

## ALLOWANCE OF HANDGUNS WITHIN U.S. STATE CAPITOL BUILDINGS

### Assignment

The Advisory Committee on Capitol Security requested an accounting of handgun allowances and screening within capitol buildings in each of the 50 states.

### Summary

There is no apparent standard regarding the allowance of guns, nor is there a uniform protocol or process to screen for guns at state capitol buildings.

Permitting requirements and policies regarding who is allowed to carry a handgun varies by state. For example, a state may allow guns in the capitol building but will not allow them to be carried into a courtroom located within that same building.

The states that allow law enforcement (LE) to carry within their capitol building impose various terms and conditions. For example, LE may limit authorization to carry to only those officers who are on official business. Some states also require LE officers to sign in, while other states have no such process.

The implementation and utilization of screening processes are unique between states. This ranges from no screening to the use of metal detectors, wands, armed personnel or combinations of each.

Other states are also currently evaluating their allowance of weapons in their capitol buildings.

### Findings

Of the 44 states that responded to the request for information:

- 14 states allow citizens to carry handguns at their capitols: seven require some type of permit; seven do not require a permit.
- With some variation, 35 states allow law enforcement officers to carry handguns at their respective capitols.
- Three states specifically allow legislators to carry handguns
- Only one state that responded to the request for information (Arizona) prohibits all guns at their capitol, except for capitol police.
- 35 employ some form of screening, either metal detectors, wands, or armed personnel.

### Data and methodology

The majority of this data was collected via an email survey or phone contact with law enforcement agencies responsible for providing security at their respective state capitol buildings.

Notes have been added to reflect the uniqueness of each state's policy of who may or may not carry a weapon into their capitol building and/or screening procedures.

This data is believed accurate as of October 15th, 2013.

# SCREENING PROCESSES & ALLOWANCE OF WEAPONS AT STATE CAPITOL BUILDINGS

| State         | Handguns Allowed   | Screening at Capitol Building   |
|---------------|--|---|
|               | N - None<br>P - Permit only<br>LE - Law enforcement<br>LG - Legislators  | M - Metal detector<br>W - Wand<br>AP - Armed personnel  |
| Alabama       | LE   | M, AP   |
| Alaska        | LE   | AP  |
| Arizona       | N - unless Capitol Police  | M, W  |
| Arkansas      | LE - on official business  | M, AP   |
| California    | LE & LG<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LE must sign in</li> </ul>   | M, AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no screening process for LG - separate entrance</li> </ul>                                    |
| Colorado      | LE - on duty only<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must provide storage for weapons</li> </ul>  | M, AP   |
| Connecticut   | LE - w/ check-in & badge   | M (if needed), AP   |
| Delaware      | LE   | M, AP, W  |
| Florida       | LE, P - w/ exemptions<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCW permit holders are exempt from committee meeting rooms but are not tracked</li> </ul>      | M, AP   |
| Georgia       | LE   | M, AP   |
| Hawaii        | LE, P  | AP  |
| Idaho         | ALL<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open carry state - anyone who can legally possess is allowed to carry.</li> </ul>                                | No screening  |
| Illinois      | LE   | M, AP   |
| Indiana       | LE, LG<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of Indiana General Assembly w/permit, and Judiciary Members</li> </ul>                                | M, AP, W  |
| Iowa          | LE, professional permit holder<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional permit holder such as private security, armored car personnel</li> </ul> | M, AP   |
| Kansas        | LE (pending P 2014)  |   |
| Kentucky      | ALL<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those without a conceal permit must display weapon</li> </ul>  | M, AP   |
| Louisiana     | No Response  |   |
| Maine         | LE - on duty only, must sign in  | M, AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone entering is screened</li> </ul>  |
| Maryland      | LE only<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-uniformed, on duty LE must be cleared prior to entry</li> </ul>  | M, AP   |
| Massachusetts | LE only  | M,<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unarmed park rangers conduct screening</li> <li>1 armed trooper outside Gov's office)</li> </ul> |
| Michigan      | ALL (if visible), P (concealed)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concealed carry only allowed for those w/ CCW permit</li> </ul>                      | AP  |
| Minnesota     | LE, P  | No screening  |
| Mississippi   | LE, P (enhanced p holders only)  | M, AP   |

| Missouri       | LE, LG (and staff)<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGs concealed carry only w/ permit; otherwise open carry required</li> </ul>                 | No screening   |
|----------------|---|--|
| Montana        | LE (and armored car officers)   | No Screening<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M for large events if needed</li> <li>W for daily use if needed</li> </ul>                |
| Nebraska       | ALL (open carry only)   | M in Supreme & Appellate Courts (no guns allowed in courts), AP (session only)   |
| Nevada         | No Response   |  |
| New Hampshire  | ALL   | No screening.<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No guns allowed on House floor, House Ante room, Public Gallery.</li> </ul>              |
| New Jersey     | No Response   |  |
| New Mexico     | No Response   |  |
| New York       | LE  | M, AP, W, Xray<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone is screened through metal detector &amp; items x-rayed</li> </ul>              |
| North Carolina | LE - on duty only   | M, AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitors show ID, go through M detection</li> <li>Card access only at other entrances</li> </ul> |
| North Dakota   | LE, Military  | AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have armed Troopers on-duty but can be anywhere on complex</li> </ul>                               |
| Ohio           | LE (on duty only)   | AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wands being implemented Sept 2013</li> </ul>  |
| Oklahoma       | LE  | M, AP, W   |
| Oregon         | LE, P   | No screening<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anyone can carry open or carry concealed if they have permit</li> </ul>                   |
| Pennsylvania   | LE - on duty only   | M, AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGs and staff exempt from screening processes</li> </ul>   |
| Rhode Island   | LE  | M, AP, W   |
| South Carolina | LE - on duty only   | M, AP  |
| South Dakota   | LE - need to check in   | AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Trooper on-duty but can be anywhere on complex</li> </ul>   |
| Tennessee      | LE (on duty only)   | M, AP, W   |
| Texas          | LE, P   | M, AP, W   |
| Utah           | ALL (open carry), LE, P   | None   |
| Virginia       | LE, P   | M, AP<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>permit holders are not allowed in Senate Chambers; only LE allowed</li> </ul>                    |
| Vermont        | No Response   |  |
| Washington     | ALL<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>open carry for anyone, concealed carry requires permit</li> </ul>   | No screening   |
| Wisconsin      | ALL - except Governor's office, Supreme Court<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>open carry for anyone, concealed carry requires permit</li> </ul> | AP   |
| West Virginia  | No Response   |  |
| Wyoming        | LE - on duty only   | AP - 1 uniformed trooper doing visual assessments upon entry   |