

2025 -- H 5436

LC001181

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- RHODE ISLAND ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN  
ACT OF 2025

Introduced By: Representatives Knight, Caldwell, Boylan, Speakman, McEntee, Ajello,  
Kazarian, Craven, Dawson, and Felix

Date Introduced: February 12, 2025

Referred To: House Judiciary

(Governor/Secretary of State/General Treasurer/Attorney General)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 11 of the General Laws entitled "CRIMINAL OFFENSES" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 47.2

4 RHODE ISLAND ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN ACT OF 2025

5 **11-47.2-1. Short title.**

6 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban  
7 Act of 2025."

8 **11-47.2-2. Definitions.**

9 When used in this chapter:

10 (1) "Ammunition feeding device" means a magazine, box, drum, tube, belt, feed strip, or  
11 device which is capable of holding ammunition to be fed continuously and directly therefrom into  
12 a semi-automatic firearm. The term shall not include an attached tubular device which is capable  
13 of holding only .22 caliber rimfire ammunition.

14 (2) "Assault weapon" means:

15 (i) A semi-automatic shotgun that has at least one of the following:

16 (A) A fixed magazine capacity exceeding six (6) rounds;

17 (B) The ability to accept a detachable magazine, or that may be readily modified to accept  
18 a detachable magazine and has either a folding, telescoping, or detachable stock, or a pistol grip.

1 or a thumbhole stock, or any feature capable of functioning as a protruding grip that can be held by  
2 the non-trigger hand.

3 (ii) Any shotgun with a revolving cylinder.

4 (iii) A semi-automatic rifle with a fixed magazine capacity exceeding ten (10) rounds.

5 (iv) A semi-automatic rifle that has the ability to accept a detachable magazine, or that may  
6 be readily modified to accept a detachable magazine, and has at least one of the following features:

7 (A) A folding, telescoping, or detachable stock;

8 (B) A bayonet mount;

9 (C) A grenade launcher;

10 (D) A shroud attached to the barrel or that partially or completely encircles the barrel,  
11 allowing the bearer to hold the firearm with the non-trigger hand without being burned, except an  
12 extension of the stock along the bottom of the barrel, which does not encircle or substantially  
13 encircle the barrel.

14 (E) A pistol grip or thumbhole stock; or

15 (F) A flash suppressor or threaded barrel designed to accommodate a flash suppressor;

16 (v) A semi-automatic pistol that has a fixed magazine capacity exceeding ten (10) rounds.

17 (vi) A semi-automatic pistol that has an ability to accept a detachable magazine, or that  
18 may be readily modified to accept a detachable magazine, and has at least one of the following:

19 (A) The capacity to accept an ammunition magazine at a location outside of the pistol grip;

20 (B) A threaded barrel capable of accepting a barrel extender, flash suppressor, forward  
21 handgrip, or silencer;

22 (C) A shroud that is attached to, or partially or completely encircles, the barrel and that  
23 permits the shooter to hold the firearm with the non-trigger hand without being burned but  
24 excluding a slide that encloses the barrel;

25 (D) A manufactured weight of fifty ounces (50 oz.) or more when the pistol is unloaded;  
26 or

27 (E) A buffer tube, arm brace, or other part that protrudes horizontally behind the pistol grip  
28 and is designed or redesigned to allow or facilitate firing the weapon from the shoulder.

29 (vii) A semi-automatic firearm that has the capacity to accept belt ammunition feeding  
30 device.

31 (viii) Any firearm that has been modified to be operable as an assault weapon as defined  
32 in this section.

33 (ix) A combination of parts in the possession or under the control of the same person from  
34 which an assault weapon as defined in this section may be readily assembled.

1 (x) "Assault weapon" shall not include a semi-automatic rifle which has an attached tubular  
2 device and which is capable of operating only with .22 caliber rimfire ammunition.

3 (3) "Detachable magazine" means an ammunition feeding device that attaches to a firearm  
4 and which can be removed without disassembly of the firearm, including an ammunition feeding  
5 device that may be readily removed from a firearm with the use of a bullet, cartridge, accessory, or  
6 other tool, or any other object that functions as a tool.

7 (4) "Federally licensed firearm dealer" means a person who holds a valid federal firearm  
8 dealers license issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 923(a).

9 (6) "Fixed magazine" means an ammunition feeding device that is permanently fixed to the  
10 firearm in such a manner that it cannot be removed without disassembly of the firearm, or contained  
11 in and not removable from a firearm, or that is otherwise not a detachable magazine, but does not  
12 include an attached tubular device designed to accept, and capable of operating only with, .22  
13 caliber rimfire ammunition.

14 (7) "Folding, telescoping, or detachable stock" means a stock that folds, telescopes,  
15 detaches or otherwise operates to reduce the length, size, or any other dimension, or otherwise  
16 enhances the concealability, of a firearm.

17 (8) "Forward grip" means a grip or handle located forward of the trigger.

18 (9) "Grandfathered assault weapon" means any assault weapon for which a certificate of  
19 possession has been issued pursuant to § 11-47.2-4.

20 (10) "Grenade launcher" means a device designed to fire, launch or propel a grenade.

21 (11) "Pistol grip" means a well-defined handle, similar to that found on a handgun, that  
22 protrudes conspicuously beneath the action of the weapon, and which permits the firearm to be held  
23 and fired with one hand.

24 (12) "Secure storage" means a firearm that is stored in a locked container or equipped with  
25 a tamper-resistant mechanical lock or other safety device, properly engaged so as to render such  
26 weapon inoperable by any person other than the owner or other lawfully authorized user pursuant  
27 to § 11-47- 60.1.

28 (13) "Semi-automatic" means a firearm which fires a single projectile for each single pull  
29 of the trigger and is self-reloading or automatically chambers a round, cartridge, or bullet.

30 (14) "Threaded barrel" means threads on the muzzle end of a barrel and shall include, but  
31 not be limited to, any barrel on which a flash suppressor, muzzle brake or silencer has been attached.

32 **11-47.2-3. Restrictions on manufacture, sale, purchase and possession of assault**  
33 **weapons.**

34 (a) No person shall manufacture, sell, offer to sell, transfer, purchase, possess, or have

1 under his or her control an assault weapon, except as otherwise authorized under this section. Any  
2 person convicted of violating this subsection shall be punished by imprisonment of not more than  
3 ten (10) years, or by a fine up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), and the assault weapon shall be  
4 subject to forfeiture.

5 (b) Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to:

6 (1) A person who, on the effective date of this chapter, lawfully possessed an assault  
7 weapon and who, within one year of the effective date of this chapter:

8 (i) Registers the assault weapon with the police department in the city or town where the  
9 person resides or, if there is no such police department or the person resides out of state, with the  
10 Rhode Island state police in accordance with the provisions of this chapter; or

11 (ii) Renders the assault weapon permanently inoperable, as provided in subsection (f) of  
12 this section; or

13 (iii) Surrenders the assault weapon to the police department in the city or town where the  
14 person resides, or, if there is no such police department or the person resides out of state, to the  
15 Rhode Island state police, in accordance with the procedures for surrender of weapons set forth by  
16 the police department or the Rhode Island state police;

17 (iv) Surrenders the assault weapon to any police station or other location designated as a  
18 site of a bona fide “gun buy-back” program, but only if said weapon is unloaded and any  
19 ammunition for said weapon is not readily or directly accessible from the passenger compartment  
20 of such vehicle while transporting same; and further, provided, that in the case of a vehicle without  
21 a compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the weapon or the ammunition shall be  
22 stored in a locked container; or

23 (v) Transfers or sells the assault weapon to a federally licensed firearm dealer or person or  
24 firm lawfully entitled to own or possess such weapon.

25 (2) A federally licensed firearms dealer who manufactures, purchases, possesses or has  
26 under his or her control an assault weapon, or who sells, offers to sell, or transfers an assault weapon  
27 to another federally licensed firearms dealer, to an entity identified in subsection (b)(3) of this  
28 section, or to an individual outside the state who may lawfully possess such weapon.

29 (3) A law enforcement agency, acting under authority of the United States, the state or any  
30 of its political subdivisions, to import, possess, or transfer an assault weapon.

31 (4) A law enforcement officer to possess or have under his or her control an assault weapon  
32 received through the authority of the United States or any department or agency thereof; a state or  
33 a department, agency, or political subdivision thereof; a municipality or a department or agency  
34 thereof or a federally recognized Indian tribe or a department or agency thereof for purposes of

1 employment provided said officer is not otherwise prohibited from receiving such a weapon and  
2 who is either:

3 (i) Exempt under §§ 11-47-9 and 11-47-9.1; or

4 (ii) A qualified law enforcement officer under 18 U.S.C. § 926B(c) and who is carrying the  
5 identification required by 18 U.S.C. § 926B(d);

6 (d) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, an active duty member of the armed  
7 forces of the United States or the national guard, or a member of the United States military reserves,  
8 may possess or have under his or her control an assault weapon when he or she is acting in the  
9 commission of the member's official duty.

10 (e) If the holder of a certificate to possess an assault weapon dies, or if the owner of an  
11 assault weapon which has been registered pursuant to this chapter dies, then the heir(s) or estate of  
12 the deceased person shall have one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of death to transfer the  
13 firearm to a federally licensed firearm dealer or person or firm lawfully entitled to own or possess  
14 such firearm; voluntarily surrender the firearm to the police department in the city or town where  
15 the deceased resided, or to the Rhode Island state police; remove the assault weapon from the state;  
16 within ninety (90) days of obtaining title, register the assault weapon in accordance with the  
17 provisions of § 11-47.2-4; or, render such weapon permanently inoperable.

18 (f) If the owner of an assault weapon elects to render such weapon permanently inoperable,  
19 the owner shall file a certification under penalty of perjury on a form prescribed by the  
20 superintendent of the state police indicating the date on which the assault weapon was rendered  
21 permanently inoperable. This certification shall be filed with either the chief law enforcement  
22 officer of the municipality in which the owner resides or, if there is no such police department or  
23 in the case of an owner who resides outside this state but stores or possesses an assault weapon in  
24 this state, with the superintendent of the state police. For purposes of this section, "permanently  
25 inoperable" means that the assault weapon is altered in such a manner that it is incapable of  
26 discharging a shot by means of an explosive and incapable of being readily restored to a firing  
27 condition.

28 **11-47.2-4. Registration of assault weapons.**

29 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of § 11-47-41, the owner of an assault weapon lawfully  
30 possessed on or before the effective date of this chapter shall have one year from the effective date  
31 of this chapter to register that weapon. To register an assault weapon, the owner shall:

32 (1) Complete an assault weapon registration statement, in the form to be prescribed by the  
33 superintendent of the state police;

34 (2) Submit to a fingerprint-supported criminal background check to ascertain whether the

1 person is disqualified from the lawful possession of firearms; and,

2 (3) Pay a registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per each person registering one or  
3 more assault weapons.

4 (b) The information to be provided in the registration statement shall include:

5 (1) The full name, date of birth, address, motor vehicle operator's license number or state  
6 identification card number of the registrant;

7 (2) The make, model, caliber, and serial number of the assault weapon being registered;  
8 and

9 (3) Each registration statement shall be signed by the registrant, and the signature shall  
10 constitute a representation of the accuracy of the information contained in the registration  
11 statement.

12 (c) For an applicant who resides in a municipality with an organized full-time police  
13 department, the registration shall take place at the main office of the police department. For all  
14 other applicants, the registration shall take place at a Rhode Island state police barracks.

15 (d) Within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this chapter, the superintendent of the  
16 state police shall prepare the registration statement as described in subsection (a) of this section and  
17 a certificate of inoperability as described in § 11-47.2-3(f), and shall provide a suitable supply of  
18 such statements to each organized full-time municipal police department and each state police  
19 barracks.

20 (e) One copy of the completed assault weapons registration statement shall be returned to  
21 the registrant and shall constitute a certificate of possession of that assault weapon. A second copy  
22 shall be sent to the superintendent and, if the registration takes place at a municipal police  
23 department, a third copy shall be retained by that municipal police department. A fourth copy of  
24 the registration statement shall be sent to the attorney general.

25 (f) A certificate of possession shall only authorize the possession of the assault weapon  
26 specified in the certificate. Any person in possession of multiple assault weapons on the effective  
27 date of this chapter must submit a separate registration statement to obtain a certificate of  
28 possession for each of the assault weapons of which they wish to retain possession; provided,  
29 however, that only one registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) shall be collected pursuant  
30 to subsection (a)(3) of this section.

31 (g) The name and address of a person issued a certificate of possession shall be kept  
32 confidential and shall not be disclosed without a lawful court order, except such records may be  
33 disclosed to state or federal law enforcement officers and state and federal probation and parole  
34 officers acting in the performance of their duties.

1 **11-47.2-5. Use and possession of assault weapons with certificate of possession.**

2 (a) Any person who has been issued a certificate of possession for an assault weapon as  
3 provided for in this chapter, may possess the assault weapon only under the following conditions:

4 (1) At that person's residence, or place of business or other property owned by that person,  
5 except the grandfathered assault weapon shall be kept in secure storage when not in the immediate  
6 possession and control and as required by § 11-47-60.1;

7 (2) While on a target range which holds a regulatory or business license for the purpose of  
8 practicing shooting at that target range;

9 (3) While on the premises of a licensed shooting club;

10 (4) While attending any exhibition, display or educational project which is about firearms  
11 and which is sponsored by, conducted under the auspices of, or approved by a law enforcement  
12 agency or a nationally or state recognized entity that fosters proficiency in, or promotes education  
13 about, firearms;

14 (5) While transporting the grandfathered assault weapon to any federally licensed firearm  
15 dealer for servicing, repair or sale; or

16 (6) While transporting an assault weapon for lawful use between any of the places set forth  
17 in subsections (a)(1) through (a)(5) of this section or for lawful use out-of-state; provided, the  
18 assault weapon is placed in a secure storage.

19 (b) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, shall be fined  
20 not more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) or imprisoned not more than three (3)  
21 years, or both, and shall be subject to forfeiture of the assault weapon pursuant to § 11-47-22.

22 **11-47.2-6. Licensed firearm dealers -- Certificate of transfer.**

23 (a) If an owner of a grandfathered assault weapon sells or transfers the assault weapon to a  
24 federally licensed firearm dealer, such dealer shall, at the time of delivery of the firearm, in addition  
25 to any other reports required by law, execute a certificate of transfer and cause copies of the  
26 certificate of transfer to be mailed or delivered to the superintendent of the state police and the  
27 attorney general.

28 (b) The certificate of transfer shall contain:

29 (1) The date of sale or transfer;

30 (2) The full name, date of birth, address, motor vehicle operator's license number or state  
31 identification card number of the seller or transferor;

32 (3) The federally licensed firearm dealer's federal firearms license number and seller or  
33 transferor's certificate of possession number; and

34 (4) A description of the grandfathered assault weapon, including the caliber of the assault

1 weapon and its make, model and serial number.

2 (c) The federally licensed firearm dealer shall retain possession of the seller or transferor's  
3 certificate of possession and affix the certificate of possession to the certificate of transfer before  
4 mailing or delivering copies of the certificate of transfer to the superintendent of the state police  
5 and the attorney general.

6 (d) A federally licensed firearm dealer may receive and possess a lawfully grandfathered  
7 assault weapon at their business premises, lawfully transport the grandfathered assault weapon  
8 between dealers or out of the state, or lawfully sell or transfer the firearm outside the state.

9 (e) A federally licensed firearm dealer may take possession of a grandfathered assault  
10 weapon for the purposes of servicing or repair from any person to whom certificate of possession  
11 for such weapon has been issued pursuant this chapter.

12 (f) A federally licensed firearm dealer may temporarily transfer possession of a  
13 grandfathered assault weapon received pursuant to subsection (a) of this section to another federally  
14 licensed firearm dealer for the purpose of servicing or repairing the firearm.

15 **11-47.2-7. Severability.**

16 If any provisions of the chapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstances  
17 is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect any other provisions or applications of this chapter,  
18 which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions  
19 of this chapter are declared to be severable.

20 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on January 1, 2026.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- RHODE ISLAND ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN  
ACT OF 2025

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1           This act would establish the Rhode Island Assault Weapons Ban Act of 2025. The act  
2 would define various assault weapons and would restrict the manufacture, sale, purchase, and  
3 possession of these assault weapons. The act would allow the owner of an assault weapon lawfully  
4 possessed on or before the effective date of this act to have one year from the effective date of this  
5 act to register that weapon and obtain a certificate of possession.

6           This act would take effect on January 1, 2026.

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