

Firearm Background Check Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: A. Cory Maloy

Senate Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill addresses background checks for firearms.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- exempts an individual from undergoing a background check for the sale or transfer of a firearm that is regulated under the National Firearms Act if the individual has received an approved application within the last 30 days for the sale or transfer of the firearm from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives;

- clarifies that a Federal Firearms Licensee does not need to undergo a criminal background check for the transfer of a firearm to the federal firearms licensee; and

- makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:**AMENDS:**

53-5a-601, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 173, 208

53-5a-602, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 208

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **53-5a-601** is amended to read:

53-5a-601 . Definitions.

As used in this part:

(1) "Antique firearm" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53-5a-101.5.

(2) "Bureau" means the Bureau of Criminal Identification created in Section 53-10-201 within the department.

- (3) "Criminal history background check" means a criminal background check conducted through the bureau or a local law enforcement agency.
- (4) "Dangerous weapon" means the same as that term is defined in Section 76-11-101.
- (5) "Dealer" means a person who is:
- (a) licensed under 18 U.S.C. Sec. 923; and
 - (b) engaged in the business of selling, leasing, or otherwise transferring a firearm or handgun, whether the person is a retail or wholesale dealer, pawnbroker, or other type of merchant or seller.
- (6) "Domestic violence" means the same as that term is defined in Section 77-36-1.
- (7) "Federal firearms licensee" means a person who:
- (a) holds a valid federal firearms license issued under 18 U.S.C. Sec. 923; and
 - (b) is engaged in the activities authorized by the specific category of license held by the person.
- (8)(a) "Firearm" means a pistol, revolver, shotgun, short barreled shotgun, rifle, or short barreled rifle, or a device that could be used as a dangerous weapon from which is expelled a projectile by action of an explosive.
- (b) "Firearm" does not include an antique firearm.
- (9) "NFA firearm" means a firearm as that term is defined in the National Firearms Act, 26 U.S.C. Sec. 5845.
- ~~[(9)]~~ (10)(a) "Short barreled rifle" means a rifle having a barrel or barrels of fewer than 16 inches in length.
- (b) "Short barreled rifle" includes a dangerous weapon made from a rifle by alteration, modification, or otherwise, if the weapon as modified has an overall length of fewer than 26 inches.
- ~~[(10)]~~ (11)(a) "Short barreled shotgun" means a shotgun having a barrel or barrels of fewer than 18 inches in length.
- (b) "Short barreled shotgun" includes a dangerous weapon made from a shotgun by alteration, modification, or otherwise, if the weapon as modified has an overall length of fewer than 26 inches.
- ~~[(11)]~~ (12) "Shotgun" means a smooth bore firearm designed to fire cartridges containing pellets or a single slug.
- ~~[(12)]~~ (13) "Slug" means a single projectile discharged from a shotgun shell.

Section 2. Section **53-5a-602** is amended to read:

53-5a-602 . Criminal background check prior to purchase of a firearm -- Fee --

Exemption for concealed firearm permit holders and law enforcement officers.

(1)(a) To establish personal identification and residence in this state for purposes of this part, a dealer shall require an individual receiving a firearm to present one photo identification on a form issued by a governmental agency of the state.

(b) A dealer may not accept a driving privilege card issued under Section 53-3-207 as proof of identification for the purpose of establishing personal identification and residence in this state as required under this Subsection (1).

(2)(a) A criminal history background check is required for the sale of a firearm by a licensed firearm dealer in the state.

(b) Subsection (2)(a) does not apply to the sale or transfer ~~of a firearm to~~ of:

(i) ~~[-]a firearm to a Federal Firearms Licensee[-] ; or~~

(ii) ~~an individual~~ a NFA firearm to an individual ~~who~~ if the individual ~~has~~ received an approved application for the sale or transfer of an ~~the~~ NFA firearm from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives within thirty days after the day on which the application was approved by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives for the NFA firearm .

(3)(a) An individual purchasing a firearm from a dealer shall consent in writing to a criminal background check, on a form provided by the bureau.

(b) The form shall contain the following information:

(i) the dealer identification number;

(ii) the name and address of the individual receiving the firearm;

(iii) the date of birth, height, weight, eye color, and hair color of the individual receiving the firearm; and

(iv) the social security number or any other identification number of the individual receiving the firearm.

(4)(a) The dealer shall send the information required by Subsection (3) to the bureau immediately upon its receipt by the dealer.

(b) A dealer may not sell or transfer a firearm to an individual until the dealer has provided the bureau with the information in Subsection (3) and has received approval from the bureau under Subsection (6).

(5) The dealer shall make a request for criminal history background information by telephone or other electronic means to the bureau and shall receive approval or denial of

the inquiry by telephone or other electronic means.

(6) When the dealer calls for or requests a criminal history background check, the bureau shall:

- (a) review the criminal history files, including juvenile court records, and the temporary restricted file created under Section 53-5a-504, to determine if the individual is prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transferring a firearm by state or federal law;
- (b) inform the dealer that:
 - (i) the records indicate the individual is prohibited; or
 - (ii) the individual is approved for purchasing, possessing, or transferring a firearm;
- (c) provide the dealer with a unique transaction number for that inquiry; and
- (d) provide a response to the requesting dealer during the call for a criminal background check, or by return call, or other electronic means, without delay, except in case of electronic failure or other circumstances beyond the control of the bureau, the bureau shall advise the dealer of the reason for the delay and give the dealer an estimate of the length of the delay.

(7)(a) The bureau may not maintain any records of the criminal history background check longer than 20 days from the date of the dealer's request, if the bureau determines that the individual receiving the firearm is not prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transferring the firearm under state or federal law.

(b) However, the bureau shall maintain a log of requests containing the dealer's federal firearms number, the transaction number, and the transaction date for a period of 12 months.

(8)(a) If the criminal history background check discloses information indicating that the individual attempting to purchase the firearm is prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transferring a firearm, the bureau shall:

- (i) within 24 hours after determining that the purchaser is prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transferring a firearm, notify the law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the dealer is located; and
- (ii) inform the law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the individual resides.

(b) Subsection (8)(a) does not apply to an individual prohibited from purchasing a firearm solely due to placement on the temporary restricted list under Section 53-5a-504.

- (c) A law enforcement agency that receives information from the bureau under Subsection (8)(a) shall provide a report before August 1 of each year to the bureau that includes:
- (i) based on the information the bureau provides to the law enforcement agency under Subsection (8)(a), the number of cases that involve an individual who is prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transferring a firearm as a result of a conviction for an offense involving domestic violence; and
 - (ii) of the cases described in Subsection (8)(c)(i):
 - (A) the number of cases the law enforcement agency investigates; and
 - (B) the number of cases the law enforcement agency investigates that result in a criminal charge.
- (d) The bureau shall:
- (i) compile the information from the reports described in Subsection (8)(c);
 - (ii) omit or redact any identifying information in the compilation; and
 - (iii) submit the compilation to the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee before November 1 of each year.
- (9) If an individual is denied the right to purchase a firearm under this section, the individual may review the individual's criminal history information and may challenge or amend the information as provided in Section 53-10-108.
- (10) The bureau shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, to ensure the identity, confidentiality, and security of all records provided by the bureau under this part are in conformance with the requirements of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, Pub. L. No. 103-159, 107 Stat. 1536 (1993).
- (11)(a) A dealer shall collect a criminal history background check fee for the sale of a firearm under this section.
- (b) The fee described under Subsection (11)(a) remains in effect until changed by the bureau through the process described in Section 63J-1-504.
- (c)(i) The dealer shall forward at one time all fees collected for criminal history background checks performed during the month to the bureau by the last day of the month following the sale of a firearm.
- (ii) The bureau shall deposit the fees ~~in~~ into the General Fund as dedicated credits to cover the cost of administering and conducting the criminal history background check program.

- (12)(a) An individual with a concealed firearm permit issued under Section 53-5a-303 or a provisional concealed firearm permit issued under Section 53-5a-304 is exempt from the background check and corresponding fee required in this section for the purchase of a firearm if:
- (i) the individual presents the individual's concealed firearm permit to the dealer prior to purchase of the firearm; and
 - (ii) the dealer verifies with the bureau that the individual's concealed firearm permit is valid.
- (b) An individual with a temporary permit to carry a concealed firearm issued under Section 53-5a-305 is not exempt from a background check and the corresponding fee required in this section for the purchase of a firearm.
- (13)(a) A law enforcement officer, as defined in Section 53-13-103, is exempt from the background check fee required in this section for the purchase of a personal firearm to be carried while off-duty if the law enforcement officer verifies current employment by providing a letter of good standing from the officer's commanding officer and current law enforcement photo identification.
- (b) Subsection (13)(a) may only be used by a law enforcement officer to purchase a personal firearm once in a 24-month period.
- (14) A dealer engaged in the business of selling, leasing, or otherwise transferring a firearm shall:
- (a) make the firearm safety brochure described in Subsection 26B-5-211(3) available to a customer free of charge; and
 - (b) at the time of purchase, distribute a cable-style gun lock provided to the dealer under Subsection 26B-5-211(3) to a customer purchasing a shotgun, short barreled shotgun, short barreled rifle, rifle, or another firearm that federal law does not require be accompanied by a gun lock at the time of purchase.

Section 3. Effective Date.

This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.