

---

## Early Learning & Human Services Committee

---

### HB 2456

**Brief Description:** Establishing a juvenile firearm early intervention alternative.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Davis, Bergquist, Pollet, Santos, Goodman and Walen.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a juvenile firearm early intervention alternative (alternative) for individuals charged in juvenile court with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm in the second degree where if the participant successfully completes certain conditions, the charge is dismissed.
- Increases the concealed pistol license initial and renewal fee by \$100 each, and those funds are deposited into a juvenile firearm early intervention services account which may be used to pay for conditions or services included in an alternative.

**Hearing Date:** 1/21/26

**Staff:** Luke Wickham (786-7146).

#### Background:

*Juvenile Justice in the State of Washington.*

In Washington, juvenile courts are a division of the state's superior court system. Juvenile courts have jurisdiction over persons under age 18 who are alleged to have committed a crime. However, there are several exceptions to that jurisdiction where state law requires youth to be tried in adult courts.

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Juvenile court dispositions are subject to statutory sentencing guidelines. Juvenile offenses are categorized using letters E through A++ to indicate the seriousness level of the offense. A statutory grid establishes the standard sentencing range for a particular offense based on the offense category and an individual's prior adjudications. Each prior felony adjudication counts as 1 point, and each prior violation, misdemeanor, or gross misdemeanor counts as 0.25 points. Fractional points are rounded down.

If a court finds that a disposition within the standard range would create a manifest injustice, the court must impose a disposition outside the standard range. The following factors may be used to form the basis for a manifest injustice finding:

- the age of the juvenile;
- the crime for which the juvenile is to be sentenced;
- the number of previous offenses committed by the juvenile;
- the nature of the previous offenses committed by the juvenile; and
- the length of time since the juvenile's last offense.

The sentencing category called local sanctions is the least serious category for juvenile sentencing purposes. Local sanctions include a range of up to 30 days in confinement, up to 12 months of community supervision, up to 150 hours of community service, and up to a \$500 fine.

When a juvenile court sentences a juvenile offender to local sanctions, the court must impose a determinate sentence within the standard range. Confinement imposed by a juvenile court up to 30 days is served in a county juvenile detention facility. Any confinement imposed that is greater than 30 days is served through commitment at a Department of Children, Youth, and Families juvenile rehabilitation institution.

#### *Juvenile Unlawful Possession of a Firearm.*

It is unlawful for a person under age 18 to own, access, have in their custody, control, possess, or receive a firearm except under certain conditions. A person who unlawfully possesses a firearm based on being under age 18 is guilty of Unlawful Possession of a Firearm in the second degree.

The court must order a minimum of 10 days of confinement for a juvenile who is found to have committed Unlawful Possession of a Firearm in the second degree. The court must also order the person to participate in an aggression replacement training program, a functional family therapy program, or another program applicable to the juvenile firearm offender population that has been identified as evidence-based or research-based and cost-beneficial. A juvenile with no criminal history that is found to have committed Unlawful Possession of a Firearm in the second degree is also subject to a standard range of local sanctions.

The circumstances where a person under age 18 may possess a firearm include when:

- attending a hunter safety course;
- engaging in practice at an established range;
- engaging in an organized competition involving the use of a firearm;
- hunting or trapping with a valid license;

- in an area where discharge of a firearm is permitted and the person is: (1) at least age 14 with a hunter safety certificate and not using a pistol; (2) or under the supervision of a parent;
- traveling with an unloaded firearm in the person's possession for an activity described above;
- on real property under control of their parent or relative with the permission of their parent to possess a firearm;
- at their residence and with the permission of their parent to possess a firearm for the purpose of preventing certain offenses; or
- a member of the armed forces of the United States, national guard, or organized reserves, when on duty.

*Concealed Pistol License.*

The chief of police of a municipality or the county sheriff must issue license for someone to carry a concealed pistol on their person that is valid for five years from the date of issue. An applicant for a concealed pistol license may not be denied unless the person:

- is ineligible to possess a firearm (based on a felony conviction, certain domestic violence convictions, certain intimate partner harassment convictions, certain misdemeanor or gross misdemeanor offenses, certain protection order violations, and certain violations of an order to surrender and prohibit weapons, an extreme protection order, no-contact order, or restraining order);
- has a license is in a revoked status;
- is under age 21;
- is subject to a court order regarding firearms;
- is free on bond or personal recognizance pending trial, appeal, or sentencing for a felony offense;
- has an outstanding warrant for their arrest for a felony or misdemeanor; or
- has been ordered to forfeit a firearm based on being under the influence of any drug or liquor when in possession of a firearm within the last year of the license request.

The initial concealed pistol license fee is \$36 plus additional charges imposed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This fee is distributed as follows:

- \$15 to the state general fund;
- \$4 to the agency taking fingerprints;
- \$14 to the issuing authority;
- \$2.16 to the firearms range account; and
- \$.84 to the concealed pistol license renewal notification account.

The concealed pistol license renewal fee is \$32, with the funds distributed as follows:

- \$15 to the state general fund;
- \$14 to the issuing authority;
- \$2.16 to the firearms range account; and
- \$.84 to the concealed pistol license renewal notification account.

## **Summary of Bill:**

### *Juvenile Firearm Early Intervention Alternative.*

A juvenile firearm early intervention alternative (alternative) is established for individuals charged in juvenile court with Unlawful Possession of a Firearm in the second degree. This alternative must be agreed to by the prosecutor, and the participant must enter an agreement to pursue the alternative within two weeks after charges are filed.

The alternative must include:

- a period of intensive community supervision assigned to a juvenile probation counselor with a reduced caseload for 12 months;
- compliance with certain conditions (curfew, geographic restrictions, restrictions on associations with certain people, electronic monitoring, and others);
- the participant consenting to random, suspicionless searches;
- the person agreeing that the juvenile probation officer has the authority to arrest the participant when there is probable cause to believe the participant has violated a condition of the alternative and there is a risk to public safety or the health and welfare of the participant; and
- successful engagement in multisystemic therapy, a credible messenger or mentorship program, and additional appropriate services.

An alternative participant must successfully engage in additional services such as behavioral health evaluations and following treatment recommendations, if appropriate.

During the period of the alternative, the court must hold a hearing at least every three months to consider status reports from the juvenile probation officer detailing the participant's compliance with conditions of the alternative.

If it appears to the prosecutor that the participant is not substantially complying with the conditions of the alternative, the prosecutor may make a motion for termination of the alternative. During a hearing to determine whether the alternative should be terminated, the court must consider the nature of the alleged noncompliance and any aggravating or mitigating circumstances. If the court finds that the participant is not substantially complying with the alternative conditions, the court must provide in its written order the grounds for terminating the alternative.

If the participant successfully completes the alternative, the charge is dismissed.

### *Concealed Pistol License Fees.*

The concealed pistol license initial and renewal fees are each increased by \$100, resulting in a \$136 initial fee (currently \$36) and a \$132 renewal fee (currently \$32). The funds from this \$100 fee increase are placed in the Juvenile Firearm Early Intervention Services Account described below.

*Juvenile Firearm Early Intervention Services Account.*

The Juvenile Firearm Early Intervention Services Account is created in the State Treasury. Moneys in this account may be spent only after appropriation and may only be used for services or conditions required for an alternative. Moneys deposited in this account consist of moneys deposited into this account from the increase in concealed pistol license fees described above and funds appropriated by the Legislature or other funds from private or public sources.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 13, 2026.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.