
Civil Rights & Judiciary Committee

HB 1195

Brief Description: Prohibiting the open carry of certain weapons in public parks and public hospitals.

Sponsors: Representatives Senn, Riccelli, Fitzgibbon, Walen, Fey, Ryu, Berry, Bateman, Simmons, Santos, Gregerson, Berg, Bergquist, Tharinger, Ramel, Doglio, Ormsby, Macri, Callan, Fosse, Thai and Pollet.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibits the knowing open carry of firearms and other weapons in public parks and public hospitals at which notice of the restriction has been posted, subject to limited exceptions.• Provides that violation of these restrictions is a gross misdemeanor.
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Hearing Date: 1/18/23

Staff: John Burzynski (786-7133).

Background:

Washington generally prohibits the knowing open carry of firearms and other weapons in certain locations, including:

- the west state capitol campus grounds;
- all buildings on the state capitol grounds;
- all state legislative offices;
- the location of all public state legislative hearings or meetings during the hearing or meeting;
- city, town, county, and other municipality buildings used for meetings of the governing body of the city, town, county, or other municipality;

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- the location of all public meetings or hearings of the governing body of a city, town, county, or other municipality during the hearing or meeting;
- permitted demonstrations; and
- within 250 feet of the perimeter of a permitted demonstration, after being advised by law enforcement of the demonstration and being directed to leave.

These restrictions are subject to various exceptions, including for law enforcement officers and personnel, and members of the armed forces.

Violations of these restrictions are classified as a misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor.

Summary of Bill:

Restrictions on Open Carry in Public Parks.

No person may knowingly open carry a firearm or other weapon within any public park at which notice has been posted that the open carry of weapons is not permitted. This restriction applies to firearms and other weapons carried on one's person or in a vehicle.

A public park is defined as any city, town, county, or other municipality neighborhood, community, or regional park facility at which children or youth are likely to be present, including park facilities that have playgrounds or child play areas; sports fields, sports courts, or sports facilities; swimming or wading pools, swim beaches, or water play areas; teen centers, community centers, or performing arts centers; skateboard parks; or other recreational facilities likely to be used by children or youth.

Restrictions on Open Carry in Public Hospitals.

No person may knowingly open carry a firearm or other weapon within any public hospital at which notice has been posted that the open carry of weapons is not permitted. This restriction applies to firearms and other weapons carried on one's person.

A public hospital is defined as any hospital owned or operated by the state or any of its subdivisions, including the University of Washington, but excludes roads, driveways, parking lots, and parking garages outside public hospital structures.

Exceptions for Law Enforcement and Members of the Armed Forces.

These restrictions do not apply to duly authorized law enforcement officers and personnel when carrying a firearm or other weapon in conformance with their agency's policy. Similarly, members of the armed forces are exempt from these restrictions when carrying a firearm or other weapon in discharge of their official duty or traveling to or from official duty.

Designation and Notice Requirements.

No later than January 1, 2024, all cities, towns, counties, and other municipalities must designate all public parks within their boundaries and post signs at each such park notifying the public that open carry of firearms and other weapons within the park is prohibited.

Additionally, no later than January 1, 2024, all public hospitals must post signs at each structure entrance notifying the public that open carry of firearms and other weapons within the hospital is prohibited.

Enforcement.

A violation of these restrictions constitutes a gross misdemeanor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.