

SENATE BILL 1559

By Bell

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39; Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1 and Title 49, Chapter 50, Part 8, relative to the carrying of handguns on the property of certain private schools and educational institutions.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 50, Part 8, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

49-50-803.

(a)

(1) The chief administrative officer of each private K-12 school shall devise and implement a handgun carry policy for any property on which the school is located that is owned or operated by the school and for any building or structure located on the school property.

(2) Any handgun carry policy devised by the chief administrative officer may:

(A) Prohibit the carrying or possession of a handgun on the property of or in a building located at the private school;

(B) Permit the carrying of handguns by persons qualified under subsection (b) on all property constituting the campus of the school and in all buildings owned or operated by the school; or

(C) Permit the carrying of handguns by persons qualified under subsection (b) in certain areas on the property of the school

or in certain buildings but prohibit the carrying in other areas or buildings.

(b) If the chief administrative officer permits the possession of handguns in accordance with this section at the private school, the following rules and limitations shall apply:

(1) No person who is otherwise prohibited from possessing a handgun is permitted to carry a handgun on private school property; and

(2) The person must have a valid Tennessee handgun carry permit.

(c)

(1) The handgun carry policy for each private school shall be reduced to writing, disseminated in a manner likely to ensure that it is known by students attending the school, the parent or guardian of each student, the faculty and other employees, and others who may go upon the grounds or enter a building on property owned or operated by the school. The policy shall be made available in the principal's office to anyone desiring a copy and distributed to the parents of children enrolled in the school by a method or methods reasonably likely to ensure dissemination of the policy, such as emails, text messaging, or posting on the school's web site.

(2) The policy shall go into effect thirty (30) days after it is announced by the chief administrative officer and disseminated to the students and parents.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1, is amended by adding the following new section:

49-7-161.

(a)

(1) The chief administrative officer of each private institution of higher education, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, shall establish the policy for the carrying of handguns on the campus and grounds of any property owned or operated by the institution, and in any building or structure located on property owned or operated by the institution.

(2) Any handgun carry policy devised by the chief administrative officer may:

(A) Prohibit the carrying or possession of a handgun on all property owned or operated by the institution, and in any building or structure located on property owned or operated by the institution;

(B) Permit the carrying of handguns by persons qualified under subsection (b) on all property owned or operated by the institution, and in any building or structure located on property owned or operated by the institution; or

(C) Permit the carrying of handguns by persons qualified under subsection (b) in certain areas on the property of the institution or in certain buildings, and prohibit the carrying in other areas or buildings.

(b) If the chief administrative officer permits the possession of handguns at the private institution, the following rules and limitations shall apply:

(1) No person who is otherwise prohibited from possessing a handgun is permitted to carry a handgun on property owned or operated by the institution; and

(2) The person must be authorized to carry a handgun pursuant to § 39-17-1351.

(c)

(1) The handgun carry policy for each private institution shall be reduced to writing and disseminated in a manner most likely to ensure that it is known by students attending the institution, the parent or guardian of each student, the faculty, staff, and employees of the institution, and others who may go upon the grounds or enter a building on property owned or operated by the institution. The policy shall be made available in the administration building to anyone desiring a copy, distributed to all interested parties, including parents of minor students enrolled at the institution, and others by a method or methods reasonably likely to ensure dissemination of the policy, such as emails, text messaging, or posting on the school's web site.

(2) The policy shall go into effect thirty (30) days after it is implemented and disseminated as provided in this subsection.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-17-1309, is amended by adding the following new subdivision to subsection (e):

() Persons permitted to carry a handgun on the property of private K-12 schools by § 49-50-803, and persons permitted to carry a handgun on the property of private for-profit or non-profit institutions of higher education pursuant to § 49-7-161.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.