

**Dangerous Weapons at Institutions of Higher Education**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Nate Blouin**

House Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE****General Description:**

This bill addresses dangerous weapons at institutions of higher education.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- authorizes an institution of higher education to make rules and regulations regarding the carrying or possession of firearms at the institution of higher education;
- expands the offense of carrying a dangerous weapon at an institution of higher education to include carrying, possessing, or storing a dangerous weapon in a dormitory located on higher education grounds; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:****AMENDS:**

**53-5a-102.2**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 208

**53-5a-102.3**, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 173, 208

**53H-3-902**, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 8

**76-11-205.5**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 208

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **53-5a-102.2** is amended to read:

**53-5a-102.2 . Open and concealed carry of a firearm outside of an individual's residence.**

(1) To effectuate the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and Utah

31 Constitution, Article I, Section 6, that prohibit the infringement of the right of the people  
32 of Utah to keep and bear arms for security and defense of self, family, others, property,  
33 or the state, as well as for other lawful purposes, and consistent with the Legislature's  
34 ability to define the lawful use of arms:

35 (a) subject to Subsections (2)(a) and (b), an individual 18 years old or older but younger  
36 than 21 years old without a provisional carry permit issued under Section 53-5a-305  
37 may only carry in an open manner:

38 (i) an unloaded rifle, shotgun, or muzzle-loading rifle in a vehicle in which the  
39 individual is lawfully present;

40 (ii) an unloaded or loaded handgun in a vehicle in which the individual is lawfully  
41 present; and

42 (iii) an unloaded firearm that the individual may otherwise lawfully carry, on a public  
43 street;

44 (b) subject to Subsections (2)(a) and (b), an individual 21 years old or older may open or  
45 conceal carry, without a conceal carry permit:

46 (i) an unloaded or loaded firearm:

47 (A) on a public street; or

48 (B) in any other place not prohibited by, or pursuant to, state statute or federal law;

49 (ii) an unloaded or loaded handgun in a vehicle in which the individual is lawfully  
50 present; and

51 (iii) an unloaded rifle, shotgun, or muzzle-loading rifle in a vehicle in which the  
52 individual is lawfully present; and

53 (c) subject to Subsections (2)(c) and (d), an individual 18 years old or older with a  
54 concealed carry permit issued under Section 53-5a-303, a temporary concealed carry  
55 permit issued under Section 53-5a-304, a provisional concealed carry permit issued  
56 under Section 53-5a-305, or a concealed carry permit lawfully issued by or in another  
57 state, may open or conceal carry a loaded or unloaded firearm:

58 (i) in a vehicle in which the individual is lawfully present;

59 (ii) on a public street; or

60 (iii) in any other place not prohibited by, or pursuant to, state statute or federal law.

61 (2)(a) An individual openly carrying a firearm under Subsection (1)(a) or (b) without a  
62 concealed carry permit may not carry the firearm:

63 (i) in a secure area established in accordance with Section 76-8-311.1 in which  
64 dangerous weapons are prohibited and notice of the prohibition is posted;

- (ii) on or about the premises of a public or private elementary school or secondary school as described in Section 76-11-205;
- (iii) on or about the premises of an institution of higher education as described in Section 76-11-205.5;
- (iv) on or about the premises of a daycare as described in Section 76-11-206;
- (v) in an airport secure area as described in Section 76-11-218;
- (vi) in a house of worship or in any private residence where dangerous weapons are prohibited as described in Section 76-11-219; or
- (vii) in any other place prohibited by, or pursuant to, another state statute or federal law.
- (b) An individual 21 years old or older concealing a firearm without a concealed carry permit under Subsection (1)(b) may not carry the firearm:
- (i) in a secure area established in accordance with Section 76-8-311.1 in which dangerous weapons are prohibited and notice of the prohibition is posted;
- (ii) on or about the school premises of a public or private elementary school or secondary school as described in Section 76-11-205;
- (iii) on or about the premises of an institution of higher education as described in Section 76-11-205.5;
- (iv) on or about a daycare premises as described in Section 76-11-206;
- (v) in an airport secure area as described in Section 76-11-218;
- (vi) in a house of worship or in any private residence where dangerous weapons are prohibited as described in Section 76-11-219; or
- (vii) in any other place prohibited by, or pursuant to, another state statute or federal law.
- (c) Subject to Subsection (2)(d), an individual with a concealed carry permit under Subsection (1)(c) may not carry the firearm in any manner:
- (i) in a secure area established in accordance with Section 76-8-311.1 in which dangerous weapons are prohibited and notice of the prohibition posted;
- (ii) in an airport secure area as described in Section 76-11-218;
- (iii) in a house of worship or in any private residence where dangerous weapons are prohibited as described in Section 76-11-219;
- (iv) in a dormitory located on the grounds of an institution of higher education as described in Subsection 76-11-205.5(2)(b); or
- ~~[(iv)]~~ (v) in any other place prohibited by, or pursuant to, another state statute or

- 99 federal law.
- 100 (d) In addition to the locations described in Subsection (2)(c):
- 101 (i) an individual 18 years old but younger than 21 years old with a provisional
- 102 concealed carry permit under Section 53-5a-304 may not carry the firearm in any
- 103 manner on or about the premises of a public or private elementary school or
- 104 secondary school as described in Section 76-11-205; and
- 105 (ii) an individual concealing a firearm only with a concealed carry permit lawfully
- 106 issued by or in another state may not carry the firearm in any manner:
- 107 (A) on or about the premises of a public or private elementary school or secondary
- 108 school as described in Section 76-11-205;
- 109 (B) on or about the premises of an institution of higher education as described in
- 110 Section 76-11-205.5; or
- 111 (C) on or about the premises of a daycare as described in Section 76-11-206.
- 112 (3) This section does not prohibit:
- 113 (a) the owner or lawful possessor of a vehicle from prohibiting another individual from
- 114 carrying a firearm in the owner or lawful possessor's vehicle; or
- 115 (b) except as provided in Section 53-5a-102.3, the owner or lawful lessee of private real
- 116 property from prohibiting another individual from possessing a firearm on the
- 117 property.
- 118 (4) An individual is lawfully present in a vehicle while carrying a firearm under this section
- 119 if:
- 120 (a) the vehicle is in the lawful possession of the individual; or
- 121 (b) the individual has the consent of the person lawfully in possession of the vehicle to
- 122 carry the firearm in the vehicle.
- 123 Section 2. Section **53-5a-102.3** is amended to read:
- 124 **53-5a-102.3 . Possession of a firearm at a residence or on real property.**
- 125 (1) As used in this section, "institution of higher education" means the same as that term is
- 126 defined in Section 53H-3-304.
- 127 [(4)] (2) Except as provided in Subsection (3)(b) and except for an individual categorized as
- 128 a restricted person under Section 76-11-302, Section 76-11-303, or 18 U.S.C. Sec.
- 129 922(g), or an individual otherwise prohibited by law, an individual 18 years old or older
- 130 may have, and cannot be restricted from having, a loaded or unloaded firearm:
- 131 (a) at the individual's place of residence; or
- 132 (b) on the individual's real property.

[~~(2)~~] (3)(a) An individual's place of residence described in Subsection [~~(1)(a)~~] (2)(a) includes:

[~~(a)~~] (i) a temporary residence or camp; or

[~~(b)~~] (ii) except as provided in Subsection (3)(b), a residence that the individual has been granted the lawful right of possession to rent or lease.

(b) An individual's place of residence described in Subsection (2)(a) does not include a dormitory located on the grounds of an institution of higher education.

Section 3. Section **53H-3-902** is amended to read:

**53H-3-902 . Power of board and institutions to adopt rules and enact regulations.**

(1) As used in this section, "face covering" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-9-210.

(2)(a) The board may enact regulations governing the conduct of university and college students, faculty, and employees.

(b) A president in consultation with the board of trustees, may enact policies governing the conduct of university and college students, faculty, and employees.

(3)(a) An institution may enact traffic, parking, and related policies governing all individuals on campus and facilities owned or controlled by the institution.

(b)(i) The board and an institution may not require proof of vaccination as a condition for enrollment or attendance within the system of higher education unless the board or an institution allows for the following exemptions:

(A) a medical exemption if the student provides to the institution a statement that the claimed exemption is for a medical reason; and

(B) a personal exemption if the student provides to the institution a statement that the claimed exemption is for a personal or religious belief.

(ii) An institution that offers both remote and in-person learning options may not deny a student who is exempt from a requirement to receive a vaccine under Subsection (3)(b)(i) to participate in an in-person learning option based upon the student's vaccination status.

(iii) Subsections (3)(b)(i) and (ii) do not apply to a student studying in a medical setting at an institution of higher education.

(iv) Nothing in this section restricts a state or local health department from acting under applicable law to contain the spread of an infectious disease.

(c)(i) The board or an institution may not require an individual to wear a face covering as a condition of attendance for in-person instruction,

institution-sponsored athletics, institution-sponsored extracurricular activities, in dormitories, or in any other place on a campus of an institution within the system of higher education at any time after the end of the spring semester in 2021.

(ii) Subsection (3)(c)(i) does not apply to an individual in a medical setting at an institution of higher education.

(4) The board shall enact regulations that require all testimony be given under oath during an employee grievance hearing for a non-faculty employee of an institution of higher education if the grievance hearing relates to the non-faculty employee's:

(a) demotion; or

(b) termination.

~~[(5) Acknowledging that the Legislature has the authority to regulate, by law, firearms at higher education institutions, the board may:]~~

~~[(a) authorize higher education institutions to establish no more than one secure area at each institution as a hearing room in accordance with Section 76-8-311.1, but not otherwise restrict the lawful possession or carrying of firearms; and]~~

~~[(b) authorize a higher education institution to make a policy that allows a resident of a dormitory located at the institution to request only roommates who are not licensed to carry a concealed firearm under Section 53-5a-303 or Section 53-5a-305.]~~

(5)(a) Notwithstanding Section 53-5a-102, and subject to Subsection (5)(b) and Sections 53-5a-102.3 and 76-11-205.5, the board shall authorize an institution of higher education to make rules and regulations regarding the carrying or possession of a firearm at the institution of higher education, which may include:

(i) prohibiting the possession or carrying of a firearm at the institution of higher education by any individual;

(ii) establishing a secure area as a hearing room in accordance with Section 76-8-311.1; and

(iii) any other rule or regulation the institution of higher education determines is beneficial to the institution of higher education.

(b) The rules and regulations made under Subsection (5)(a) may not:

(i) prohibit an individual described in Section 53-5a-108 from possessing or carrying a firearm at the institution of higher education;

(ii) allow an individual without a concealed carry permit as described in Section 53-5a-303, a provisional concealed carry permit as described in Section 53-5a-304, or a temporary concealed carry permit issued under Section 53-5a-305, to carry or

- 201                   possess a firearm at the higher education institution in violation of Section  
202                   76-11-205.5; or  
203                   (iii) allow an individual to carry, possess, or store a firearm in a dormitory located at  
204                   the institution of higher education in violation of Section 76-11-205.5.
- 205       (6) In addition to the requirements and penalty prescribed in Sections 76-8-311.1 and  
206       76-8-311.2, the board shall make rules regarding any secure area established under  
207       Subsection (5)(a)(ii) to ensure:
- 208           (a) the use of reasonable means such as mechanical, electronic, x-ray, or similar devices,  
209           to detect firearms, ammunition, or dangerous weapons contained in the personal  
210           property of or on the person of any individual attempting to enter a secure area  
211           hearing room;
- 212           (b) that an individual required or requested to attend a hearing in a secure area hearing  
213           room is notified in writing of the requirements related to entering a secure area  
214           hearing room under this Subsection (6)(b) and Section 76-8-311.1; and
- 215           ~~[(e) that the restriction of firearms, ammunition, or dangerous weapons in the secure~~  
216           ~~area hearing room is in effect only during the time the secure area hearing room is in~~  
217           ~~use for hearings and for a reasonable time before and after the hearing; and]~~
- 218           ~~[(d)]~~ (c) the application of reasonable space limitations to the secure area hearing room as  
219           the number of individuals involved in a typical hearing warrants.
- 220       (7) The board and institutions may enforce the rules, regulations, and policies described in  
221       this section in any reasonable manner, including the assessment of fees, fines, and  
222       forfeitures, through:
- 223           (a) withholding from money owed the violator;  
224           (b) the imposition of probation, suspension, or expulsion from the institution;  
225           (c) the revocation of privileges;  
226           (d) the refusal to issue certificates, degrees, and diplomas;  
227           (e) judicial process; or  
228           (f) any reasonable combination of the alternatives described in this Subsection (7).
- 229       Section 4. Section **76-11-205.5** is amended to read:
- 230       **76-11-205.5 . Carrying a dangerous weapon at an institution of higher education.**
- 231       (1) As used in this section, "on or about school premises" means:
- 232           (a) in a public or private institution of higher education; or  
233           (b) on the grounds of a public or private institution of higher education.
- 234       (2) An actor commits carrying a dangerous weapon at an institution of higher education if

the actor:

(a)(i) is not an individual listed in Subsection (4);

~~[(b)]~~ (ii) carries a dangerous weapon on or about school premises; and

~~[(c)]~~ (iii) knows or reasonably believes that the actor is on or about school premises at the time the actor carries the dangerous weapon~~[-]~~ ; or

(b) carries, possesses, or stores a dangerous weapon in a dormitory located on the grounds of a public or private institution of higher education.

(3)(a) A violation of Subsection (2) is a class B misdemeanor if the dangerous weapon [ ~~carried by the actor~~ ] is not a firearm.

(b) A violation of Subsection (2) is a class A misdemeanor if the dangerous weapon [ ~~carried by the actor~~ ] is a firearm.

(4) ~~[This section-]~~ Subsection (2)(a) does not apply if:

(a) the actor is an individual exempt from certain weapons laws as described in Section 53-5a-108;

(b) the actor has a concealed carry permit as described in Section 53-5a-303 and the institution of higher education has not enacted a regulation prohibiting an actor with a concealed carry permit from carrying the dangerous weapon on the grounds of the institution of higher education under Section 53H-3-902;

(c) the actor has a provisional concealed carry permit as described in Section 53-5a-304 and the institution of higher education has not enacted a regulation prohibiting an actor with a provisional concealed carry permit from carrying the dangerous weapon on the grounds of the institution of higher education under Section 53H-3-902;

(d) the actor has a temporary concealed carry permit issued under Section 53-5a-305 and the institution of higher education has not enacted a regulation prohibiting an actor with a temporary concealed carry permit from carrying the dangerous weapon on the grounds of the institution of higher education under Section 53H-3-902;

~~[(e) the actor is carrying the dangerous weapon at the actor's place of residence or on the actor's real property;]~~

~~[(f)]~~ (e) the possession of the dangerous weapon is approved by the responsible school administrator;

~~[(g)]~~ (f) the dangerous weapon is present or to be used in connection with a lawful, approved activity and is in the possession or under the control of the actor responsible for the dangerous weapon's possession or use; or

~~[(h)]~~ (g)(i) the actor is carrying the dangerous weapon in a vehicle lawfully under the



269 actor's control[-] ;  
270 (ii) [-not including] the actor is not in a vehicle owned by the school or used by the  
271 school to transport students[-] ; and  
272 (iii) the actor is driving the vehicle through the institution of higher education on  
273 roads accessible to the public and does not park in a parking lot or otherwise  
274 remain on the grounds of the institution of higher education.

275 (5) This section does not prohibit prosecution of another criminal offense that may occur on  
276 or about school premises.

277 Section 5. **Effective Date.**

278 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.