

FIREARMS REGISTRATION



General Requirements & Study Guide

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF


The Metropolitan Police Department is the agency responsible for registering firearms in the District of Columbia. This pamphlet provides you with the information you need to comply with the District's laws regarding proper registration and safekeeping of your weapon. By being familiar with the law and the process, you will be able to quickly and easily register your weapon and ensure that you are in compliance.

While this guide aims to give you everything you need to follow the steps, the members of our Firearms Registration Section stand ready to assist you with any special needs you may have and provide answers to your questions. They can be reached at (202) 727-4275. The MPD also provides a 24-hour gun registration hotline at (202) 727-9490.

As a gun owner, you understand how important it is to be responsible. The Department encourages you to take the necessary measures to ensure that your firearms are securely stored. Too often our police officers are faced with the devastating realities of gun violence, either intentional or accidental. Having an improperly stored gun in your home can be a significant risk factor for injury and death. In fact, firearm related injuries are a leading cause of death in children, and include deaths from unintentional injuries, homicide and suicide.

That's why MPD, with assistance from Project ChildSafe, provides a gunlock free of charge for each gun registered in the District of Columbia. The locks are simple and easy to install. Gun owners are strongly encouraged to use these locks to reduce the likelihood of accidental injury or death. In addition, it is illegal in the District of Columbia for any person to possess a firearm in the home if a minor under the age of 18 is likely to gain access to a firearm without the permission of the parent or guardian, unless the registered owner complies with the storage provisions outlined in Part IV, Section 6 of this study guide.

Thank you for your cooperation and compliance with the District's laws and for your commitment to being a responsible gun owner.


Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT FIREARMS REGISTRATION SECTION

HOURS: Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm
ADDRESS: 300 Indiana Avenue, NW, Room 2169
Washington, DC 20001
TELEPHONE: (202) 727-4275
WEB: www.mpdc.dc.gov/gunregistration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER	4
FIREARMS REGISTRATION PROCEDURES IN BRIEF	5
Newly Purchased Firearm.....	5
Previously Owned Firearm.....	5
COMPLETE FIREARMS REGISTRATION PROCEDURES	6
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FIREARMS REGISTRATION (Study Guide)	8
I. Firearms Eligible for Registration	8
II. Registrant Eligibility	8
III. Filing Times.....	9
IV. Duties and Responsibilities of the Registrant	9
V. Revocation of Registration Certificate.....	11
VI. Procedures for Denial or Revocation	11
VII. Possession and Sale of Ammunition	11
VIII. Responsibility of Estate Executors or Administrators.....	12
IX. Voluntary Surrender of Firearms, Destructive Devices, or Ammunition	12
X. General Penalties	12

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

Firearms Eligible to be Registered

In general, rifles, shotguns, revolvers, and handguns may be registered in the District of Columbia. For more information, please see Part I, “Firearms Eligible for Registration” in this guide.

Transporting Your Firearm for Registration or to a Lawful Recreational Activity

When transporting your firearm in a vehicle, it must be unloaded, with neither the firearm nor any ammunition readily accessible or directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the transporting vehicle. If the vehicle does not have a compartment separate from the driver's compartment, the firearm or ammunition must be unloaded and contained in a locked container other than the glove compartment or console.

If you are transporting your firearm in a manner other than in a vehicle, it must be unloaded, inside a locked container, and separate from any ammunition.

If you are stopped by any police agency in the District of Columbia with a firearm in your possession, you must immediately produce the registration certificate and substantiate your lawful reason for transporting the weapon. If you are transporting the weapon to or from the Firearms Registration Section (FRS) in order to register it, you may only do so during regular FRS business hours (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

Do not bring ammunition with you when you register your firearm. Possession of ammunition for an unregistered firearm is prohibited in the District of Columbia, and you may be subject to criminal charges. If registering a semi-automatic firearm, **bring** the empty accompanying magazine. Please note that it is illegal to possess a magazine that holds more than ten rounds of ammunition in the District of Columbia. For more information, please see Part VII, “Possession and Sale of Ammunition” in this guide.

Retrieving Your Firearm from a Dealer

Under DC law, a firearms dealer cannot release a firearm to a purchaser until 10 days after the initial application. (DC Official Code §22-4508) A gun dealer will not release your firearm until you return with your approved registration certificate. If, for any reason, a gun dealer has released a firearm or firearms to you before 10 days have passed or without an approved registration certificate, you must **IMMEDIATELY** bring the firearm(s) to FRS.

FIREARMS REGISTRATION PROCEDURES IN BRIEF

Newly Purchased Firearm

To register a newly purchased firearm:

Rifle or Shotgun

- The DC firearms dealer will provide and complete Section A of MPD's "Application for Firearms Registration Certificate" (PD-219).
- You will complete the rest of the application and bring it to the FRS along with all other necessary materials to complete the registration process.
- Once the application is approved (generally within 5 days), the FRS will notify you. You can pick up your registration certificate or request that it be mailed to you.
- After you get the registration certificate, bring it to the dealer to pick up your legally registered gun.

Handgun

- The DC firearms dealer will provide and complete Section A of MPD's "Application for Firearms Registration Certificate" (PD-219).
- You will complete the rest of the application and bring it to the FRS along with all other necessary materials to complete the registration process.
- Once the application is approved (generally within 5 days), the FRS will notify you. You can pick up your registration certificate or request that it be mailed to you.
- After you get the registration certificate, bring it to the dealer to pick up your handgun.
- Immediately bring the **UNLOADED** gun back to the FRS for a ballistics test. This process takes approximately 1-hour, after which the registration process is complete and you may leave with your legally registered gun.

Previously Owned Firearm

To register a firearm (rifle, shotgun, or handgun) that you already legally possess in another jurisdiction:

- Bring your **UNLOADED** gun to the FRS (do not bring any ammunition) along with all materials necessary to complete the registration process.
- After you complete the process, you will leave with your gun.
- Once the application is approved (generally within 5 days), the FRS will notify you. You can pick up your registration certificate or request that it be mailed to you. Your registration process is then complete.

COMPLETE FIREARMS REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

1. Complete MPD's **Application for Firearms Registration Certificate** (PD-219).
 - a. The form is available through DC dealers, or through FRS. You can pick up a copy at the FRS office or contact FRS to request that a form be mailed to you.
 - b. Fill out the "Purchaser/Owner's Name" of the form.. If you are buying a new gun, the dealer will complete Section A. The form must be signed by both the purchaser and seller in the presence of each other.
2. Bring the completed PD-219 to the FRS, along with:
 - a. The firearm, if appropriate.
 - i. If you already own the firearm, bring the UNLOADED gun with you.
 - ii. If you are purchasing a firearm, the dealer cannot release the firearm to you until you have completed this process and have an approved registration certificate.
 - b. Proof of residency in the District of Columbia (e.g., a valid DC operator's permit, DC vehicle registration card, lease agreement for a residence in the District, the deed to your home, or other legal document showing DC residency).
 - c. Two full-face passport size photographs (1" × ¾" × 1") which have been taken within a 30-day period preceding the filing of the application.
 - d. Proof that your vision is better than or equal to that required to obtain a valid DC driver's license.
 - i. You may present your valid DC operator's permit or a valid optometry examination.
 - ii. If you don't have a valid DC operator's permit or optometry exam, you will be directed to the DC Department of Motor Vehicles (located at 300 C Street, NW) to pass a vision test showing your vision is at least 20/40 in the best eye OR no less than 20/70 in the best eye and field of vision of at least 140° (with or without corrective lenses).
 - e. Proof that you have met the minimum training requirement of four hours of classroom instruction and one hour of range instruction conducted by a state-certified or certified military firearms instructor.
 - i. An affidavit signed by the certified firearms instructor who conducted the course providing the name, address, and phone number of the instructor and attesting to the successful completion of the course by the applicant will constitute proof.
 1. Any firearms instructor certified by MPD can provide this training. A current list is available on the website (www.mpdc.dc.gov/gunregistration) or at the FRS.
 2. Training provided by firearms instructors not on this list will be considered on a case-by-case basis if the instruction was provided outside of the Metropolitan Washington area.

- ii. An official license or certificate provided by a government agency for the use of a firearm will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Examples include, but are not limited to, a license or certificate for hunting, armed military service, or armed service as a special police officer.
3. Take and pass the 20-question multiple choice test based on information on DC's firearms laws and regulations provided in this guide. To pass, you must correctly answer at least 15 questions. If you fail the written exam, you will be denied a certificate until you can satisfactorily pass the test. You will be given one additional opportunity to take the exam again without additional charge.
 4. Pay the appropriate fees (see chart below).
 5. Be fingerprinted for your background check.
 6. If you are registering a handgun that you already own, submit the handgun for ballistics testing. This process generally takes no more than one hour.
 7. Once the application is approved (generally within 5 days), the FRS will notify you. You can pick up your registration certificate or request that it be mailed to you. If you are registering:
 - a. A firearm that you already own, your registration process is complete.
 - b. A rifle or shotgun that you have just purchased, you must bring your certificate to the dealer to retrieve the gun, and your registration process is complete.
 - c. A handgun that you have just purchased, you must bring your certificate to the dealer to pick up your gun. You will then bring your gun back to FRS for a ballistics check. This process generally takes no more than one hour, after which your registration process is complete.

Fee Schedule

Fee Type	Handgun	Rifle or Shotgun
Application	\$13	\$13
Ballistics Test	\$12	N/A
Fingerprinting / FBI Background Check	\$35	\$35
Total	\$60	\$48

Fees must be paid at the time of application, and can be paid only by **cash** or **money order**. Money orders should be made payable to "DC Treasurer."

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FIREARMS REGISTRATION (Study Guide)

I. Firearms Eligible for Registration

In general, rifles, shotguns, revolvers, and handguns may be registered in the District of Columbia. Per DC Official Code § 7-2502.02, registration of the following firearms is prohibited:

1. Sawed-off shotguns
2. Machine guns
3. Short-barreled rifles
4. An unsafe handgun prohibited under DC Official Code § 7-2505.04
5. An assault weapon; or
6. A .50 BMG rifle

For definitions of and more information about these prohibitions, please see the MPD publication, "Firearms Eligible for Registration," which is available at FRS or at www.mpdc.dc.gov/gunregistration.

II. Registrant Eligibility

To obtain a registration certificate, an applicant or registrant must:

1. Be 21 years of age or older. (Applicants between the age of 18 and 21 may qualify if they have a notarized statement from their parent or guardian stating that the parent or guardian assumes civil liability for all damages resulting from the applicant's use of the firearm. This special registration, however, will expire on the applicant's twenty-first birthday.)
2. Not stand convicted of a crime of violence, weapons offense, or of a violation of this Act.
3. Not be under indictment for a crime of violence (excluding larceny) or a weapons offense.
4. Within the previous five years:
 - a. Not stand convicted for: (1) a narcotics or dangerous drug offense; (2) threats to do bodily harm; (3) assault; (4) an intrafamily offense as defined in DC Official Code §16-1001(8); or (5) two or more violations of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
 - b. Not have been acquitted of any criminal charge by reason of insanity or adjudicated a chronic alcoholic by any court.
 - c. Not have been voluntarily or involuntarily committed to any mental hospital or institution.
 - d. Not have a history of violent behavior.
 - e. Not have been the respondent in an intrafamily proceeding in which a civil protection order or a foreign protection order was issued against the applicant.
5. Not appear to suffer from a physical defect which would make it unsafe for him to possess and use a firearm safely and responsibly.

6. Not have been found negligent in any firearm mishap causing death or injury to another human being.
7. Not otherwise ineligible to possess a pistol under DC Official Code § 22-4503.

III. Filing Times

1. When purchasing a new firearm, you must file an application for a registration certificate and complete the registration process before taking possession of the firearm from a licensed dealer.
2. For firearms you already own, you must file an application immediately after it is brought into the District of Columbia. You may comply with this requirement by personally communicating your intent to register the firearm to the FRS. You must then file an application for a registration certificate within 48 hours after communicating your intent to do so.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities of the Registrant

1. Registered Firearms and Registration Certificate
 - a. Every registrant must file a police report at a police district station or at FRS immediately if any of the following occurs:
 - i. Discovery of loss, theft, or destruction of a registration certificate or registered firearm.
 - ii. Any change of name or address that differs from the one recorded on the original certificate.
 - iii. Sale, transfer or other disposition of any firearm.
2. The registration certificate must be returned to the Police Department immediately when the registered firearm has been lost, stolen, destroyed, sold, transferred, or otherwise disposed of.
3. The registrant must have the registration certificate in his or her possession whenever he has possession of the firearm, and show it to a member of the Metropolitan Police Department or other law enforcement officer upon request.
4. In addition to any other criminal or civil sanctions, a violation of any of the above-listed duties may result in:
 - a. First violation: a civil fine of \$100
 - b. Second violation: a civil fine of \$500, revocation of the registration of the applicable firearm, and a 5-year prohibition on subsequent registrations
 - c. Third violation: a civil fine of \$500, revocation of the registration of the applicable firearm, and permanent prohibition on subsequent registrations
5. Firearms or ammunition may not be loaned, borrowed, given, or rented to or from another person.
6. Individuals can only sell a firearm to a licensed dealer in the District of Columbia. Firearms may not be pawned.

7. Storage of firearms:
 - a. Policy: It is recommended that each registrant keep any firearm in his or her possession unloaded and either disassembled or secured by a trigger lock, gun safe, locked box, or other secure device.
 - b. Criminal Offense: The law requires that no person shall store or keep any loaded firearm on any premises under his control if he knows or reasonably should know that a minor under the age of 18 is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the parent or guardian of the minor unless such person:
 - i. Keeps the firearm in a securely locked box, secured container, or in a location which a reasonable person would believe to be secure; or
 - ii. Carries the firearm on his person or within such close proximity that he can readily retrieve and use it as if he carried it on his person.
 - c. Penalties:
 - i. A person who violates subsection (b) of this section is guilty of criminally negligent storage of a firearm and, except as provided in paragraph (ii) of this subsection, shall be fined not more than \$1,000, imprisoned not more than 180 days, or both.
 - ii. A person who violates subsection (b) of this section and the minor causes injury or death to themselves or another shall be fined not more than \$5,000, imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.
 - iii. The provisions of paragraphs (i) and (ii) of this subsection shall not apply if the minor obtains the firearm as a result of an unlawful entry to any premises by any person.
8. No person shall carry or possess a firearm on public space in the District of Columbia unless traveling directly to or from a lawful firearm-related activity (registration, hunting, shooting at a practice range, etc.)
9. Transporting a firearm:
 - a. When transporting a firearm in a vehicle, it must be unloaded, with neither the firearm nor any ammunition readily accessible or directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the transporting vehicle.
 - b. If the vehicle does not have a compartment separate from the driver's compartment, the firearm or ammunition must be unloaded and contained in a locked container other than the glove compartment or console.
 - c. When transporting a firearm in a manner other than in a vehicle, it must be unloaded, inside a locked container, and separate from any ammunition.
10. It is a criminal offense to discharge a firearm in the District of Columbia without first obtaining a special written permit from the Chief of Police authorizing the discharge.

V. Revocation of Registration Certificate

Registration will be revoked if:

1. Information furnished in the application for registration proves to be intentionally false.
2. The registered firearm becomes unregistrable under Part I: Firearms Approved for Registration.
3. The registrant becomes ineligible under the requirements in Part II, "Registrant Eligibility."
4. The registrant is found in violation of the duties and responsibilities set forth in Part IV, "Duties and Responsibilities of the Registrant," Section 1, "Registration Certificate."

VI. Procedures for Denial or Revocation

1. If an application for registration is denied or a registration certificate is revoked, the applicant or registrant will be notified by mail. The applicant or registrant will have 15 days from the receipt of such notification to appeal to the Metropolitan Police Department with further evidence for consideration. If the applicant does not respond within the required 15 days, the denial or revocation will become final.
2. After having been notified of a final unfavorable decision, the applicant or registrant must peacefully surrender his firearm to FRS as detailed in Part IX: Voluntary Surrender of Firearms, Destructive Devices, or Ammunition, remove the firearm from the District, or otherwise lawfully dispose of the firearm.

VII. Possession and Sale of Ammunition

1. No person shall possess ammunition within the District unless:
 - a. He is a licensed dealer.
 - b. He is a holder of a valid registration certificate for a firearm of the same gauge or caliber as the ammunition he possesses.
 - c. He holds an ammunition collector's certificate effective prior to September 25, 1976.
2. No person shall possess restricted ammunition, defined as any bullet designed for use in a pistol which, when fired from a pistol from a barrel of 5" or less in length, is capable of penetrating a commercially available body armor with a penetration resistance equal to or greater than that of 18 layers of Kevlar. (D.C. Official Code § 7-2501.01 (13a))
3. No person in the District shall possess, sell, or transfer any large capacity ammunition feeding device regardless of whether the device is attached to a firearm. A "large capacity ammunition feeding device" means a magazine, belt, drum, feed strip, or similar device that has a capacity of, or that can be readily restored or converted to accept, more than 10 rounds of ammunition. This does not include an attached tubular device designed to accept, and capable of operating only with, .22 caliber rimfire ammunition.
4. The sale or transfer of ammunition is prohibited unless:
 - a. The seller is a licensed firearms dealer.

- b. It is of the same caliber as described in the registration certificate or other proof in the case of a non-resident.
- c. The purchaser has an ammunition collector's certificate effective prior to September 25, 1976.

VIII. Responsibility of Estate Executors or Administrators

The executor of or administrator of an estate containing a firearm shall notify the FRS within 30 days of his appointment. Until the lawful disposition of such firearm, the executor or administrator shall be charged with the duties and responsibilities as described in Part IV, "Duties and Responsibilities of the Registrant."

IX. Voluntary Surrender of Firearms, Destructive Devices, or Ammunition

If a person or organization within the District voluntarily and peaceably delivers and abandons to the Chief of Police any firearm, destructive device or ammunition at any time, such delivery shall preclude the arrest and prosecution of such person on a charge of violating any provision of this section with respect to the firearm, destructive device, or ammunition voluntarily delivered. Delivery under this section may be made at any police district, station, or central headquarters, or by summoning a police officer to the person's residence or place of business. Every firearm and destructive device to be delivered and abandoned to the Chief under this section shall be unloaded and securely wrapped in a package, and, in the case of delivery to a police facility, the package shall be carried in open view. No person who delivers and abandons a firearm, destructive device, or ammunition under this section, shall be required to furnish identification, photographs or fingerprints. No amount of money shall be paid for any firearm, destructive device, or ammunition delivered and abandoned under this section. (DC Official Code § 7-2507.05 (a))

X. General Penalties

1. As listed in the DC Official Code § 7-2507.06, any person who violates any provision of this Act shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than \$1,000 or be imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, except that:
2. A person convicted of knowingly possessing restricted pistol bullets in violation of § 7-2506.01(3) may be sentenced to imprisonment for a term not to exceed 10 years and shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a mandatory-minimum term of not less than 1 year and shall not be released from prison or granted probation or suspension of sentence prior to serving the mandatory-minimum sentence, and, in addition, may be fined an amount not to exceed \$10,000.

Additional penalties may apply. (See Part IV, Sections 1 and 6 of this guide.)

About This Guide

The Firearms Control Regulations Act of 1975 (or “the Act”) requires that firearms be registered with the Metropolitan Police Department. Legislation enacted in 2008 and 2009 amends the Act, changing the laws and procedures governing firearms registration. This guide is provided to help provide a clearer understanding of this legislation, the process for registering a firearm, and your duties and responsibilities as a firearms owner in the District of Columbia.

Specific questions should be directed to the Firearms Registration Section.

Firearms Registration Section

Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm

300 Indiana Avenue, NW, Room 2169

Washington, DC 20001

(202) 727-4275

Firearms Registration Hotline 24 hours

(202) 727-9490

For more information

www.mpdc.dc.gov/gunregistration

Additional information about the firearms registration process and the applicable laws is available at this website. Other materials include links to recent legislation, frequently asked questions, data on crimes committed with guns, and gun safety information.

Issue Date: January 15, 2009

Contents of this document are subject to change pending additional legislative changes. Updated materials will be made available to comply with revisions to the District’s law as necessary.