
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Senator Jesse Arreguín, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 1948 **Hearing Date:** June 9, 2026
Author: Ramos
Version: March 19, 2026
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** No
Consultant: AB

Subject: *Firearms: concealed carry licenses*

HISTORY

Source: San Bernardino County Sheriff Shannon Discus

Prior Legislation: AB 1078 (Berman), Ch. 570, Stats. of 2025
AB 1092 (Castillo), failed in Assembly Public Safety, 2025
AB 1006 (Ramos), held in Assembly Appropriations, 2025
AB 1483 (Valencia), Ch. 246, Stats. of 2023
AB 1133 (Schiavo), held in Senate Appropriations, 2023
SB 2 (Portantino), Ch. 249, Stats. of 2023
SB 918 (Portantino), failed on Assembly Floor, 2022
AB 1621 (Gipson) Ch. 76, Stats. of 2022
SB 715 (Portantino), Ch. 250, Stats. of 2021
SB 941 (Portantino), vetoed by Governor, 2020
SB 914 (Portantino), held due to COVID-19, 2020
SB 118 (Committee on Budget), Ch. 29, Stats. of 2020
AB 879 (Gipson), Ch. 730, Stats. of 2019
AB 376 (Portantino) Ch. 738, Stats. of 2019
SB 746 (Portantino), Ch. 780, Stats. of 2018

Support: California Civil Liberties Advocacy; California Rifle & Pistol Association;
California State Sheriffs Association; Peace Officers Research Association of
California; San Bernardino County Sheriffs Department

Opposition: None known

Assembly Floor Vote: 71 - 0

PURPOSE

The purpose of this bill is to extend the duration of a license to carry concealed firearms (CCW) from two years to three years, except as specified.

Existing law generally prohibits the possession of firearms in most public areas, with specified exceptions. (Pen. Code, §§ 25300 et seq.)

Existing law exempts persons with CCW licenses from the laws prohibiting possessing a firearm in a public area. (Pen. Code, § 25655.)

Existing law provides that when a California resident applies for a new CCW license or license renewal, the sheriff of a county or the chief or other head of a municipal police department of any city or city and county shall issue or renew a license to that person upon proof of all of the following:

- The applicant is not a disqualified person to receive such a license, as defined.
- The applicant is at least 21 years of age, and presents clear evidence of the person's identity and age, as defined.
- The applicant is a resident of the county or a city within the county, or the applicant's principal place of employment or business is in the county or a city within the county and the applicant spends a substantial period of time in that place of employment or business.
- The applicant has completed a course of training, as defined.
- The applicant is the recorded owner, with the Department of Justice (DOJ), of the pistol, revolver, or other firearm for which the license will be issued. (Pen. Code, §§ 26150, subd. (a)(1)-(5); 26155, subd. (a)(1)-(5).)

Existing law sets forth separate requirements for non-California residents apply for a new CCW license or CCW license renewal, including that the non-California resident must attest, 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. (Pen. Code, §§ 26150, subd. (b); 26155, subd. (b).)

Existing law requires applicants for a new CCW license to complete a course of training that meets specified criteria, including that the course be no less than 16 hours in length and include live-fire shooting exercises. (Pen. Code, § 26165.)

Existing law establishes that, unless a court makes a contrary determination, an applicant shall be deemed to be a disqualified person and cannot receive or renew a license if, among other things, the applicant is reasonably likely to be dangerous, has been convicted of specified crimes, has engaged in the reckless use of a firearm, or is currently abusing any controlled substance, as specified. (Pen. Code, § 26202, subd. (a)(1)-(10).)

Existing law states that in determining whether an applicant is a disqualified person and cannot receive or renew a license, the licensing authority shall conduct an investigation that includes, among other things, an in-person interview unless otherwise stated, interviews with three character witnesses, and a review of information provided by DOJ. (Pen. Code, § 26202, subd. (b)(1)-(6).)

Existing law authorizes a person issued a CCW license to apply to the licensing authority for an amendment to the license for one of several specified purposes, but specifies that an amendment to the license does not extend the original expiration date of the license and that the license shall be subject to renewal at the same time as if the license had not been amended. (Pen. Code, § 26215, subs. (a), (c).)

Existing law states that except as otherwise provided, a CCW license is valid for any period of time not to exceed 2 years from the date that the license is issued. (Pen. Code, § 26220, subd. (a).)

Existing law provides that if the licensee's place of employment or business was the basis for issuance of a CCW license, the license is valid for any period of time not to exceed 90 days from the date of the license, unless the license was issued to a custodial officer who is an employee of the sheriff of a county, as specified. (Pen. Code, § 26220, subd. (b).)

Existing law provides that a CCW license is valid for any period of time not to exceed three years from the date of the license if the license is issued to any of the following individuals:

- A judge of a California court of record.
- A full-time court commissioner of a California court of record.
- A judge of a federal court.
- A magistrate of a federal court. (Pen. Code, § 26220, subd. (c).)

Existing law provides that a CCW license is valid for any period of time not to exceed 4 years from the date of the license if the license is issued to a custodial officer who is an employee of the sheriff of a county, as specified, except that the license shall be invalid upon the conclusion of the person's employment if the four year period has not otherwise expired or any other condition does not limit the validity of the license. (Pen. Code, § 26220, subd. (d).)

Existing law provides that a CCW license issued to a reserve or auxiliary peace officer or sheriff's deputy, as provided, is valid for any period of time not to exceed four years from the date of the license, except that the license shall be invalid upon the conclusion of the person's appointment if the four-year period has not otherwise expired or any other condition does not limit the validity of the license to a shorter time period. (Pen. Code, § 26220, subd. (e).)

This bill extends the duration that a standard CCW license may be valid from 2 years to 3 years.

This bill strikes the existing provision specifying that a CCW issued to certain judicial officers may be valid for any period of time not to exceed three years.

This bill clarifies that the provisions specifying the duration that a CCW is valid when issued to a sheriff's department custodial officer or a reserve officer of a police or sheriff's department applies to both new and renewal licenses.

COMMENTS

1. Need for This Bill

According to the author:

The current process for CCW licenses issuance creates significant and reoccurring costs for gun owners and additional workload on county resources which could otherwise support other essential public safety priorities. By extending the duration of these permits, we help reduce administrative costs for local governments and ease the financial strain on law abiding gun owners.

2. *Bruen* and California's Updated CCW Framework

In June of 2022, the United States Supreme Court issued its landmark ruling in *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen*, (2022) 597 U.S. 1 (hereinafter, "*Bruen*"), in which it invalidated a New York State law requiring applicants for a concealed carry license to show "proper cause," or a special need distinguishable from the general public, as well as good moral character, when applying for license. In a 6-3 decision along ideological lines, the Court ruled that the New York law's "proper cause" requirement was an unconstitutional violation of the Second Amendment, and that the "Second and Fourteenth Amendments protect an individual's right to carry a handgun for self-defense outside the home," effectively establishing a constitutional right to publicly carry a firearm under the Second Amendment.¹

Moreover, the *Bruen* decision abrogated the existing two-part test established by the Court's 2008 decision in *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008) 554 U.S. 570, and established a new test for determining whether a law or regulation comports with the Second Amendment. Step one of that new test involves asking whether the Second Amendment's plain text covers the individual conduct at issue.² Next, in defense of a law regulating firearms, the government must show more than that the regulation promotes an important governmental interest – rather, the law must be "consistent with this Nation's historical tradition of firearm regulation."³ Under the *Bruen* decision, "how and why the regulations burden a law-abiding citizen's right to armed self-defense" matters, and further, "whether modern and historical regulations impose a comparable burden on the right of armed self-defense and whether that burden is comparably justified are 'central' considerations when engaging in an analogical inquiry."⁴ Nevertheless, the Court made clear that regulations consistent with historical precedent, such as those that prohibit weapons in "sensitive places," would likely pass constitutional muster.⁵

In reaching its decision in *Bruen*, the Court recognized that California was among the limited number of states that had an analogue to New York's "proper cause" standard in their concealed carry laws, suggesting that California's law was similarly unconstitutional. Namely, California's CCW law provided that licensing authorities (primarily law enforcement agencies) had discretion to deny CCW applications when a determination was made that the applicant was not "of good moral character" or when "good cause" did not exist for the issuance of the license. These types of "may-issue" licensure regimes granting broad discretion to the licensing authority were exactly what the Court invalidated in *Bruen*. Thus, in response, the Legislature passed SB 2 (Portantino), Chapter 249, Statutes of 2023 which revised the state's concealed carry laws to no longer require a showing of good cause or good moral character to obtain a CCW and prohibited the carrying of concealed weapons in several specified sensitive locations, including schools, government buildings, public transit, medical facilities, public parks, sporting facilities, places of worship, correctional institutions, and several others.⁶

¹ *Id.* at p. 8.

² *Id.* at pp. 22-23

³ *Id.* at pp. 27-30

⁴ *Id.* at p. 29.

⁵ *Id.* at pp. 29-30.

⁶ Pen. Code, §§ 26150, 26155, 26230

3. Effect of This Bill

Since the enactment of SB 2, which shifted California from a “may-issue” CCW regime to a “shall-issue regime” where licensing authorities have less discretion to deny applications, many counties have been plagued by CCW processing delays and application backlogs. San Francisco Sheriff Paul Miyamoto recently issued a formal apology after processing delays caused several timely requested permit renewals to expire without action, citing staffing shortages.⁷ Other reports suggest that wait times and administrative hurdles have been greater particularly for Black and Latino Californians, with some applicants in Los Angeles County waiting 16-20 months for a screening interview.⁸ In response to such claims, the United States Department of Justice sued the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department in September 2025, alleging that such delays infringed on the applicants’ Second Amendment rights.⁹ For context, SB 2 provided that the licensing authority must give written notice to the applicant indicating approval or denial of the application within 120 of receiving the completed application or 30 days after receiving background check information from the California Department of Justice, whichever is later.¹⁰

Existing law enacted by SB 2 provides that a CCW license is valid for a maximum of 2 years from the date of issuance, except in the case of judicial officers, for whom CCW licenses are valid for up to 3 years before requiring renewal.¹¹ Additionally, CCWs issued to custodial officers employed by a sheriff’s department or to reserve police officers are valid for a maximum of 4 years.¹² Last year, Assemblymember Castillo authored AB 1092, which would have extended the validity of a CCW issued after January 1, 2026 and before January 1, 2027 from 2 years to 3 years, and of a CCW issued on or after January 1, 2027 to a maximum of 4 years. That measure failed in the Assembly Public Safety Committee. This bill is similar to AB 1092, except that it simply specifies that all standard CCWs are valid for a maximum of 3 years, and strikes the consequently unnecessary language granting a 3-year CCW to judicial officers. The bill also clarifies that the 4-year CCW available to custodial officers and reserve officers applies to both new and renewal CCWs.

4. Argument in Support

According to the California Rifle and Pistol Association:

This common-sense legislation amends Penal Code Section 26220 to extend the validity period of concealed carry licenses (CCWs). Under the amended bill, new

⁷ “San Francisco Sheriff Blames Budget Cuts for CCW Renewal Failures, Issues Public Apology.” *USA Carry*. 12 December 2025. <https://www.usacarry.com/san-francisco-sheriff-blames-budget-cuts-for-ccw-renewal-failures-issues-public-apology/>

⁸ “Some California Gun Owners Are Frustrated by Long Wait Times for Concealed Carry Permits.” *The Observer*. 3 March 2025. <https://www.theobserver.media/california/some-california-gun-owners-are-frustrated-by-long-wait-times-for-concealed-carry-permits-050f38e9/> ; See also, Pre-Litigation Demand Letter from California Rifle and Pistol Association to City of Los Angeles, available at: <https://michellawyers.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Pre-litigation-Demand-to-LAPD-re-CCW-Wait-Times.pdf>

⁹ “Justice Department lawsuit alleges LASD processes concealed carry licenses too slowly.” *ABC7 Los Angeles*. 30 September 2025. <https://abc7.com/post/justice-department-lawsuit-alleges-los-angeles-county-sheriffs-processes-concealed-carry-licenses-slowly/17911015/>

¹⁰ Pen. Code, § 26185, 26205. Existing law is silent on the timeframe in which DOJ must notify the licensing authority of the results of a background check for a new applicant, which could potentially be the source of the delay.

¹¹ Pen. Code, § 26220, subds. (a), (c).

¹² Pen. Code, § 26220, subds. (d), (e).

licenses would be valid for up to three years, while renewal licenses would be valid for up to six years. This change reduces unnecessary bureaucratic burdens on law-abiding Californians while maintaining all existing public safety requirements, including training, background checks, and good cause/good moral character standards. Current law limits most CCW licenses to a maximum of two years, forcing responsible gun owners to renew far more frequently than necessary. AB 1948 aligns California's renewal cycle with more practical standards already used in many other states, saving time and money for both license holders and local licensing authorities without compromising rigorous vetting processes.

CRPA supports this bill for the following key reasons:

- **Reduces Unnecessary Burdens on Law-Abiding Citizens:** Frequent renewals create significant time and financial costs (application fees, training, fingerprinting, and processing). Extending license durations to 3 years for new licenses and 6 years for renewals provides meaningful relief while preserving all safety safeguards.
- **Maintains Strong Public Safety Standards:** The bill makes no changes to eligibility requirements, training mandates, or the ability of licensing authorities to deny or revoke licenses. It simply modernizes an outdated renewal schedule.
- **Increases Efficiency for Licensing Authorities:** Local law enforcement agencies will benefit from reduced administrative workload, allowing them to focus resources on higher-priority public safety matters.
- **Aligns with Practical Policy:** Many states have successfully implemented longer CCW validity periods. AB 1948 brings California in line with reasonable, efficient practices that respect the rights of qualified individuals.

-- END --