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MEMORANDUM OF LAW

From: Matthew D. Cubeiro
To:
Re: Comprehensive Overview of CCW License in California
Date: 4/6/2026

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum provides a comprehensive overview of the process for applying for and obtaining a Carry Concealed Weapon (“CCW”) license in California, as governed by state law. The analysis focuses on California Penal Code sections 26150 through 26235, which outline the statutory framework for CCW licenses, including eligibility, issuance, renewal, training, conditions, and restrictions. Additionally, it examines sections 4400 through 4440 of Title 11 of the California Code of Regulations, which detail administrative regulations related to CCW licenses, including definitions, uniform license design, instructor certification, revocation procedures, and background checks.

This updated memo includes specific analysis of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD), Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office (SCSO) policies and practices, highlighting discrepancies with state law and regulations. Information is drawn from agency websites and recent online resident reports (from June 22, 2025, onward).

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II. KEY TAKEAWAYS AND COMMON PROBLEMS

- Many issuing authorities are unaware of the recent changes made to the CCW application process as applied to non-residents, the effect of prior temporary restraining orders, and other amendments.
- Certain applicants may use confidential addresses if participating in state-related programs in lieu of their residential address.
- Issuing agencies may only charge application processing fees “equal to the reasonable costs for processing” and in no case may that fee exceed that cost.
- Psychological assessments are not required, but optional.
- Issuing authorities have specific statutory grounds to deny and statutory grounds to revoke. But these are independent from one another and do not always overlap.
- Issuing authorities are required to notify applicants of all reasons for a denial or revocation and provide specific information on how to appeal the decision.
- Although not expressly stated, any determination that an applicant is “disqualified” must still observe general Due Process principles. This means that if an applicant is determined to be disqualified due to an allegation of specified conduct, that conduct must have been examined by a court with notice and opportunity to be heard, and resulted in a ruling that the applicant did indeed engage in the specified conduct at issue.
- Statutory processing timelines require applicants be approved or denied within 120 days of submitting their application, or 30 days after receiving the livescan report from DOJ, whichever is later.
- All issuing agencies must make publicly available a CCW policy that meets specific minimum requirements.
- Issuing authorities are not liable for any damages caused by the issuance, suspension, revocation, or denial of a license, when done so in accordance with the statutes below.

III. APPLICABLE STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

A. California Penal Code Section 26150 Through 26235

The following Penal Code sections encompass California’s statutory framework regarding the issuance of a CCW. While most of these statutes have been in effect for decades in some form, they were significantly reworked following the adoption of Senate Bill No. 2 (“SB

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2”), which took effect on January 1, 2024. More recently, the adoption of Assembly Bill No. 1078 (“AB 1078”), which took effect on January 1 of this year, further amend these sections following recent litigation and related developments following the implementation of SB 2.

i. 26150 – General Application Requirements When Applying to County Sheriff

Penal Code section 26150 sets forth the general requirements for an individual to obtain a CCW in California when applying through their local sheriff’s office. In general, a CCW applicant must:

- 1) Not be “disqualified” pursuant to Penal Code section 26202;
- 2) Be at least 21 years of age, and present clear evidence of their identity and age (as defined in Penal Code section 16400);
- 3) Be a resident of the county (or city within the county), or have a principal place of employment or business in the county (or city within the county) and spend a substantial period of time in that place of employment or business;
- 4) Complete a training course as described in Penal Code section 26165; and,
- 5) Have an AFS record matching the applicant’s information for all firearms sought to be listed on the license.

Although rarely issued, this Penal Code allows sheriffs to issue a license to carry a loaded and exposed firearm, but only in those counties with populations of less than 200,000, and only within the county (meaning such permits are not valid statewide). Approximately 25-30 counties in California have populations less than 200,000.

This section also allows sheriffs to enter into agreements with local police departments within the county to process all CCW applications in lieu of the sheriff (but only as applied to applicants who reside in the police department’s jurisdiction).

Setting aside the above residency requirement, this section has recently been amended to allow non-CA residents to apply for a CCW following the adoption of AB 1078, provided the applicant “attests, under oath, that the jurisdiction in which they have applied is the primary location in California in which they intend to travel or spend time.” The training requirement has also been modified to state that if the licensing authority has not approved of any online training courses, “the applicant may complete an online training course approved by any other licensing authority that issues licenses under this section.” The live-fire course must also generally be within 75 miles of the applicant’s residence. Lastly, any firearms listed on the applicant’s license

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application need not have a matching AFS record on file with CA DOJ. Several issuing agencies appear to be unaware of these recent changes.

ii. 26155 – General Application Requirements When Applying to Local Police Department

Penal Code section 26155 is largely the same as Section 26150, with the exception that it concerns the issuance of a CCW by a municipal police department as opposed to the county sheriff. Applications are instead submitted to the specific city as opposed to the County. CA residents applying to a local municipality must be residents of the city (there is no principal place of employment exception like there is for County applications). All other requirements as applied to non-CA residents are unchanged.

Like a county, a city is authorized to issue a loaded and exposed carry permit if the city is within a county with a population of less than 200,000. This Penal Code also expressly states the chief or other head of a municipal police department may enter into an agreement with the sheriff of the county to process all CCW applications.

iii. 26160 – Requirement of Written Policy

This Penal Code simply requires all issuing authorities to publish and make available a written policy. The policy must at least summarize the provisions of Penal Code sections 26150(a-b) and 26155.

iv. 26162 – AFS Record Requirements for Listed Firearms

Following the adoption of Senate Bill No. 2, this section requires issuing authorities to determine if the applicant is the “recorded owner” of any firearm sought to be listed on the license.

While not expressly stated, this effectively means there is a Automated Firearms System (“AFS”) record on file for the firearm that is associated with the individual applicant. AFS records, however, do not reflect actual ownership or possession of the firearm.¹ This is because AFS records are usually only generated following a transaction at a California licensed firearms dealer. Many firearms are lawfully owned by individuals with no matching AFS record on file for various reasons.

Issuing authorities should be aware that there is no means by which a non-California resident can satisfy this requirement, as non-residents lack the required California Driver’s

¹ See <http://michellawyers.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Info-Bulletin-re-Changes-to-LEGR-Program.pdf>.

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License and/or Identification Card to generate such a record, hence the exception stated in sections 26150 and 26155.

v. 26165 – Required Training for CCW Applicants

This section states that CCW applicants must complete a training course that is “acceptable to the licensing authority” which meets all the following criteria:

- Be no less than 16 hours;
- Include instructions on firearm safety, handling, shooting technique, safe storage, legal methods of transport, securing firearms in vehicles, laws governing where permit holders may carry, laws regarding the permissible use of a firearm, and laws regarding the permissible use of lethal force in self-defense;
- Include a mental health and mental health resources component no less than one hour in length;
- Be taught and supervised by a DOJ-certified CCW instructor except for the mental health component;
- Require students to pass a written exam;
- Include live-fire shooting exercises and include a demonstration by the applicant of safe handling of, and shooting proficiency with, each firearm applying to be licensed to carry.

Issuing agencies must establish and make available the standards used when issuing licenses regarding the required live-fire shooting exercises, including minimum number of rounds to be fired and minimum passing scores from specified distances.

Notwithstanding the above, issuing authorities may instead require applicants to attend a POST training course at a community college, up to a maximum of 24 hours in length, but only if required uniformly of all applicants without exception.

As applied to renewal applicants, the training must be no less than eight hours and satisfy all other requirements. No course of training is required for any person certified by the licensing authority as a trainer.

Setting aside the above, applicants cannot be required to pay for any training courses prior to the initial determination of whether the applicant is a disqualified person pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Penal Code section 26202.

vi. 26170 – CCWs for Law Enforcement Personnel

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This section states that if an applicant is a deputized or appointed as a peace officer pursuant to subdivision (a) or (b) of Penal Code section 830.6 by the issuing agency, and otherwise satisfies specified criteria, the issuing authority must issue them a CCW. Issuing authorities may waive any fees for the issuance of such a license.

vii. 26175 – Requirement for Uniform CCW Application / Confidential Address Exceptions

This section makes clear that all CCW applications “shall be uniform throughout the state, upon forms to be prescribed by the Attorney General.” The specified application form has since been promulgated by the Bureau of Firearms.² This section also serves as the statutory basis by which the Attorney General has adopted uniform license formats that all issuing authorities must now use.

Often overlooked by issuing authorities, this section also makes clear that individuals who participate in the address confidentiality statutes commencing with Section 6205 of the Government Code may, in lieu of their residence or business address, provide the address designated to the applicant by the Secretary of State. Similarly, individuals listed in subdivision (c) of Penal Code section 26220 may provide a business address or an alternative mailing address, such as a Post Office Box, in lieu of their residential address.

viii. 26180 – Misdemeanor for Making False Statement in Application

This section makes it a misdemeanor to knowingly provide a false statement in the CCW application, and a felony to knowingly provide a false statement on the application regarding any of the following:

- The denial or revocation of a CA CCW license, or amendment;
- A criminal conviction;
- A finding of not guilty by reason of insanity;
- The use of a controlled substance;
- A dishonorable discharge from military service;
- A commitment to a mental institution; or,
- A renunciation of US citizenship.

² Many issuing agencies use an online system of some type (often Permittum) to process CCW application submissions. Systems such as these typically act to complete the questions on the DOJ-approved application in an electronic format, while also allowing a means to submit additional documents in connection with an application.

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ix. 26185 – Applicant Livescan Procedures

In general, this section concerns how an applicant’s livescan is to be handled by the Department of Justice and issuing authorities.

Upon proper notice, DOJ is required to submit the fingerprints for a background check and provide both a state and federal response to the licensing authority. DOJ will forward information to the licensing authority as to whether the person is prohibited by state or federal law from possessing, receiving, owning, or purchasing a firearm. A similar process is undertaken for renewal applications.

No license may be issued unless DOJ confirms the applicant’s eligibility. This means individuals who result in “undetermined” backgrounds will be barred from obtaining a CCW by statute.

Lastly, this section imposes a renewing livescan requirement beginning September 1, 2026, for all renewal applications after that date.

x. 26190 – Fees and Psychological Exam

This section sets forth the fee requirements for the issuance of a CCW. As a threshold matter, DOJ sets a fee for the cost of processing an applicant’s livescan, which can only be increased at a rate not to exceed the legislative approved annual cost-of-living adjustments for DOJ’s budget.

As applied to issuing agencies, they must charge an additional fee “equal to the reasonable costs for processing the application” (or amendment) excluding the livescan and training costs. Only the first 50% of this fee may be collected upon filing, and the remaining may only be collected upon issuance of the license. Although such fees may be increased, “in no case shall the local fees exceed the reasonable costs to the licensing authority.”

Given this, issuing authorities must justify any fee charged with some level of accounting of the costs associated with processing CCW applications. Ongoing litigation challenges jurisdictions imposing exorbitant fees.

Unrelated to fees, this section also allows licensing authorities to impose a psychological assessment. Importantly, this assessment is not required by statute but is instead optional. In the case of non-residents, such assessments must be conducted virtually or within 75 miles of the applicant’s residence. As with fees, applicants may be charged a fee for the assessment but in no case may the charge exceed the reasonable costs to the licensing authority.

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Issuing authorities may also impose additional psychological assessments for renewal applicants, but “only if there is compelling evidence of a public safety concern.” To date, we are unaware of such a situation arising where a renewal applicant is not already prohibited due to the underlying basis for the concern.

xi. 26195 – Required Denial and Revocation Reasons

This section states that issuing authorities cannot issue a CCW if any of the following are true:

- DOJ has determined the applicant is prohibited from possessing, receiving, owning, or purchasing a firearm;
- The applicant knowingly provides any inaccurate or incomplete information as outlined in subdivision (e) of Penal Code section 26175; or,
- The applicant fails to notify the issuing agency of any restraining order, arrest, charge, or conviction of a crime referenced in Penal Code section 26202.

This section further states that a license must be revoked if any of the following are true:

- The CCW holder has breached any conditions or restrictions outlined in Penal Code section 26200;
- The CCW holder knowingly provided inaccurate or incomplete information as outlined in subdivision (e) of Penal Code section 26175;
- The CCW holder fails to notify the issuing agency of any restraining order, arrest, charge, or conviction of a crime referenced in Penal Code section 26202; or,
- DOJ notifies the issuing agency that the CCW holder is prohibited from possessing, receiving, owning, or purchasing a firearm.

Issuing authorities must notify DOJ of any revocation, and provide immediate written notification to the CCW holder.

xii. 26200 – Restrictions and Conditions on CCWs

This section prohibits CCW holders from engaging in any of the following while carrying a firearm:

- Consuming alcoholic beverages or controlled substances;

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- Being in a place having a primary purpose of dispensing alcoholic beverages for onsite consumption;
- Be under the influence of any alcohol, medication, or controlled substance;
- Carrying a firearm not listed on the license or a firearm for which they are not the recorded owner (note that this does not expressly mention non-residents but such exceptions should equally apply);
- Falsely represent to a person that they are a peace officer;
- Engage in an unjustified display of a deadly weapon;
- Fail to carry their CCW license on their person;
- Impede a peace officer in the conduct of their activities;
- Refuse to display the license or to provide the firearm to a peace officer upon demand for purposes of inspecting the firearm;
- Violate any federal, state, or local criminal law.

This section also makes clear that issuing authorities may impose additional restrictions, but any such restrictions must be indicated on the license itself.

Lastly, this section limits the number of firearms that may be carried at any one time to two firearms.

xiii. 26202 – Reasons for Disqualification and Issuing Authority Investigation

This section outlines the reasons why an individual would be disqualified from obtaining a CCW in California. Substantial changes to this section were made recently and are now in effect as of January 1, 2026.

In general, unless a court makes a contrary determination, an applicant is deemed disqualified of any one or more of the following apply:

- Is reasonably like to be a danger to self or others as demonstrated in:
 - The application itself;
 - The licensing authorities investigation into the applicant; or,
 - As shown by the results of any psychological assessment;
- Has been convicted of contempt of court under Penal Code section 166 (or any federal law or similar state law that includes comparable elements);

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- Has been subject to any restraining order or similar order pursuant to the following provisions (or any federal law or similar state law that includes comparable elements) unless that order expired or was vacated or cancelled more than five years prior, or that order expired or was vacated and the applicant did not receive notice and an opportunity to be heard before the order was issued (meaning this does not apply to temporary orders issued prior to a hearing):
 - Stalking
 - Emergency Domestic Violence orders
 - Domestic Violence
 - Victim intimidation
 - Gun Violence Restraining Orders
 - Civil Harassment
 - Child Abuse / Visitation
 - Elder Abuse
- Convictions for any of the following in the past 10 years:
 - Interference with Civil Rights or Hate Crime
 - Specified offenses or outstanding warrants resulting in 10-year firearm prohibitions
- Has engaged in an unlawful or reckless use, display, or brandishing of a firearm (while not expressly stated, constitutional protections dictate a criminal conviction must have occurred and there was not a justifiable excuse like self-defense);
- Convictions for any offense listed in Penal Code sections 290, 667.5, 1192.5, 1192.7, or 29805 in the past 10 years that was dismissed pursuant to a plea or dismissed with a waiver pursuant to *People v. Harbey*, 25 Cal.3d 754 (1979);
- In the past 5 years has been committed to or incarcerated in county jail or state prison for, or on probation, parole, post release community supervision, or mandatory supervision because of a conviction of an offense, an element of which involves controlled substances or alcohol;
- Is an “unlawful user of or addicted to any controlled substance” as described under federal law in section 922 of Title 18 of the United States Code;
- Is currently engaging in excessive use or consumption of a controlled substance or alcohol reflecting that the applicant has lost the power of self-control;
- In the past 10 years, has experienced the loss or theft of multiple firearms due to the applicant’s lack of compliance with federal, state, or local law regarding storage,

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transportation, or securing the firearm (while not expressly stated, constitutional protections again imply the individual is proven to have failed to comply with storage requirements, such as through a criminal conviction subject to due process and an opportunity to be heard); or,

- Failed to report a loss of a firearm as required under Penal Code section 25250 or any other state, federal, or local law requiring such reporting (as with others above, constitutional protections require a conviction to have occurred).

In making a determination regarding any of the above reasons for disqualification, issuing authorities must conduct an investigation that meets all the following requirements:

- In-person or virtual interview of the applicant (optional for renewals);
- In-person, virtual, or telephonic interviews with at least three character references (option for renewals);
- A review of publicly available information about the applicant;
- A review of all information provided in the application;
- A review of the report provided by DOJ following the livescan; and,
- A review of CARPOS (California Restraining and Protective Order System) via CLETS (California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System).

Issuing authorities are not prohibited from conducting additional investigative efforts in addition to those listed above.

Within 90 days of receiving the completed application, issuing authorities must give written notice to the applicant of their initial determination. If the initial determination does not result in disqualification, the notice must inform the applicant to proceed with training and the livescan requirements.

If the initial determination is that the applicant is disqualified, the notice must inform the applicant of the reasons for the determination and inform the applicant that they may request a hearing from a court under Penal Code section 26206. IF the disqualification is based on a determination that the applicant is an unlawful user or addicted to a controlled substance, the issuing authority must notify the federal NICS system and include supporting documentation to that effect within 5 days of the determination. The issuing authority must retain that same documentation for at least 12 months from the date of submission to NICS.

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xiv. 26205 – Processing Time Requirements for Issuing Authorities

This section sets for the time requirements for processing a CCW by the issuing authority. Note that these requirements are separate from the “initial determination” requirements outlined in the prior section.

Specifically, issuing authorities must approve or deny an application within 120 days of receiving the completed application, or 30 days after receipt of the information from DOJ, whichever is later. This section also restates that if the license was denied, the notice must state the reason for the denial.

xv. 26206 – Appeals Process for Denials and Revocations

In general, this section concerns the procedures by which an applicant denied a CCW may challenge the reason for the denial in court. Once again, this section requires issuing authorities to state the specific reasons for the denial but also requires issuing authorities to inform the applicant that they may request a hearing from a court to review the reasons for the denial. Issuing authorities must also provide the applicant with a copy of the most recent “Request for Hearing to Challenge Disqualified Person Determination” form prescribed by DOJ.

Applicants generally have 30 days after receipt of the notice of denial to request a hearing using this form. But if the issuing authority has its own internal appeal process, applicants must first exhaust such options. Any such required process, however, must be resolved within 60 days of when the applicant files the appeal. If the appeal still results in a denial, the applicant will then have 30 days from that point to file a request with a court for review of the denial.

Once filed, the court must schedule a hearing within 60 days in which the district attorney will represent the issuing agency. Prior to this, the DOJ must file under seal copies of the applicant’s criminal history with the court within 14 days of the request being filed with the court. The issuing agency must also file any records or reports on which it relied in denying or revoking the license, or instead file a declaration that summarizes the information relied upon. Both the DOJ report and the documents relied upon by the issuing agency must be disclosed to the applicant and the district attorney upon request.

The district attorney is entitled to a continuance not to exceed 30 days, and if any additional continuances are granted, in no case can they exceed 60 days.

Any material and relevant evidence not excluded under Section 352 of the Evidence Code is admissible at the hearing. The District Attorney bears the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence that the applicant is disqualified under Penal Code section 26202.

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Should the District Attorney fail to meet this burden (or declines or fails to go forward for any reason), the court shall order as follows:

- The applicant is not disqualified under Penal Code section 26202;
- The issuing agency must issue notice to proceed with the training requirements and submit the applicants fingerprints to DOJ;
- DOJ must confirm the applicant's eligibility to possess, receive, own, or purchase a firearm; and,
- A copy of the order shall be submitted to DOJ.

In cases involving revocations of an existing license, the court must also order the person's license reinstated with the original expiration date extended by the length of time between the date of the revocation notice and the date of the court's order.

If the District Attorney meets their burden, the court shall inform the person of their right to file a subsequent application no sooner than two years from the date of the hearing.

If the applicant was denied not because of a disqualified determination but instead because the applicant failed to meet any other requirement for the issuance of a CCW (such as the residency requirement), issuing authorities must provide the same notice to the applicant stating the reason, but instead inform the applicant that they may apply to the court for a writ of mandate pursuant to the Code of Civil Procedure. Such petition must also be filed within 30 days of the denial or exhaustion of any internal appeals process with the issuing authority.

xvi. 26210 – CCW Holder Change of Address

This section sets forth the procedures following a CCW license holders change of address. In general, CCW holders must notify their issuing agency of any change of address within 10 days. Following this notice, the issuing agency must then notify DOJ of the change within the next 10 days.

If the CCW holder has not breached any conditions or restrictions, and is not prohibited from owning or possessing firearms, a change of address cannot be revoked simply because the place of residence has changed to another county (unless the license is for the open and loaded carry of a firearm, in which case it must be revoked immediately).

However, a separate provision then states that if the place of residence was the basis for issuance, that license will then automatically expire after 90 days.

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It is not clear from the recent changes to non-resident CCW applicants how this section applies. Likewise, it is also not clear if this section would apply to a situation where a California resident becomes a resident of a different state, but wishes to maintain their CCW as a non-resident. In such situations, the law as written suggests that if the CCW holder would satisfy the requirements for a non-resident CCW, then their license should not expire and instead remain valid.

xvii. 26215 – CCW Amendments

This section concerns amendments to an existing CCW license, which include amendments to add or delete a firearm on a license, change the license type to an open and exposed license in a county with a population of less than 200,000 persons, or change any restrictions or conditions on the license.

Any amendments do not extend the original expiration date, and renewal requirements will still apply as any amendment application does not constitute a renewal application.

xviii. 26220 – CCW Period of Validity

In general, all CCW licenses are valid for a period of 2 years. If the licensee's principal place of business was the basis for issuance, such licenses are valid for only 90 days, and is only valid in the county in which it was issued.

Licenses issued to judges (state or federal), full-time court commissioners, and federal magistrates are valid for 3 years.

Licenses issued to custodial officers form a Sheriff or peace officers are valid for 4 years, unless the person's employment as such ends prior for any reason.

xix. 26225 – Issuing Authority Records

This section requires issuing agencies to maintain records of denials, issuance, amendments, and revocations of any CCW license, copies of which must be filed immediately with DOJ. Issuing agencies must also annually report the total number of licenses issued to peace officers and judges on an annual basis. In addition, issuing authorities must immediately notify DOJ of any CCW holders who fail to renew their CCW within 90 days of expiration.

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xx. 26230 – Prohibited Places for CCW Holders

Separate from the conditions and restrictions placed on CCW holders, this section specifies where CCW holders may not carry their firearm and how to properly transport and store their firearms at or around such areas.

As a threshold matter, this section has been subject to ongoing litigation that has resulted in varying degrees of injunctions against the listed locations. As of the date of this memorandum, the following six locations listed are enjoined from enforcement (meaning CCW holders may carry their firearm in such locations):

- Hospitals and Medical Facilities
- Public Transit
- Public Gatherings
- Places of Worship
- Financial Institutions
- Private Property open to the public

Setting aside the above, the locations listed below are those locations otherwise listed in this section which are currently enforceable:

- School zones
- Preschool and childcare facilities
- Buildings under the control of an officer of the state executive or legislative branch
- Court buildings
- Local government buildings
- Adult and juvenile detention centers
- Colleges and universities
- Airports and passenger vessel terminals
- Property controlled by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- Police stations
- Polling places
- Bars and restaurants that serve alcohol (and related parking areas)
- Playgrounds and youth centers (and adjacent streets and sidewalks)
- Parks, athletic areas, and athletic facilities (and adjacent streets and sidewalks)

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- Property under the control of the Department of Parks and Recreation or Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Casinos and similar gambling establishments (and related parking areas)
- Stadiums and arenas (and related parking areas)
- Public libraries (and related parking areas)
- Amusement parks (and related parking areas)
- Zoos and museums (and related parking areas)

It should be noted that this provision is limited in enforcement to those areas within the jurisdiction of the state of California. Some areas listed, like those controlled by the federal nuclear regulatory commission, and not within California's jurisdiction by nature of being federal property, thereby prohibiting enforcement of this section in those areas and otherwise making their listing redundant. A California CCW likewise does not apply in such areas by nature of those areas not being in California. Carry a firearm in those areas pursuant to a California CCW, therefore, would likely violate federal law.

The same is true for some areas listed in the context of other applicable California gun laws. Places like school zones and college campuses and universities, for example, prohibit firearm possession absent specific, limited circumstances which a CCW does not cover. Carrying a firearm in such areas would therefore violate those restrictions in addition to this section, making their listing again redundant and unnecessary.

Setting aside the above prohibited locations, this section expressly allows the transport of a firearm in a vehicle in a locked box on such property absent more restrictive local laws. CCW holders may also transport and store their firearms in a locked box in their vehicle placed out of plain view in the parking areas of such locations. What's more, a CCW holder is not in violation of this section "while they are traveling along a public right-of-way that touches or crosses any of the premises identified . . . if the concealed firearm is carried on their person . . . or is being transported in a vehicle by the licensee in accordance with all other applicable provisions of law."³

xxi. 26235 – DOJ IT System Contracts

This section allows DOJ to enter into contracts to implement new or change existing information technology systems, and exempts those contracts from various provisions of the Government Code and Public Contract Code.

³ With the caveat that this does not allow the person to loiter or remain longer than necessary to complete their travel.

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B. California Code of Regulations, Title 11, Sections 4400 Through 4432

The following sections of Title 11 of the California Code of Regulations are those addressing the above Penal Codes and related issues concerning California's CCW application process.

i. 4400 – Applicable Definitions

This section includes definitions for various terms used throughout the regulations discussed below. Of these definitions, all are self-explanatory with the exception of the definition of "Safe weapon practices", which is defined as "(i) treat all firearms as if they are loaded; (ii) keep the firearm pointed in the safest possible direction; (iii) keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot; and (iv) know how to properly operate your firearm." This term is used in Sections 4410-1441.

ii. 4401 – Uniform CCW License Design Standards

This section specifies the size and format of CCW licenses issuing authorities must use (sample images below). Issuing authorities are only allowed to add their seal to the top left corner of the front of the license, with no other modifications allowed. Importantly, the regulations do not require every field to be completed. Nor do the regulations require actual physical addresses to be reflected on.

There is no limit on the number of handguns to be listed, other than to say if additional space is needed, to list them under "Restrictions, Comments, and Additional Firearm information (if any)" section on the back.

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Sample images provided in the regulation itself:

**LICENSE TO CARRY CONCEALED PISTOL, REVOLVER,
OR OTHER FIREARM WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

<AGENCY NAME><ORI#><HEAD OF AGENCY>

Agcy. Lic. #:**Iss:****Exp:**

COVER
AREA WITH
PHOTO OF
LICENSEE

CII #:

Name:

Address:

DOB:

Occupation:

Bus. Addr:

Hgt:

Eyes:

Lic. Issued:

Type:

County:

DL/ID:

Wgt:

Hair:

Issued by:

Signature of Licensee

Serial #	Manufacturer	Model	Caliber

Right Thumb Print

COVER
AREA
WITH
IMAGE

**Restrictions, Comments, and Additional Firearm
information (if any):**

Issued under Penal Code § 26150, 26155, or 26170

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iii. 4402 – Capturing Thumbprint for Uniform CCW Licenses

This regulation specifies that all licensing authorities must obtain an original right thumbprint for every CCW license (unless it is unavailable) and ensure it is true to size. The regulation also places specific requirements on the device used to capture the thumbprint, as well as a minimum 600 DPI when printed on Form BOF 4501.

iv. 4410 – CCW DOJ Certified Instructor Qualifications and Applications

This regulation specifies the requirements and credentials necessary for an individual to teach the required course of training CCW applicants must complete prior to being issued or renewing a CCW license. In general, a CCW instructor must obtain and maintain a Certificate of Eligibility, be at least 21 years of age, be credentialed as a firearms instructor in one of several specified disciplines, and pass a live-fire shooting qualification. Once all requirements are met, DOJ will issue a DOJ-Certified CCW Instructor credential valid for four years.

v. 4411 – Revoking CCW DOJ Certified Instructor’s Certification

This regulation outlines the procedures for revoking a DOJ-Certified CCW Instructor credential. The regulation also provides a means by which individuals may notify DOJ that an instructor’s credential should be revoked.

vi. 4412 – Shooting Qualification for POST-Certified Firearms Instructors

This regulation specifies that DOJ-Certified CCW Instructors who are also POST-certified and an active duty peace officer is exempt from the live-fire shooting qualification requirement. The regulation also expressly states that reserve peace officers do not qualify for the exemption.

vii. 4420 – Submission of Fingerprints

This regulation requires all CCW applicants to submit fingerprints through an authorized Live Scan operator. Specifically, a CCW applicant must complete a “Request For Lice Scan Service” form to the Live Scan operator, who will then capture and transmit the applicant’s fingerprints to CA DOJ. Individuals with confidential addresses may use an alternative address as outlined.

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viii. 4421 – Initial and Renewal Applicant Background Checks

When processing CCW applicant backgrounds, this regulation requires CA DOJ to review both NICS and its own state databases. Renewal applications submitted after September 1, 2026, will also require a NICS check (presumably thereby requiring a new Live Scan).

ix. 4422 – Background Checks Following Denials or Revocations

This regulation specifies how CA DOJ conducts subsequent background checks on CCW applicants and existing CCW holders who successfully challenge their denial or revocation in court. This regulation also states that no new, renewal, or reinstatement of a CCW license shall take place “unless the Department confirms the applicant’s eligibility to possess, receive, own or purchase a firearm.

x. 4430 – Delay Submitting NO Longer Interested Notifications when Applicant is Disqualified Person

This regulation specifies that CA DOJ will not terminate updates on a CCW applicant’s background check prior to statutory timeframes to appeal a denial or revocation. And if a petition to challenge a denial or revocation is timely filed, CA DOJ will not terminate prior to the court’s decision.

xi. 4431 – Reviewing the Automated Firearms System

This regulation specifies CA DOJ will review AFS to determine if the CCW applicant has a matching DROS record on file for a handgun listed on the license application. The regulation specifies that the serial number of the firearm must match the CCW applicant’s name, date of birth, and ID number.

xii. 4432 – Notifications, Records, and Annual Survey

This regulation specifies licensing authorities must notify CA DOJ within 15 days of a denial, denial of an amendment, issuance, amendment, or revocation of a CCW using the appropriate form. The regulation also states licensing authorities must submit annual reports on reserve/auxiliary peace officer and judicial CCWs to CA DOJ using the appropriate form.

IV. SUGGESTED APPLICATION PROCESSING CHECKLIST FOR ISSUING AGENCIES

Below is a suggested step-by-step breakdown issuing authorities should take following the receipt of a CCW application. If at any point during these steps an applicant is determined to be disqualified, the issuing agency must provide the applicant with written notice of that determination, the grounds for the denial, and information on how to appeal the decision.

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Step 1: Confirm General Application Requirements Met

- Confirm CCW application fully completed.
- Confirm applicant is at least 21 years old.
- Confirm applicant resides in city or county.
 - For non-CA residents, confirm city or county is where applicant intends to spend time.
- Confirm receipt of initial 50% of application fee collected.
- Confirm receipt of copy of Driver's License or State ID, as well as any other required documentation.

Step 2: Initial Determination (Must be Completed Within 90 Days)

- Conduct in-person or virtual interview of the applicant (optional for renewals).
 - Suggested- Take photograph and capture thumbprint of applicant to be used on license at this step.
- Conduct in-person, virtual, or telephonic interviews with at least three character references (option for renewals).
- Review publicly available information about the applicant.
- Review of all information provided in the application.
- Review Automated Firearms System to confirm matching AFS record (if applicant is California resident).

Step 3: Training and Livescan (Following Positive Initial Determination)

- Direct applicant to proceed with required training and submit livescan.
 - Direct applicant to proceed with psychological testing if required.

Step 4: Determine Whether Applicant "Disqualified"

- Review DOJ report following receipt of livescan.
- Review CARPOS (California Restraining and Protective Order System) via CLETS (California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System).
- Determine whether applicant is "disqualified" or eligible.

Step 5: Issuance

- Confirm applicant has completed required training through DOJ-Certified Instructor.

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- Inform applicant that CCW has been approved and to proceed with final payment.
- Confirm receipt of remaining 50% application processing fee from applicant.
- Issue CCW to Applicant.
- Report issuance to DOJ as required.

V. LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR ISSUING AUTHORITIES

Often overlooked by issuing agencies, the Government Code provides express liability protection as applied to the issuance or denial of any license. Much like how the California Department of Motor Vehicles cannot be held liable for injuries caused by the issuance or denial of a Driver's License. Any decision by an issuing agency to deny a license due to concerns of potential agency liability, therefore, are without merit and likely exceed the statutory grounds for denials.

Specifically, public entities are not liable for any injury caused "by the issuance, denial, suspension or revocation of, or by the failure or refusal to issue, deny, suspend or revoke" a CCW "where the public entity or any employee of the public entity is authorized by enactment to determine whether or not such authorization should be issued, denied, suspended or revoked." Gov. Code § 818.4.

Further, agency employees are likewise not liable for any injury caused by their "issuance, denial, suspension or revocation of" or their "failure or refusal to issue, deny, suspend or revoke" a CCW when "authorized by enactment to determine whether or not such authorization should be issued, denied, suspended or revoked." Gov. Code § 821.2.

VI. ANALYSIS OF AGENCY-SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PRACTICES

A. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD)

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) maintains its primary concealed carry weapon (CCW) information on its official website⁴ which serves as the main public-facing resource for applicants. The main CCW page explicitly states that the full CCW policy is "currently under review, and will be available when updated," while referencing compliance with recent laws such as Assembly Bill 1078 (AB 1078) for applications submitted via Permitium. It notes that the "good cause" requirement is not enforced pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court's

⁴ See lasd.org/ccw and the associated Permitium application portal at lasd.permitium.com/ccw/start.

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decision in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen* (2022) and directs users to review the "Requirements and Qualifications for a CCW" before applying, though no direct link to a comprehensive document is provided. Non-resident eligibility is addressed, effective April 22, 2025, under a federal injunction in related litigation, with attestation requirements. Recent developments include a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) lawsuit filed on September 30, 2025, alleging unconstitutional delays in processing CCW applications, which settled on October 31, 2025, with LASD agreeing to comply with the 120-day statutory processing deadline and to address backlogs. As of February 2026, LASD reports issuing over 5,000 CCW permits in 2025 alone, reflecting significant backlog reductions from prior highs (e.g., from around 10,000 to approximately 3,200 inherited and further reduced). The following analysis identifies key discrepancies or potential violations between the LASD's publicly posted information and applicable California statutes.

Regarding the written policy requirement, the LASD's main CCW page indicates that the policy is under review and not currently available, while the Permitted portal references relevant Penal Code sections and summarizes some requirements such as age, residency, and training. However, no standalone, comprehensive written policy document is provided. This absence constitutes a violation of the mandatory publication requirement, as piecemeal summaries in the portal do not fully encapsulate the statutory provisions. The ongoing review, particularly amid recent amendments and litigation, hinders transparency for applicants.

With respect to general application requirements and issuance standards, the Permitted portal states that "determination of issuance is at the discretion of the licensing authority" and notes that answering questions does not guarantee issuance. Non-residents are eligible (effective April 22, 2025, per a federal injunction in *California Rifle & Pistol Association v. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department*), requiring an attestation that the jurisdiction is their primary location in California for travel or time spent within 12 months; applicants must reside in LASD jurisdiction (unincorporated areas or contract cities) otherwise, with up to three firearms listed. Discrepancies include: the discretionary issuance language contradicts the post-Bruen shall-issue framework, under which denials must stem solely from statutory disqualifications or explicit failures rather than broad discretion (residual language persists despite acknowledgment of Bruen). Non-resident implementation aligns with the court injunction (predating AB 1078's January 1, 2026 effective date), but prior policy lagged until judicial compulsion.

As to training requirements, the LASD mandates no less than 16 hours for new applicants (8 hours for renewals) from LASD-approved providers (with a list provided), including required topics and live-fire proficiency demonstrated with each firearm (up to three). Applicants are instructed not to complete training until after initial screening and CCW unit approval (post-background check), with completion required within 60 days or withdrawal. These provisions generally align with the statute, including deferral to comply with no-prepayment rules.

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However, no mention is made of online course flexibility or the 75-mile live-fire radius for non-residents; the approved-provider restriction could impermissibly exclude alternatives if no online options are approved.

Concerning fees and psychological examinations, the LASD charges \$43 initial submission plus \$173 issuance for standard two-year licenses (\$216 total), with variations for judicial (three-year) and non-resident applicants (e.g., \$136 initial for non-residents); fees are non-refundable and include DOJ Live Scan costs, with no psychological exam required. Fees appear reasonable on their face, but no public justification or detailed cost accounting is provided for any increases, potentially violating the "reasonable costs" limit and transparency expectations (amid statewide challenges to similar fees).

Revocation grounds align with prohibitions (e.g., criminal conduct). Investigation elements otherwise align, but no public mention is made of the 90/120-day timelines. The 2025 DOJ lawsuit highlighted severe pre-settlement delays (e.g., only two approvals from 3,982 new applications January 2024–March 2025); the October 2025 settlement mandates compliance, backlog clearance, and quarterly reporting, though pre-settlement practices were non-compliant.

The appeals process receives no mention in LASD materials, including any reference to appeals, hearings, or forms. This omission violates the statutory duty to inform applicants of appeal rights in denial notices.

In other areas, such as uniform application, amendments, validity, and records, the LASD uses the DOJ-prescribed form (BOF 4012), with validity periods matching statutory standards (two years standard, three for judges). Amendments and address changes are not detailed extensively, but no major contradictions appear; records and DOJ reporting are implied through the process. However, the incomplete policy publication affects overall compliance.

LASD's practices demonstrate partial adaptation to post-Bruen, SB 2, and AB 1078 changes (e.g., non-resident eligibility, elimination of good cause), but significant lags persist in transparency, shall-issue language, and timely processing (as evidenced by prior litigation). The ongoing policy review as of February 2026 and the DOJ settlement suggest progress toward improvement. Applicants should monitor lasd.org/ccw for updates, as current discrepancies may reflect transitional delays amid legal and legislative developments; California DOJ resources can provide additional guidance on uniform standards.

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B. Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)

The Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) primary concealed carry weapon (CCW) information is hosted on its official website.⁵ LAPD processes applications exclusively for City of Los Angeles residents, utilizing a waiting list for initial applications (first-come, first-served via email to CCWProcessing@lapd.online). As of February 2026, reports indicate ongoing delays, with 2025 complaints from groups like the California Rifle & Pistol Association (CRPA) threatening litigation over 18-22 month waits that violate statutory timelines. Although no direct DOJ lawsuit targets the LAPD (unlike the September 2025 suit against the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department for comparable delays), the LAPD's practices reflect similar issues. The following analysis identifies key discrepancies or potential violations between the LAPD's publicly posted information and applicable California statutes.

Regarding the written policy requirement, the LAPD website offers summaries through the main page, FAQ PDF, and Policy PDF (focused on SB 2 updates such as prohibited places), while the Permitium portal references relevant sections and requirements. However, no standalone, comprehensive written policy document fully summarizes the statutes, with information fragmented across pages and PDFs. This fragmented approach constitutes a partial violation, as the lack of a unified, complete policy document undermines full transparency. The Policy PDF remains outdated (January 2024) and fails to incorporate AB 1078 changes (e.g., non-AFS exceptions), which may mislead applicants.

With respect to general application requirements and issuance standards, the LAPD requires city residency (verified by driver's license/ID and utilities/lease), AFS-recorded ownership matching for firearms, and listing of up to three firearms. Non-residents have been eligible since April 2025 with an attestation, aligning with the statute. Issuance is described as "determined by LAPD based on policy," with a waiting list for initials (email to join, prohibiting direct submission until contacted). Language implying LAPD "determines" issuance suggests discretion beyond mere verification, conflicting with the shall-issue framework where denials must arise solely from disqualification or explicit failures. The pre-application waiting list (with 18-22 month delays reported in 2025 CRPA complaints) effectively postpones the "completed application" trigger, violating the 120-day processing timeline and mirroring issues in the LASD DOJ lawsuit where such delays were challenged as unconstitutional. Non-resident implementation aligns with the injunction and AB 1078, though training flexibility (e.g., 75-mile live-fire) is not fully detailed.

⁵ See lapdonline.org/ccw and the associated Permitium application portal at lapdca.permitium.com/ccw/start.

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As to training requirements under Penal Code § 26165, the LAPD mandates 16 hours for new applicants (8 hours for renewals) from an approved providers list, with training deferred until post-approval for new applications (must occur within 90 days of approval or face withdrawal, and dated no earlier than 6 months before interview). This includes live-fire proficiency (with posted standards) and firearm inspections; renewals must be completed within 1 month of expiration but not more than 6 months prior. These provisions generally align with the statute, though the approved-list restriction may impermissibly exclude online alternatives if none are approved. The non-resident 75-mile provision is mentioned but not emphasized, and deferring training post-screening complies with no-prepayment rules.

Concerning fees and psychological examinations under Penal Code section 26190, the LAPD charges \$268 total for new licenses (\$53 initial plus \$215 issuance) and \$77 for renewals (\$25 plus \$52), with no psychological exam required. No public cost justification is provided, potentially violating the "reasonable costs" limit.

Revocations have been reported for violations such as unreported arrests, address changes, or prohibited conduct. The reference requirement exceeds the statutory three, imposing an additional burden. The investigation otherwise aligns with statutory guidelines on its face, but processing delays (e.g., from the waiting list) may obstruct timely determinations.

C. Santa Clara County Sheriff ("SCSO")

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) maintains its primary concealed carry weapon (CCW) information on its official website.⁶ Effective January 11, 2026, updated training and qualification standards have been implemented, mandating concealed holster draws, a defined course of fire (minimum 25 out of 30 rounds at distances of 5 to 15 yards), and a new firearm proficiency form. Posts from online forums indicate processing times of 6 to 12 months, which exceed statutory timelines, although the SCSO website does not post any backlog notice and states that permits are issued to qualified applicants. The following analysis identifies key discrepancies or potential violations between the SCSO's publicly posted information and applicable California statutes.

Regarding the written policy requirement, the SCSO's main CCW page references issuance authority under Penal Code section 26150(a) and department procedures, while the Permitium portal mentions a "written policy" summarizing requirements and provides a link to the SCSO CCW Policy (Policy 207: License to Carry a Firearm). However, information remains dispersed across the main page, FAQ, and restrictions page, with summaries of eligibility,

⁶ See sheriff.santaclaracounty.gov/services/other-services/ccw and the associated Permitium application portal at scso.permitium.com/ccw/start.

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process, and restrictions. This fragmented presentation constitutes a partial violation, as no single, comprehensive, unified written policy document (such as a standalone downloadable PDF encompassing all statutory provisions) appears readily available. Furthermore, no evident updates address recent legislative changes such as AB 1078, which may mislead applicants.

With respect to general application requirements and issuance standards under Penal Code §§ 26150 and 26155, the SCSO requires county residency (verified by driver's license/ID, utilities, etc.) or principal place of business for limited 90-day licenses. For non-residents, proof of membership in specific organizations (such as CRPA, GOA, GOC, or Second Amendment Foundation) is demanded, firearms must be recorded with the California DOJ, and up to three handguns may be listed (with no shotguns, rifles, or "AR Pistols" permitted). Issuance is described as "discretionary," with language indicating that meeting requirements does not guarantee approval. The process entails online application, interview (Tuesdays/Thursdays), psychological evaluation, Live Scan, and then training. Several discrepancies arise: the non-resident membership requirement contravenes AB 1078, which permits non-residents to apply via oath without such organizational conditions, representing an outdated and unlawful barrier. The "discretionary" issuance language and non-guarantee statements conflict with the post-Bruen shall-issue framework, under which denials must stem solely from statutory disqualifications or explicit failures rather than broad discretion. Reported processing delays of 6-12 months (per applicant forums) violate the statutory 120-day timeline, akin to issues in neighboring jurisdictions. While limited business-related licenses partially align, the overall non-resident policy appears not fully updated to reflect AB 1078.

As to training requirements, the SCSO mandates 16 hours for new applicants (8 hours for renewals) from approved providers only (with a provided list), with training deferred until after approval (interview, psych evaluation, Live Scan). Updates effective January 11, 2026, require qualifications from a concealed holster, a specific course of fire, and a new proficiency form; pre-approval training is voided. These provisions generally align with the statute, though the exclusive reliance on approved providers may impermissibly exclude viable online alternatives if none are approved. The materials omit reference to the non-resident 75-mile training provision. Deferring training until post-screening complies with prohibitions on prepayment, and the holster/qualification specifics, while adding detail, are not explicitly prohibited provided they are uniform and published.

Concerning fees and psychological examinations, the SCSO charges \$488 for initial application plus \$488 issuance for new two-year licenses (total \$976, excluding Live Scan, psych, and training costs), \$447 for renewals, and \$15 for modifications. A psychological evaluation is required for all applicants as part of the process. These fees appear exorbitant absent public justification or detailed cost accounting, exceeding the statutory limit to "reasonable" costs. Mandating psych exams for every applicant diverges from the statute's

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optional framing and omits any provision for virtual options or the 75-mile rule for non-residents, nor does it address evidence-based necessity for renewals. A lawsuit has been filed against SCSO challenging these two issues.

The appeals process receives no mention in SCSO materials, including any reference to appeals, hearings, or forms. This omission violates the statutory duty to inform applicants of their appeal rights in denial notices.

In other areas, such as uniform application, amendments, validity, and records, the SCSO limits amendments to existing licensees (with justification required) and correctly states non-recognition of out-of-state CCWs. However, prohibiting firearm changes during the application process restricts flexibility under section 26215. No mention is made of address confidentiality options.

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