

FIREARM SAFETY TEAM

OREGON CONCEALED HANDGUN LICENSE TRAINING

Disclaimer: This training manual is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Firearm laws, including Measure 114 and Senate Bill 554, are subject to change and ongoing judicial review. Always consult with a qualified attorney for specific legal questions.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Firearm Safety Team's Oregon Concealed Handgun License (CHL) training. This course fulfills the educational requirement to apply for your CHL. By completing this material, you are accepting the serious responsibility of firearm ownership.

We believe that the right to bear arms requires the duty to do so safely and legally. This course merges statewide standards with specific insights for Multnomah County to ensure you are prepared for the unique legal landscape of Oregon.



THE CARDINAL RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY

Safety is the paramount foundation of all firearm handling. These four rules must be followed at all times to mitigate negligent discharges.

- 1. Treat all firearms as if they are loaded.**
 - Never assume a gun is empty until you have verified it personally.
- 2. Never point a firearm at anything you are not willing to destroy.**
 - This is known as "Muzzle Control." Always keep the firearm pointed in a safe direction.
- 3. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are on target and have decided to fire.**
 - Your finger should rest outside the trigger guard, along the slide or frame, until you make the conscious decision to shoot.
- 4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.**
 - Bullets can travel long distances and penetrate walls. You are responsible for every round you fire.

Figure 1. Cardinal Rules of Firearm Safety

RULE 1	RULE 2	RULE 3	RULE 4
Treat all firearms as if they are loaded.	Never point a firearm at anything you are not willing to destroy.	Keep your finger off the trigger until you are on target and have decided to fire.	Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.
Personal Verification: Never assume a gun is empty. Check it yourself every time you handle it.	Muzzle Control: Always keep the firearm pointed in a safe direction to prevent injury from accidental discharge.	Finger Placement: Rest your finger along the frame or slide, outside the trigger guard, until you are ready to shoot.	Target ID and Backstop: Bullets can travel long distances. You are responsible for where every round ends up.

Additional Safety Protocols

- **Impairment:** Never handle or carry a firearm while under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or prescription drugs that affect your judgment.
- **Cleaning:** Always unload the firearm in a separate room from your ammunition. Check the chamber and magazine well three times to ensure it is empty before cleaning.
- **Mental Health & Suicide Prevention:** 40% of suicides in Multnomah County involve a firearm. If a household member is in crisis, limit access by changing safe combinations or temporarily storing firearms with a trusted friend or law enforcement agency.

OREGON LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Possession and Carry

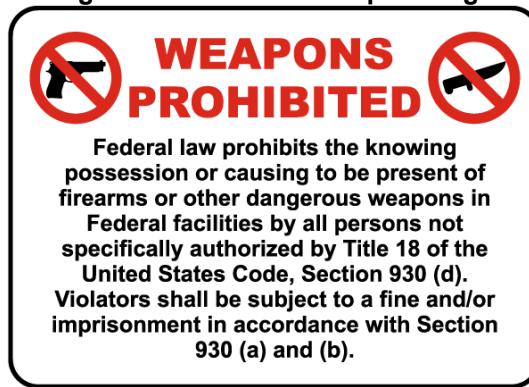
- **Open Carry:** Generally, open carry is legal in Oregon. However, local ordinances in cities like Portland and counties like Multnomah prohibit the open carry of **loaded** firearms in public places unless you have a CHL.
- **Concealed Carry:** You must have a valid CHL to carry a concealed handgun on your person or within reach in a vehicle. "Concealed" includes covering the firearm with a jacket or placing it in a bag.
- **Vehicle Transport (Without a CHL):**
 - The handgun must **not** be "readily accessible".
 - It should be locked in the trunk or a locked container (like a glove box) with the key removed from the lock.
 - The firearm should be unloaded.
- **Reciprocity:** Oregon does **not** recognize CHLs from other states. Conversely, your Oregon CHL is **not** valid in Washington State.

Prohibited Places (Even with a CHL)

Possessing a CHL does **not** grant permission to carry everywhere. You are generally prohibited from carrying in:

- **Federal Facilities:** Post offices, federal courthouses, and secure areas of airports (past TSA).
- **Court Facilities:** State courthouses and any building occupied by court personnel (unless authorized by the presiding judge). Violation is a Class C Felony.
- **School Grounds:** Under SB 554, school districts, colleges, and universities may prohibit CHL carry if they post clear signage and website notices. **Always check the specific school policy.**
- **Private Property:** Business owners have the right to ban firearms on their premises.
- **Indian Reservations:** Generally prohibited without tribal permission.

Figure 2. Prohibited Weapons Sign



Source: <https://www.safetysign.com/products/9485/federal-facilities-weapons-prohibited-sign>

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Secure Storage and Strict Liability (SB 554)

Oregon law enforces strict liability for firearm storage.

- **Requirement:** When not under your control, firearms must be secured with a trigger lock, cable lock, or in a locked container (safe/lockbox).
- **Vehicle Storage:** A handgun left unattended in a vehicle must be locked in a container (glove box/trunk) and **not visible** from outside.
- **Liability:** If you fail to secure your firearm and it is used to injure someone, you can be held "strictly liable" (negligence per se), meaning you are responsible even if you acted reasonably.
- **Theft Reporting:** You must report a lost or stolen firearm to law enforcement within **72 hours** (or 48 hours in Multnomah County per local ordinance).

Figure 3. Pistol with Cable Lock



Source: <https://www.pewpewtactical.com/best-gun-trigger-locks/>

Measure 114 Update

Note: This measure includes significant changes regarding purchasing and magazines.

- **Permit to Purchase:** The measure requires a permit to purchase any firearm, which includes a background check and live-fire training.
- **Magazine Capacity:** Limits magazines to 10 rounds.
 - **Grandfather Clause:** If you owned large-capacity magazines prior to the effective date, you may keep them, but you may generally only use them on private property or at a shooting range. You cannot carry them concealed for self-defense in public.

USE OF FORCE

Oregon law (ORS 161.209) allows for the use of force only when reasonably necessary.

Physical Force

You may use physical force (non-deadly) if you **reasonably believe** it is necessary to defend yourself or another from the use or *imminent* use of unlawful physical force.

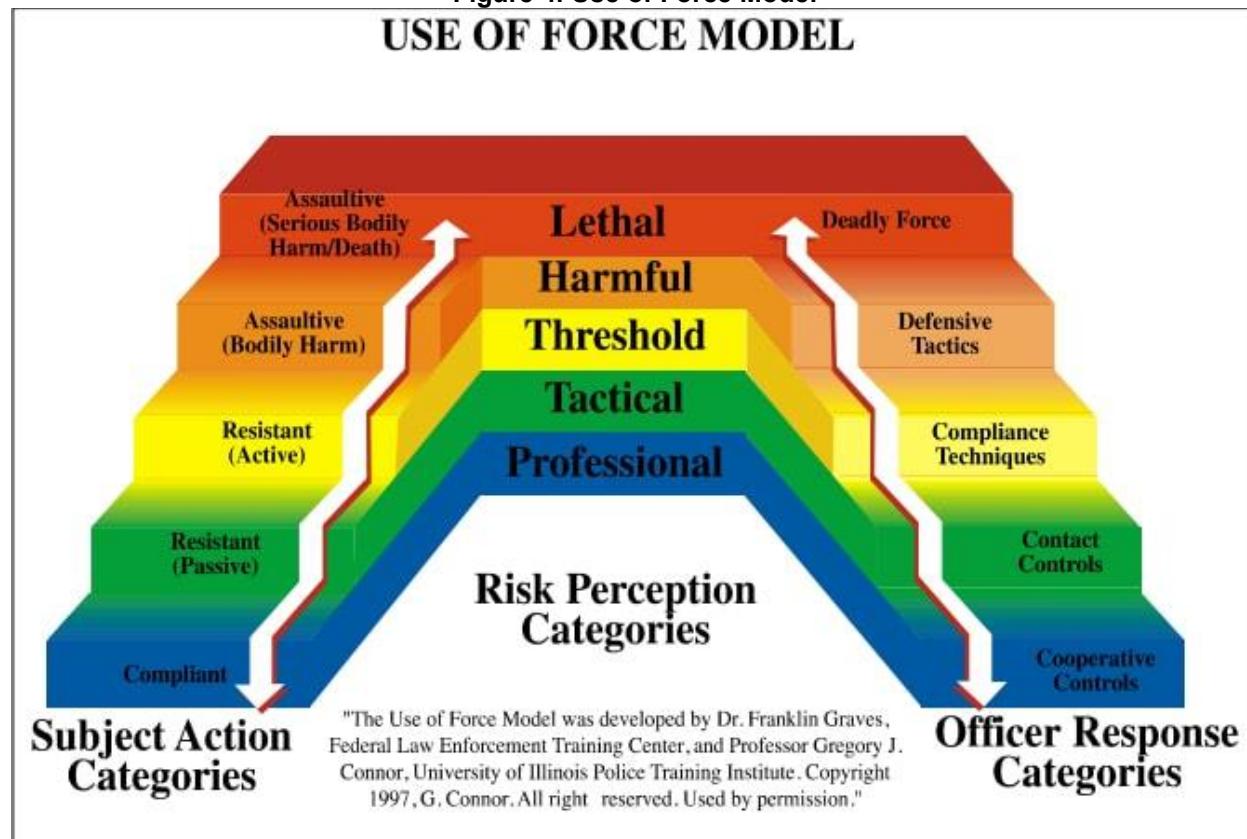
- "**Imminent**": Means the threat is about to happen immediately (e.g., someone standing in front of you with a knife vs. a threat made over Zoom).

Deadly Physical Force

Deadly force is justified **only** when you reasonably believe another person is:

1. Committing or attempting to commit a felony involving physical force (e.g., violent robbery);
2. Committing or attempting a burglary in a dwelling; or
3. Using or about to use unlawful **deadly** physical force against you or another.

Figure 4. Use of Force Model



Source: <https://www.srsselfdefense.com/blog/civilian-use-of-force-continuum/>

Practical Scenarios

Understanding the law requires applying it to real-world situations.

Scenario A: The Fleeing Intruder

- **Situation:** You discover an intruder in your home. They turn and run out the front door.
- **Action: Do Not Shoot.**
- **Reason:** Once the person flees, the threat is no longer imminent. You generally cannot use deadly force solely to retrieve property or stop a fleeing suspect.

Scenario B: The Imminent Threat

- **Situation:** You confront an intruder who has stolen your TV. You command them to leave. They drop the TV, pull a knife, and walk toward you with a fixed stare.
- **Action: Shoot (Likely Justified).**
- **Reason:** The intruder demonstrated **Intent** (ignoring commands), **Means** (knife), and **Opportunity** (closing distance/no obstacles). Your safety is at serious risk.

Scenario C: Road Rage (The Aggressor)

- **Situation:** You are cut off in traffic. You exit your vehicle to argue. You get into a fistfight, lose, and then draw your gun.
- **Action: Not Justified.**
- **Reason:** You were a willing participant/aggressor. You generally cannot claim self-defense if you provoked the fight or were the initial aggressor.

PRACTICAL CARRY AND GEAR

Figure 5. Concealed Carry Postions



Source: <https://www.vedderholsters.com/news-articles/concealed-carry-positions-ultimate-guide/>

Holster Selection

Your carry method must balance four competing needs: **Concealability, Speed/Access, Comfort, and Security**.

- **On-Body vs. Off-Body:** Avoid carrying in a purse or backpack unless it has a specific holster compartment. Loose carry in a bag is dangerous and slow.
- **Maintenance:** Check leather holsters for wear that could fold into the trigger guard and ensure screws on Kydex holsters remain tight.

Figure 6. Various Holsters

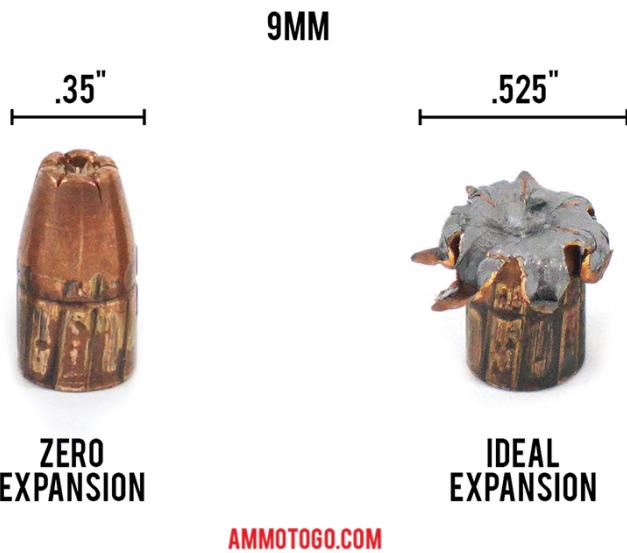


Source: <https://www.pewpewtactical.com/best-iwb-inside-waistband-holsters/>

Ammunition Selection

- **Practice:** Use **Full Metal Jacket (FMJ)** or ball ammunition for training as it is cost-effective.
- **Self-Defense:** Always use **Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP)** for carry. JHP is designed to expand ("mushroom") upon impact, which maximizes stopping power and reduces the risk of the bullet passing through the attacker and hitting a bystander.

Figure 7. Bullet Expansion



Source: <https://www.ammunitiontogo.com/lodge/barriers-and-ammo/>

Interacting with Law Enforcement

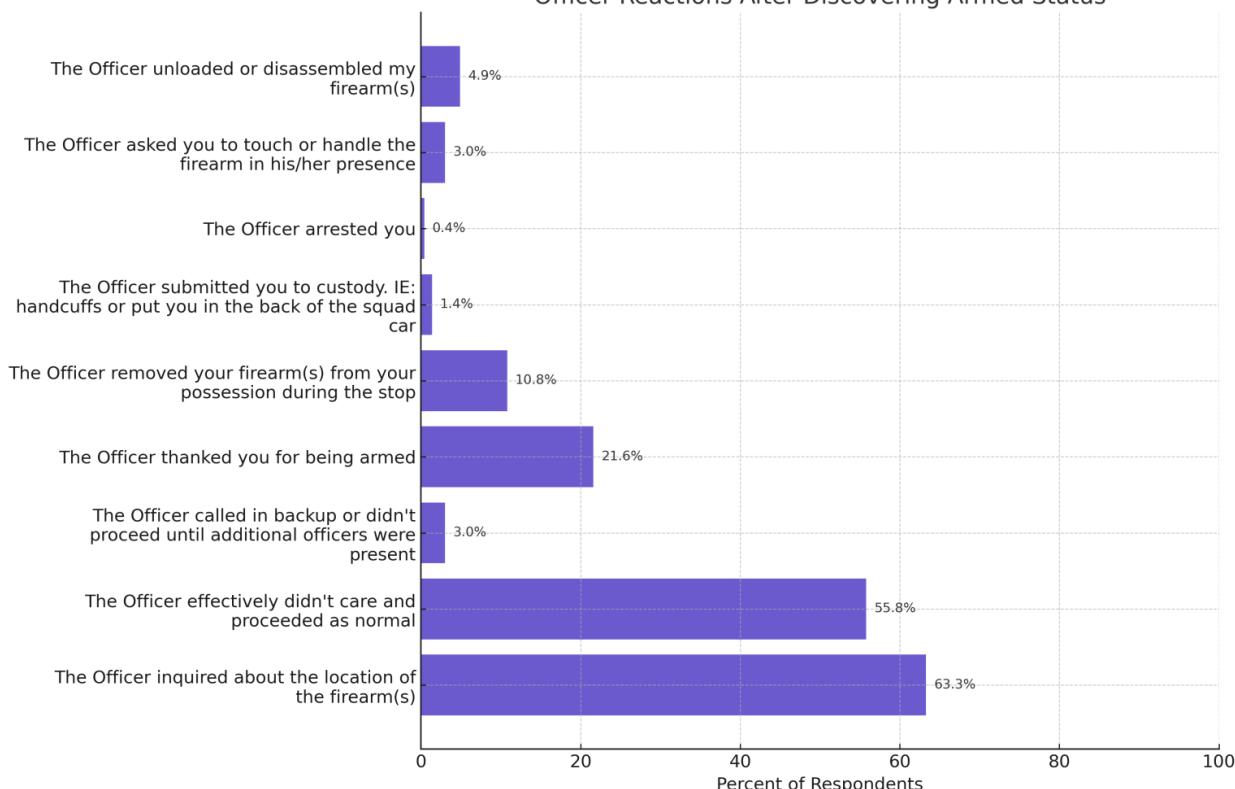
If you are pulled over while carrying, follow these steps to ensure safety for everyone:

1. **Hands on Wheel:** Keep both hands visible (e.g., on the steering wheel).
2. **Inform:** Calmly inform the officer, "I have a Concealed Handgun License and I am carrying a firearm." Ask how they want to proceed.
3. **Do Not Reach:** Never reach for your wallet or the firearm until explicitly told to do so.
4. **Disclosure:** While Oregon law does not strictly require you to announce your CHL immediately, it is highly recommended to avoid misunderstandings if the officer spots the weapon.

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Figure 8. Officer Reactions to Armed Status

Officer Reactions After Discovering Armed Status



Source: <https://www.concealedcarry.com/statistics/what-over-1600-armed-traffic-stops-reveal-about-law-enforcement-interactions/>

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APPLYING FOR YOUR CHL (MULTNOMAH COUNTY)

The Oregon CHL is issued by the Sheriff of your county of residence.

Requirements

- U.S. Citizen or legal resident (with 6 months continuous residency).
- At least 21 years old.
- No felony convictions or misdemeanor convictions within the last 4 years.
- No outstanding warrants or restraining orders.
- **Training Certificate:** Completion of this course satisfies the safety training requirement.

Application Steps

1. **Apply:** Complete the application online at mcsous or at the kiosk at 3083 NE 170th Place, Portland.
2. **Schedule:** Book an appointment for fingerprinting and a photograph.
3. **Fees:** Approximately \$115 (Credit card accepted online; Cash/Check only in person).
4. **Bring Documentation:**
 - Valid Driver's License/ID.
 - Proof of Residency (if address on ID is not current): Tax return, lease agreement, or voter registration.
 - Course Completion Certificate.
 - Proof of Citizenship (Passport/Birth Certificate) if not born in the US.

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