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## Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act—Are You Ready?

By Jennifer Schilling

The wheels are in motion and soon the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act will take flight. The law allows licensed individuals to carry concealed or partially concealed firearms on their persons and in their vehicles. Businesses need to act quickly if they intend to limit an individual's ability to carry concealed firearms into the workplace or onto company property.

The Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act, passed into law July 2013, provided that by no later than January 5, 2014, individuals would be able to submit applications to be licensed to carry a concealed or partially concealed firearm. Although the deadline is not until January 5, 2014, the Illinois State Police have already completed many steps toward finalizing the licensing process, including publishing requisite firearm training curriculum, identifying certified trainers throughout Illinois, and publishing the required signage for businesses to ban firearms on company property. Final implementation steps include publishing formal applications.

### What Businesses Should Know

1. Firearms are expressly prohibited in specific enumerated locations as follows:
  - Elementary or secondary schools, buildings containing a preschool or child care facilities
  - Public playgrounds, parks, athletic facilities, libraries
  - Airports, zoos, museums, and amusement parks
  - Colleges or universities (and affiliated locations such as sports venues, theater venues, medical training facilities)
  - Stadiums/arenas of any collegiate or professional sporting event
  - Buildings under the control or partial control of an officer of the executive or legislative branch of government, courts and units of local government
  - Correctional institutions and detention centers
  - Hospitals, hospital affiliates, mental health facilities, and nursing homes
  - Public transportation including buses, trains, and public transportation facilities
  - Establishments that serve alcohol, if more than 50% of the establishment's gross receipts within the prior three months are from the sale of alcohol

- Public gathering/events that require the issuance of a permit
  - Areas that have been issued Special Event Retailer licenses under the Liquor Control Act
  - Cook County Forest Preserve District
  - Gaming facilities licensed under the Riverboat Gambling Act or the Illinois Horse Racing Act
  - Real estate used “owned, leased, controlled” or used for nuclear energy, storage, weapons, or as a development site or facility regulated by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission
  - Any area where firearms are prohibited by federal law
2. If a place of business is not among the expressly prohibited locations, licensed individuals are permitted to carry concealed or partially concealed weapons onto the premises unless the business posts signage at its entrances expressly prohibiting firearms.

The signage must be the uniform sign provided by the Illinois State Police.<sup>1</sup> **NOTE: When printing the sign, please ensure the black borders surrounding the “no firearms” symbol measure 4 inches from top to bottom and 6 inches from left to right.**

Notably, even if a business has posted the signage, the law expressly provides for a parking lot exception. Under the parking lot exception, even where a business has posted signage, individuals may carry a concealed firearm within a vehicle into parking lot areas and may store a firearm or ammunition within a locked vehicle or within a locked container that is out of plain view within the vehicle.

Individuals may also carry an unloaded concealed firearm in the immediate area surrounding his or her vehicle within a parking area for the limited purpose of storing or retrieving it from the vehicle’s trunk.

## Next Steps

Businesses should update employee handbooks to comply with Illinois law, and should decide whether to ban employees, the public, and other visitors, from entering their facilities with a firearm. If employers decide to ban firearms, they should print the required signage and identify all entrances to the building and premises where the sign can be clearly and conspicuously posted.

Business tenants that lease office space within a building should discuss with landlords their intentions with respect to firearm limitations. In the event a landlord elects not to prohibit firearms in the entire building, tenants can seek permission to post the no firearm signage at their individual entrances.

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<sup>1</sup> The signage is now available for printing at: <http://www.isp.state.il.us/firearms/ccw/>.