

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## Licensing

### **Q. I am a resident of Massachusetts. How do I obtain a firearms license?**

**A.** A license to carry (LTC) issued pursuant to G.L. c. 140, §131 or a firearms identification card (FID) issued pursuant to G.L. c. 140, §129B may be obtained from the police department where you reside or have a place of business (your licensing authority). Applications for a LTC or FID are available under "Firearms Forms and Applications".

A LTC Class A entitles the holder to possess a large capacity firearm (pistol or revolver), rifle or shotgun. (See G.L. c. 140, §121 for the definition of large capacity). A LTC Class B entitles the holder to possess a non-large capacity firearm or large capacity rifle or shotgun. A FID entitles the holder to possess non-large capacity rifles and shotguns.

There is a \$100 application fee for a LTC or FID. As part of the application process, an applicant must submit fingerprints for a comprehensive background check and, if a new applicant, provide proof of completion of a basic firearm safety course pursuant to G.L. c. 140, §131P.

### **Q: Is a license required to possess an air gun (i.e. bb or pellet guns, so-called air rifles or air pistols, paint ball guns) or ammunition therefore (i.e. bb's, pellets, CO2 cartridges, paint balls)?**

**A:** An FID Card is not required to possess an air gun in Massachusetts. Air guns are regulated by [M.G.L. c. 269, §12B](#) which limits their use by minors who are not accompanied by an adult, holding a sporting or hunting license, or holding a permit from the chief of police. Massachusetts law also prohibits anyone from discharging air rifles from across streets, alleys, public ways or railroads or railway right of ways. It should also be noted that an FID Card or an LTC are not required to purchase an air gun or ammunition. As such, the state FA10 form should not be used to record the sale of such air guns.

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### **Q: Can a nonresident obtain a permit to carry a weapon in Massachusetts?**

**A:** [MGL c. 140 § 131F](#) allows the Colonel of the State Police or his designee to issue a temporary LTC to nonresidents or persons not falling within the jurisdiction of a local licensing authority. Currently, the Firearms Record Bureau (FRB) has been designated to issue permits to nonresidents. The phone number of the FRB is (617) 660-4780.

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### **Q: Do I need an FID Card or an LTC Firearms to possess a gun in my home?**

**A:** Yes. At a minimum you need an FID Card for non-large capacity rifles and shotguns. For handguns you need either an LTC, or an FID Card combined with a Permit to Purchase firearms for the particular handgun in question.

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**Q: Where do I apply for a License to Carry (LTC) or a Firearms Identification (FID) Card?**

**A:** Generally, application is made to the local police department where the applicant resides or has a place of business. For more specific information on FIDs refer to [M.G.L. c. 140, §129B](#), or for LTCs refer to [M.G.L. c 140 § 131\(d\)](#) .

**Q: How can I obtain the status of my pending LTC or FID card application?**

**A:** You can now retrieve the status of the firearms license application you've submitted to your local police department through the DCJIS by calling (617) 660-4722 during the normal business hours of Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The following information is required:

Name

Date of birth

Active LTC, FID card, or machine gun license number

Driver's license number (for identity verification)

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## **Address Change**

**Q: I am changing my address. Who do I notify?**

**A:** Under [M.G.L. c. 140, §129B\(10\)](#), and [M.G.L. c. 140. § 131\(I\)](#) , a holder of an FID Card or an LTC must notify, in writing, the licensing authority that issued the Card or License, the chief of police into whose jurisdiction the Card or License holder moves, and the Commissioner of the DCJIS. The notice must be made by certified mail within 30 days of its occurrence.

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## **Purchasing and Selling**

**Q: How many guns a year can a person sell without being a dealer?**

**A:** Under [M.G.L. c. 140, §128A](#), a properly licensed resident who is not a dealer may sell up to four guns in any one calendar year through a private transfer of ownership.  
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**Q: Should a special form be used when selling guns through a private sale?**

**A:** The state form required for private sales is an FA10 Form. The FA10 replaced what was known as the "Blue Card" previously used for private sales. This transaction can be completed electronically using the [Massachusetts Firearms Registration and Transfer System](#). Alternatively, a paper FA10 form can be obtained from any police department. The seller must fill out the form and forward it to the Firearms Record Bureau (FRB) within seven days of the transaction.  
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**Q: Do weapons purchased by Massachusetts residents while in another state have to be reported in Massachusetts?**

**A:** [M.G.L. c. 140, §128B](#), residents who purchase from someone other than a Massachusetts dealer, either within or outside the Commonwealth, must report the purchase within seven days to the FRB. The transaction must be reported using the [Massachusetts Firearms Registration and Transfer System](#) or a paper FA10 form.  
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**Q: Can a Massachusetts resident sell a gun without being a licensed dealer?**

**A:** Yes. Under [M.G.L. c. 140, §128A](#), a Massachusetts resident may sell a gun provided that he lawfully possesses it with an appropriate FID Card or LTC, or is otherwise exempt, and that the person buying the gun is also properly licensed with the appropriate FID Card or LTC (depending on the type of gun being bought). The transaction must be reported using the [Massachusetts Firearms Registration and Transfer System](#) or a paper FA10 form.

**Q: How can I retrieve my personal identification (PIN) number?**

**A:** You can retrieve the PIN number for your active LTC, FID card, or machine gun license through the DCJIS by calling (617) 660-4722 during the normal business hours of Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The following information is required:

Name

Date of birth

Active LTC, FID card, or machine gun license number Driver's license number (for identity verification)

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## Safety Locks

### **Q: Should all weapons sold within the Commonwealth be equipped with a safety lock?**

**A:** [M.G.L. c. 140, §131K](#) states that all sales of firearms and large capacity weapons in Massachusetts MUST include a safety device approved by the colonel of state police. This requirement applies to any seller including a wholesaler. The seller is not required to install the device so long as the weapon is accompanied by it. Failure to comply with this provision will constitute a breach of warranty and an unfair trade practice. This section does not apply to non-large capacity rifles and shotguns.

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### **Q: If an individual buys a handgun or large capacity rifle or shotgun from a dealer, can he supply his own trigger lock to avoid paying for a new one from the dealer?**

**A:** No. [M.G.L. c. 140, §131K](#) states that a state approved safety device must be sold with the weapon. This places the burden on the dealer to provide the safety device and does not allow the dealer an option of letting the purchaser provide a trigger lock.

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### **Q: Are state-approved trigger locks required any time a trigger lock is used?**

**A:** No. State-approved trigger locks are only required under the provisions of [M.G.L. c. 140, §131K](#) which applies to dealers who provide them with handguns and large capacity rifles and shotguns that they sell. State-approved trigger locks are not required in any other section of chapter 140. However, most common trigger locks that would be used to help the gun owner comply with section [131L](#) are likely to be state approved even though that approval is not required

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## Transporting Firearms

### **Q: How do I transport a gun in my vehicle?**

**A:** A person with a Class "A" LTC may transport a handgun loaded or unloaded on his person or under his direct control in the vehicle. If the handgun is not under his direct control, it must be unloaded and in a locked case, locked trunk or other secure container.

A person with a Class "B" LTC must transport handguns unloaded and in a locked case, locked trunk or other secure container. All persons transporting large capacity rifles and shotguns must transport them unloaded and in a locked case, locked trunk or other secure container. Trigger locks do not meet the requirements of securing a weapon during transport in motor vehicle.

For more specific information see [M.G.L. c. 140, §131C](#).  
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**Q: Do I need to lock my non-large capacity rifles and shotguns in a case while transporting them in a vehicle?**

**A:** No. They must be transported unloaded, but are not required to be in a locked case while transporting.  
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**Q: Can I leave my gun in my car if I need to go into the store on my way home from the range or from hunting?**

**A:** If your handgun or large capacity rifle or shotgun is transported in accordance with the provisions of [M.G.L. c. 140, §131C](#) (i.e. unloaded and in a locked case, locked trunk or other secure container) then the gun may be left unattended in the vehicle. Weapons transported in this manner will automatically be considered "stored or kept" in compliance with the safe storage requirements of [§131L](#).

A person leaving a non-large capacity rifle or shotgun in an unattended vehicle is required to lock the rifle or shotgun in a case/container or in the trunk, or install a mechanical locking device on the weapon (i.e. cable or trigger lock).  
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## Restraining Orders

**Q: Can an individual who is the subject of a restraining order, seek to have the judge remove the surrender portion of the restraining order with regards to weapons permits so that he/she can possess a weapon?**

**A:** Previously, the surrender order could be lifted by the judge, pursuant to [M.G.L. c. 209A, §3C](#), and guns and permits could be returned even though the restraining order remained in effect. Under recent changes in [M.G.L. c. 140, §§129B](#) and [131](#), the suspension and surrender of a defendant's FID Card or LTC must continue as long as the underlying restraining order is in effect.  
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