

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY WEAPONS POLICY

Issuing Office

President of Liberty University

Affected Parties

All members of the Liberty University community, including students, trustees, officers, employees, contractors, suppliers, volunteers, alumni, and visitors.

Authority

This Weapons Policy (this "Policy") is promulgated pursuant to the authority granted to the President by the Board of Trustees of Liberty University on April 22, 2016.

Policy

Liberty University is committed to ensuring a safe learning and working environment for its students, faculty, staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors, while also respecting individuals' rights to protect themselves. This Policy is intended to outline the circumstances under which a person may possess, conceal, carry, store, service and transport weapons on Liberty University's campus and other properties owned or controlled by Liberty University.

Section 1. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Conceal carry" or "concealed carry" means hidden from common observation while being on or about a person. A weapon is deemed hidden from common observation when it appears so deceptively as to disguise the weapon's true nature.
- B. "Firearm" means any Handgun, rifle (semi-automatic, bolt-action and otherwise), shotgun of any kind, muzzleloader, and any other device designed, made and intended to fire single or multiple projectiles by means of an explosion of a combustible material from one or more barrels.
- C. "Handgun" means any semi-automatic pistol or revolver, or other firearm originally designed, made and intended to fire single or multiple projectiles by means of an explosion of a combustible material from one or more barrels when held in one hand.
- D. "Less-lethal Weapon" means any weapon designed to temporarily incapacitate another person while minimizing the possibility of a fatal or permanent injury to that person, including without limitation pepper spray and stun weapons.

E. “University Property” is defined as any building or land owned or leased by Liberty University or subject to its control, including but not limited to spaces on University property with defined enclosures for a designated use, such as an academic building, a residence hall, a theatre, an athletic field or stadium, but University facilities do not include open spaces, parking lots and recreational trails, even when those areas are enclosed by fencing or walls. “University Property” *does not include any building or land leased by Liberty University to a third party, including without limitation, Liberty Christian Academy.*

F. “Weapon” means an item designed for fighting purposes or commonly understood to be a weapon, including without limitation “Prop Weapons”, which are items that look like weapons but in fact are not actually designed for fighting purposes. “Weapon” includes without limitation, Handgun, pistol, revolver, other weapons designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind by action of an explosion of any combustible material, ammunition, any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, machete, razor (but not safety razors commonly used for personal grooming), sling bow, spring stick, metal knuck, blackjack, nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, any disc having two or more points or pointed blades designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, and any weapon similar to the items described in this section. “Weapon” does not include a pocketknife with a blade under three (3) inches.

Section 2. WEAPONS ON UNIVERSITY PROPERTY GENERALLY PROHIBITED

A. **General Rule.** Except as expressly permitted by this Policy, no person may possess, conceal, carry, store, display, transport, clean, service or use any Weapon on University Property.

B. **Exceptions.** No Weapon may be brought onto University Property except under the following limited exceptions:

- a. A person may possess, Conceal Carry, store, transport and use (when lawful) a Less-Lethal Weapon on University Property, provided the Less-Lethal Weapon may only be displayed or openly carried when necessary for its lawful use.
- b. A person authorized by the Liberty University Police Department (“LUPD”) to Conceal Carry a Handgun under Section 3 below may Conceal Carry a Handgun approved by LUPD, subject to the requirements and limitations of this Policy.
- c. Police officers, other law enforcement officers, and other government personnel authorized to carry Weapons may carry and/or Conceal Carry their Weapons on University Property in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- d. Licensed security officers who are authorized to carry a Firearm and approved by LUPD to carry a Weapon, may carry and/or Conceal Carry their Weapons on University Property, in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- e. A person may possess, use, and clean a Firearm at the Liberty Mountain Gun Club and transport a Firearm to and from the Gun Club, subject to the rules and regulations of the Gun Club as amended from time to time and any directives from Gun Club staff.
- f. A person may only possess, store, carry, display, transport or use a Prop Weapon as expressly permitted by LUPD, which permission must be obtained prior to the Prop Weapon being brought onto University Property.
- g. A person may store a Weapon with LUPD if approved by LUPD as provided in Section 6, below.

For the avoidance of doubt, rifles (semi-automatic, bolt-action and otherwise), shotguns, muzzleloaders, pistol carbines, and other Firearms that are not Handguns approved by LUPD under this Policy are not permitted in Residence Halls. A person may apply to have Weapons which are not permitted in Resident Halls stored with LUPD as provided in this Policy.

C. Absolute Prohibition (When Exceptions Do Not Apply). In accordance with state and federal law, no Weapons (including concealed Handguns approved by LUPD) are permitted at secured areas of airports and aircraft, except as expressly permitted by law. No Weapons are permitted within the confines of a facility on University Property being used exclusively by a third party renting or using the facility, where the tenant or authorized user elects to restrict Weapons within its event and posts a sign prohibiting Weapons. "University Property" does not include the interior and exterior areas of Liberty Christian Academy, which leases property owned by Liberty University. Possession of Weapons on Liberty Christian Academy's facility is strictly prohibited (and currently a violation of criminal law), except for law enforcement and licensed security officers.

Section 3. AUTHORIZATION TO CONCEAL CARRY HANDGUN ON LIBERTY PROPERTY

A. Eligibility Requirements.

a. Employees and students who do not reside on University Property may only possess, store, Conceal Carry, transport, and use (when lawfully appropriate) an approved Handgun while on University Property when the following conditions are met and maintained:

- i. The person holds a valid concealed handgun permit recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia;

- ii. The person is authorized in writing by LUPD to carry a concealed Handgun;
- iii. The person does not openly carry their Handgun on University Property; and
- iv. When not Conceal Carrying their approved Handgun, the person stores the approved Handgun in a secured container or compartment in their vehicle or office while on University Property.

b. Employees and students who reside in Residence Halls may only possess, store, Conceal Carry, transport or use (when lawfully appropriate) an approved Handgun while on University Property when the following conditions are met and maintained:

- i. The person holds a valid concealed handgun permit recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- ii. The person is authorized in writing by LUPD to carry a concealed Handgun;
- iii. The person does not openly carry their handgun on University Property;
- iv. The person's roommate(s) who are assigned to live in the person's room or apartment consent to the presence and storage of the approved Handgun in his/her assigned room or apartment and to the installation of the safe in his/her room or apartment;
- v. When not Conceal Carrying their approved Handgun, the person stores his/her the Handgun (1) in a secured safe provided and installed by LUPD in his/her Residence Hall room or (2) in a secured container or secured compartment in his/her vehicle while on University Property, except when being actively transferred from the Handgun's concealed position to one of the two locations mentioned above, or while necessary for its lawful use;
- vi. While showering, wearing clothes that do not permit safe concealment of the approved Handgun, or engaged in other activities where the approved Handgun is not concealed on a person's body, the person must (1) secure the approved Handgun in a University-installed safe, in secured compartment in the student's vehicle, or at LUPD, or (2) remove the approved Handgun from University property;
- vii. The person shall never service, clean, display or pass to another person the approved Handgun inside the Residence Halls; and
- viii. The person shall never permit or facilitate access to the University-installed safe by anyone, except LUPD officers.

c. Visitors to Liberty University who are not faculty, staff or students of Liberty University may only possess, store, Conceal Carry, transport, and use (when lawfully appropriate) an approved Handgun while on University Property when the following conditions are met and maintained:

- i. The person holds a valid concealed handgun permit recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- ii. When not Conceal Carrying their approved Handgun, the person stores the approved Handgun in a secured container or compartment in their vehicle while on University Property; and
- iii. The person does not openly carry their Handgun on University Property.

Section 4. PROCEDURE TO OBTAIN AUTHORIZATION TO CONCEAL CARRY AND STORE HANDGUNS IN RESIDENCE HALLS

A. Application for Conceal Carry Permit. To apply for authorization to Conceal Carry, a person must:

- a. Submit to LUPD a completed *Application for Concealed Carry on Campus* and, if applicable, a *Handgun Safe Responsibility Form*. These forms are available from LUPD which can be reached by phone at (434) 592-7641, by email at LUPD@liberty.edu, or in person at the LUPD's office 1971 University Blvd, Green Hall, Terrace Level Suite 700;
- b. Provide LUPD with a copy of the applicant's valid, unexpired concealed handgun permit that is recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- c. Provide the applicant's full legal name, date of birth, current residential address, phone, email and, if applicable, proof of current faculty, staff or student status;
- d. Authorize review by LUPD of applicant's criminal background records and records in the possession of the University relevant to the LUPD determination regarding approval for Conceal Carry;
- e. Provide the make, model, caliber, and serial number of the Handgun the applicant is requesting to Conceal Carry and any other distinguishing information about the Handgun that will enable LUPD to match it to the applicant; and
- f. If residing in a Residence Hall, the applicant must:
 - i. Submit a completed *Handgun Safe Form* to LUPD and be approved;
 - ii. Authorize the annual charge for safe rental (including installation, programming and removal) to the applicant's student account;
 - iii. Provide the names of the applicant's roommates who reside in the applicant's assigned room or apartment;

- iv. Arrange for each of the applicant's roommates to appear personally at LUPD with University or government-issued identification to consent in writing to the presence and storage of the approved Handgun in his/her assigned room or apartment and to the installation of the safe in his/her room or apartment; and
- v. Permit University personnel to install the safe in the applicant's room.

B. Decision on Approval. Within 20 business days of submitting a complete application, LUPD will provide the person with a written response indicating whether the person's application has been approved or not, and if not, the response may or may not state the general reason(s) for denial. LUPD authorization to Conceal Carry a handgun may not extend beyond the expiration date of the applicant's concealed handgun permit.

C. Persons Not Eligible for Authorization to Conceal Carry. LUPD may revoke authorization to Conceal Carry on University Property (or not approve an application for authorization to Conceal Carry) for any person who: (1) does not comply with this Policy; (2) is on probation for violation of any academic or honor code, or of the Liberty Way, or Liberty University Student Honor Code; (3) has been arrested for or charged with any assault, battery, stalking, crime of violence, or a felony, and has such case pending; (4) has been convicted of assault, battery, stalking, any crime of violence, or a felony; (5) is restricted or restrained from contacting or communicating with another person pursuant to a no-contact directive or restraining order from the University or from any court or agency; or (6) is disapproved by Liberty University or LUPD for any other reason.

D. Written Requests Regarding Another's Authorization to Conceal Carry.

- a. Any Liberty University student, faculty or staff member may submit a written request to LUPD requesting that LUPD not authorize another person to Conceal Carry on University Property.
- b. For good cause, LUPD may, in its sole discretion, deny approval of such person's application for authorization to Conceal Carry or restrict or revoke prior authorization to Conceal Carry on University Property. In such cases, final determination of whether to approve, restrict or revoke a person's privilege to Conceal Carry on University Property shall be made by LUPD, in its sole discretion.

Section 5. RULES FOR PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO CONCEAL CARRY

A. Each person authorized by LUPD to Conceal Carry a Handgun in accordance with this Weapons Policy shall, while on University Property and in possession of his/her approved Handgun, keep a copy of the LUPD written response authorizing him/her to carry such Handgun, and shall produce such written authorization immediately upon demand by any law enforcement officer or other Liberty University official.

B. Approved Handguns may not be serviced and/or cleaned on University Property, except that approved Handguns may be cleaned at the Liberty Mountain Gun Club, provided the person authorized by LUPD to Conceal Carry informs Gun Club staff of his/her intent to clean the Handgun and complies with all rules and regulations of the Gun Club and any directives of Gun Club staff.

Section 6. STORAGE OF WEAPONS WITH LUPD

A. **General.** Any Liberty University student or faculty or staff member who desires to store a Weapon with LUPD may, upon approval by LUPD, bring the Weapon or Firearm, unloaded, onto University Property for storage with LUPD, using the procedure in this section.

B. **Application to Store Weapons.** To apply to store a Weapon with LUPD, a person must submit to LUPD a completed ***Weapons Storage Request*** form and provide LUPD with the following information:

- a. The applicant's name, date of birth, current residential address (including dorm and room number, if applicable), phone, email and proof of current faculty, staff or student status;
- b. The make, model, caliber, and serial number of the Weapon the applicant desires to store with LUPD and any other distinguishing information about the Weapon that will enable LUPD to match it to the applicant; and
- c. the amount and caliber of any ammunition or projectiles.

C. **Decision on Approval.** For good cause, LUPD shall not approve an application to store a Weapon with LUPD, which will generally provide the person with a written response indicating whether the person's application has been approved or not, and if not, the response may or may not state the general reason(s) for denial.

D. **Procedure for Storage and Retrieval.** Upon approval of a storage application, LUPD shall: (1) authorize the applicant to bring the approved firearm/weapon(s) in a vehicle to the LUPD office, and (2) provide an escort to the person to bring the Weapon(s) from the vehicle to the LUPD office.

To protect the property rights of each person in his or her Weapon, LUPD will ensure that all Weapons in its custody remain secure and unhandled, unless necessary for storage, retrieval, or storage rearrangement purposes.

Within the designated hours for Weapons check-out, LUPD shall retrieve and produce to the owner the requested Weapon(s) upon the owner's request, presentation of valid photo identification, and the owner's completion of a check-out form which details the check-out time of the Weapon(s), where the Weapon(s) will be used and for what lawful purpose, and when the Weapon(s) will be checked-in. LUPD shall provide the person with a receipt showing all the above check-out information.

If LUPD has reason to believe return of the Weapon(s) upon request poses a danger to the safety of the owner and/or others, LUPD may delay or reasonably condition release of the Weapon(s) in its sole discretion.

LUPD shall keep records of every such transaction, and shall adopt measures to ensure the timely check-in of all Weapons.

Persons who are approved to store Weapons with LUPD shall immediately upon entry upon of University Property, bring the Weapon to the LUPD office in a vehicle. **Weapons may not be brought from a vehicle to the LUPD office without an escort provided by LUPD.**

E. Weapons Not Eligible for Storage. LUPD has the discretion to decline to store any Weapon for any reason, including homemade weapons, weapons without serial numbers, etc. The following Weapons are not eligible to be stored with LUPD: machine guns, sawed-off shotguns, sawed-off rifles, explosives of any kind, dirks, bowie knives, switchblade knives, ballistic knives, machetes, razors, sling bows, spring sticks, metal knucks, blackjacks, nun chahkas, nun chucks, nunchakus, shurikens, or fighting chains, throwing stars or oriental darts.

- a. "Machine gun" means any Firearm which shoots or is designed to shoot automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger.
- b. "Sawed-off shotgun" means any Firearm originally designed as a shoulder weapon, utilizing a self-contained cartridge from which a number of ball shot pellets or projectiles may be fired simultaneously from a smooth or rifled bore by a single function of the firing device and which has a barrel length of less than 18 inches for smooth bore weapons and 16 inches for rifled weapons.
- c. "Sawed-off rifle" means a rifle of any caliber which expels a projectile by action of an explosion of a combustible material and is designed as a shoulder weapon with a barrel or barrels length of less than 16 inches or which has been modified to an overall length of less than 26 inches.

Section 7. ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY

A. Confidentiality. LUPD shall keep its records regarding applications and approvals and denials of Handgun permits confidential from all third parties, except Liberty University officials and as required by law or court order. LUPD will post a current version of this Policy in its entirety on LUPD's website.

B. Questions. Any person who has questions about the application of this Policy to a particular situation should seek guidance from the Chief of the Liberty University Police Department or Vice President of Security & Public Safety.

C. **Sanctions.** Any person who violates this Policy will be subject to all appropriate penalties under University policy and applicable law, including immediate revocation of any LUPD authorization to Conceal Carry a Handgun and/or to store a Weapon with LUPD under this Policy.

- a. Liberty University employees who violate this Policy shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
- b. Visitors (including contractors) who violate this Policy may be banned from University Property and referred to law enforcement for possible prosecution.
- c. Students who violate this Policy are subject to 30 misconduct points and a \$500.00 fine, 30 hours Disciplinary Community Service, and possible Administrative Withdrawal, or such other penalties as may be prescribed in the Liberty University Student Honor Code for such misconduct.

Revision History

Approved August 22, 2016

Revised June 23, 2023