important that all persons who might be armed be aware of the Church's preplanning for dealing with such incidents and to reduce the possibility of innocent persons being injured as a result of negligence or being mistaken as a threat to congregants or responding emergency service agencies.

Nothing in these guidelines relieves the personal criminal or civil liability of an armed individual congregant, nor does the Church assume any liability for their actions while on Church property. Church staff and volunteers must comply with other qualifications and expectations when acting on the Church's behalf. See *Guidelines Related to Carrying of Concealed Firearms by Staff and Volunteers on a Church's Property*.

Washington is a "shall issue" state for eligible persons applying for a Concealed Pistol License.¹ As such, a properly licensed person may carry a concealed firearm anywhere except those state and federal statutorily prohibited areas. Churches are not within those statutorily prohibited areas except when such possession is denied on the property.

1. The primary purpose for any person issued a Concealed Pistol License is for self-defensive purposes or to defend an innocent third party and to comply with

¹ Revised Code of Washington 9.41.070.

all laws of the State of Washington relating to the carrying of a concealed handgun.

2. The person must hold a current Washington State Concealed Pistol license or, if a non-Washington resident, a current license from another jurisdiction which is recognized and accepted by the State of Washington.
3. If a congregant is legally authorized to carry a concealed firearm and intends to do so on Church property, that congregant must notify the Rector, Vicar or their designee(s) to insure that doing so will be done in a safe manner and that person is aware of what conduct is expected from them with regards to carrying a firearm on Church property. This is for the mutual safety of the congregant and other persons.
4. The congregant will be required to show evidence of having attended a training course by a National Rifle Association Certified Instructor or other state or nationally certified firearms instructor program, firearms school or agency to include but not limited to the following topics:
 - a. Firearm Safety Rules
 - b. Laws relating to the use of deadly force
 - i. Criminal Liability
 - ii. Civil Liability
 - c. Demonstrate safe gun handling
 - d. Live Fire demonstration may be required at the discretion of the Rector, Vicar or their designee.
 - e. A carried firearm must be legal to possess in the State of Washington under State and Federal law.
 - f. There shall be a record of this criteria and a photo copy of the concealed pistol license and other relevant information including a signed copy of receipt of these guidelines.

The Rector, Vicar or their designee shall have the discretion over the approval of such evidence of the above and other factors for acceptance or denial of the above conditions and any other relevant factor known relating to this section.

5. A person who is an active or retired commissioned law enforcement officer, reserve law enforcement officer or within other categories of qualified law enforcement officers under the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act² and have

² Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act, 2010 Title 18 USC, Chapter 44, Section 926(b)[qualified active duty LEO or 926 (c)[qualified retired LEO (LEOSA)

evidence of such certification are exempt from meeting the requirements of sections 2 & 4. As they may be a critical asset in an emergency, they are encouraged to contact the Rector, Vicar or their designee(s).

6. "Open Carry" is not permitted on any church property unless specifically authorized by the Rector or their designee.
7. The careless, reckless, or intentional exposure of the firearm by any person in a manner causing alarm to any congregant or staff member may be cause to request that person to leave their firearm at home, locked in their vehicle or leave the premises as determined by the Rector, Vicar or their designee.
8. As a private entity, (NAME OF CHURCH) retains at its sole discretion and absolute right to inform any person, for any reason, verbally or any written or electronic format, that they cannot carry a firearm on the church property. Such a determination shall be made solely by the Rector, Vicar or their designee(s). Failure to comply with such a prohibition may subject the person to prosecution for criminal trespass should they fail to leave the premises upon demand.

I have read, understand and agree to the above conditions.

Congregant

Date

Rector, Vicar or designee

Date