



BUREAU OF SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES
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FIREARMS PERMIT FACT SHEET

The Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS or Bureau) issues Firearms Permits (also referred to as a "Firearms Qualification Card (FQ)" or "Exposed Firearms Permit") as specified in Article 4 (commencing with Section 7540) of Chapter 11.3, Article 4 (commencing with Section 7583) of Chapter 11.5 and Article 6 (commencing with Section 7596) of Chapter 11.6 of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code (BPC).

Requirements for Issuance of Initial Firearms Permit

In order to be eligible for a BSIS Firearms Permit, applicants must:

- be a citizen of the United States or have permanent legal alien status (BPC Sections 7583.23 and 7596.3); and
- not be banned from owning or possessing any firearm pursuant to State or Federal Law (BPC Sections 7583.24, 7583.25 and 7596.8); and
- be a licensed Private Investigator, Qualified Manager of a Private Investigator, Private Patrol Operator, Qualified Manager of a Private Patrol Operator, Alarm Company Operator, Qualified Manager of an Alarm Company Operator or be a registered Security Guard or Alarm Agent with BSIS (BPC Sections 7583.23, 7596, 7542); and must
- complete a criminal history background check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the California Department of Justice (DOJ) (BPC Sections 7583.23, 7583.24, and 7596.8); and
- complete and submit to the Bureau, the BSIS Application for Firearms Permit¹; and
- complete the required training courses, including passing all required examinations and qualifications; and
- pay the initial application fee² (Title 16, California Code of Regulations, Section 640.)
- After July 1, 2018, complete an assessment, if applicable (BPC Section 7583.47)³.

Criminal History Background Check

Applicants for a BSIS Firearms Permit must undergo a criminal history background

¹ Download the initial Firearms Permit application at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/fq_initial.pdf.

² View the Bureau's fees at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/newfees.pdf

³ Determine whether you are required to complete the assessment at <https://www.bsis.ca.gov/firearmsassessment/>.

check through the FBI and DOJ. Applicants should use the appropriate Live Scan Form⁴ available on the Bureau's website as it contains the correct coding needed to ensure the Bureau receives the needed information in a timely manner.

Applicants for a BSIS Firearms Permit must not be prohibited from owning or possessing any firearm pursuant to State or Federal Law. In addition to completing the required Live Scan, applicants must also complete and submit the Firearm Eligibility Application⁵ to DOJ and pay the \$38.00 application fee to the Live Scan operator (Title 11, California Code of Regulations, Section 4005). **Applicants are responsible for paying all Live Scan, FBI and DOJ processing fees at the time of fingerprinting.** A list of Live Scan locations⁶ is available on the Bureau's website.

To check on the status of your background check, please call the Department of Justice's automated system at (916) 227-4557. Please note, you will need to provide your ATI number (located at the bottom of your completed Live Scan form) and your date of birth.

Required Training Courses (BPC Sections 7542, 7583.7, 7583.8, 7583.23, and 7596)

Applicants for a BSIS Firearms Permit must complete the following training:

- **Power to Arrest**
Applicants must complete training in the power to arrest. The training may be administered by a licensed PPO, a Bureau-approved firearm or baton training facility, or an organization or school approved by the Bureau. Security Guards may also obtain the training from their employing PPO. Applicants may verify a licensed PPO or training facility by accessing the "Verify a License⁷" page on the Bureau's website. To confirm if an organization or school is approved by the Bureau to administer the training, email bsis@dca.ca.gov.
- **BSIS Firearms Training and Qualifications**
Applicants must complete the Course of Firearms Training (CCR Section 635) at a Bureau-approved firearm training facility and from a Bureau-approved firearm training instructor, and pass the written examination and range qualifications. For information on Bureau-approved Firearm Training Facilities, visit the "Verify a License⁶" page available on the Bureau's website. The BSIS Firearms Training Manual⁸ is also available on the Bureau's website.

Firearms Assessment

Effective July 1, 2018, a BSIS security guard registrant seeking an initial BSIS firearms permit must complete an assessment for the purposes of determining whether he/she

⁴ View a list of all available Live Scan forms at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/livescan/index.shtml.

⁵ Download the Firearm Eligibility Application at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/firearms_qualification.pdf.

⁶ View a list of Live Scan locations at <https://oag.ca.gov/fingerprints/locations>.

⁷ Locate a BSIS licensee authorized to offer Powers to Arrest or firearms training at <https://www.breeze.ca.gov/>.

⁸ Review the Firearms Training Manual at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/firearms_manual.pdf.

possesses, at the time of the assessment, appropriate judgment, restraint, and self-control to carry a firearm while on duty (Business and Professions Code Sections 7583.23 and 7583.47).

Given that other BSIS license types (e.g., private investigator license, private patrol operator license, alarm company operator license, etc.) can be associated with the firearms permit, under certain circumstances an individual seeking to associate a firearms permit to a security guard registration will need to complete/pass the assessment as a condition for the association. To determine if you are required to complete the assessment along with additional information regarding the process, please review information on the Bureau's website⁹.

Firearm Calibers (BPC Sections 7542, 7583.37, 7597.3 and CCR Section 632)

Applicants must qualify with the caliber of weapon that will be carried while on duty. The caliber must be listed on the Firearms Permit.

Licensees may not carry, while on duty, a firearm with a caliber that the licensee has not qualified to carry and which does not appear on the face of their firearm permit.

Application Processing

To avoid application processing delays, review the list of common application deficiencies¹⁰ before submitting your application.

Applicants may submit their completed application, application fee¹¹ and completed Live Scan form containing the signature of the Live Scan operator and Automated Transaction Identifier (ATI) number or classifiable fingerprint cards to:

Bureau of Security and Investigative Services
P.O. Box 989002
West Sacramento, CA 95798-9002

Application Status

Please allow the Bureau 6-8 weeks from the date your payment was cashiered before contacting the Bureau regarding the status of your application(s). For the current application processing timeframes, please review the timeframe for initial applications¹² and the timeframe for renewal applications¹³.

⁹ Determine whether you are required to take the assessment at <https://www.bsis.ca.gov/firearmsassessment/>.

¹⁰ Review a list of common application deficiencies at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/application_tips.shtml.

¹¹ View the Bureau's fees at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/newfees.pdf

¹² View the Bureau's current initial application processing timeframes at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/app_timelines.shtml.

¹³ View the Bureau's current renewal application processing timeframes at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/app_renew_timelines.shtml.

Associating Additional Qualifying License(s) to a Pre-Existing Firearms Permit

A BSIS firearms permit authorizes the permit holder to carry an exposed firearm while performing the duties of only those license types listed on the firearms permit itself. For example, a permit holder who only has a security guard registration listed on his/her firearms permit and who also holds a Private Investigator (PI) license cannot work while armed while carrying out the duties of a PI licensee. The firearms permit card must list the PI license for the permit holder to work as an armed PI licensee.

Permit holders may associate multiple qualifying license(s) at any time with the submission of the *Request to Associate BSIS Firearms Permit with Additional Qualifying License(s) and Request for Replacement Firearms Permit form*¹⁴.

For additional information regarding the process of associating additional qualifying licenses, please visit the Bureau's website¹⁵.

Requirements for Renewal of Firearms Permit (BPC Sections 7542, 7583.32, 7596.7 and CCR Section 633)

A BSIS Firearms Permit expires two years from the date of issuance. In order to renew the permit, the applicant must:

- have completed two (2) range qualifications on a firing range every twelve (12) months and at least four (4) months apart. Applicants must complete four (4) total range qualifications prior to renewal of the Firearms Permit at a Bureau-approved firearm training facility and from a Bureau-approved firearm training instructor. All range qualifications must be certified by a Bureau-approved Firearms Training Facility. Applicants must also;
- have completed the two-hour review training course in the use of force and de-escalation of force before each requalification; and
- complete and submit a Firearms Permit Renewal Application¹⁶; and
- include a new Firearm Eligibility Application¹⁷ with the Renewal Application.

The application for renewal should be submitted to the Bureau at least 60 days before the expiration date of the permit to provide sufficient time for processing. **Please note:** You may not renew your Firearms Permit once it has expired. If you allow your BSIS Firearms Permit to expire, you must apply for a new permit.

¹⁴ Download the *Request to Associate BSIS Firearms Permit with Additional Qualifying License(s) and Request for Replacement Firearms Permit form* at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/fq_assoc_form.pdf.

¹⁵ Review additional information about adding calibers to a pre-existing firearms permit at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/fq_assoc_info.pdf.

¹⁶ Download the firearms renewal application at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/fq_renewal.pdf.

¹⁷ Download the Firearms Eligibility Application at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/firearms_qualification.pdf.

IMPORTANT: YOU ARE REQUIRED, BY LAW, TO SUBMIT A COMPLETE FIREARMS APPLICATION TO THE BUREAU AT LEAST TWO (2) MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR FIREARMS PERMIT'S EXPIRATION. PLEASE NOTE, THE BUREAU IS UNABLE TO PROCESS APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED MORE THAN THREE (3) MONTHS PRIOR TO EXPIRATION.

➤ Visit https://www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/newfees.pdf to view the Bureau's fees

Peace Officer Exemptions

Please see "Information on Peace Officer Exemptions"¹⁸

All BSIS Firearms Permit holders are responsible for understanding all prohibitions, violations, and the proper incident reporting requirements outlined in the BSIS Firearms Training Manual.

Additional information can be found on the Bureau's website at www.bsis.ca.gov.

¹⁸ Review peace officer exemptions at https://www.bsis.ca.gov/consumers/faqs/po_faq.shtml.