

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES DIRECTIVE NO. 16 (Amended June 29, 2016)  
BANNING OPEN CARRYING OF FIREARMS

---

**Purpose** To implement Executive Order 50 and to disseminate information on open-carry firearms guidance in premises owned, leased or controlled by executive branch agencies.

---

**Applicability** This Directive applies to all "State Offices," meaning buildings owned, leased or controlled by or for an executive branch agency, including supporting buildings. "Executive branch agency" includes any administrative unit of State government in the executive branch, including any department, institution, commission, board, council, authority or other body, however designated.

This prohibition does not apply to law enforcement officers (including retired law enforcement officers certified pursuant to Va. Code § 18.2-308.016), authorized security personnel, or military personnel, when such individuals are authorized to carry a firearm in accordance with their duties, and when they are carrying the firearm within that authority. It also does not apply to State employees where the employee's position requires carrying a firearm.

This prohibition also does not apply to hunters who are in compliance with Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' Hunting and Trapping Regulations regarding allowable firearms, public hunting lands, and hunting license requirements; lodges and cabins owned by the Commonwealth and used solely by the public for recreational facilities; any buildings which serve as living quarters for Commonwealth employees; or any buildings at a rest area on an interstate highway.

---

**Policy** In accordance with EO50, the open carrying of firearms in or on State Offices is prohibited. Entry upon a State Office in violation of this prohibition is expressly forbidden.

In leased State Offices with space open to others, this prohibition shall apply when that space is used exclusively for functions or activities sponsored by the Executive branch agency's tenants while such functions are taking place.

This policy is intended to be consistent with Virginia Department of Human Resource Management Policy 1.80 – Workplace Violence, which prohibits State employees from possessing, brandishing, or using a weapon that is not required by the employee's position while on State premises or engaged in State business.

---

**Required Lease Term** All leases entered into where an Executive branch agency is the lessor shall contain a prohibition on open-carry firearms consistent with this directive. All leases entered into for the benefit of an Executive branch agency shall contain this prohibition to indicate the lessor's acknowledgment.

---

**Signs** Signs shall be posted in all State Offices as may be required. Signs shall be of a design and size approved by the Department of General Services. Agencies shall be responsible for obtaining signage design from the Department and for posting of the signs.

---

**Enforcement** Agencies shall be responsible for enforcing this directive within the State Offices assigned to the agency.

---

**Exemptions** This Directive does not apply a State institution of higher education if the institution has implemented its own policies or regulations governing firearms.

The Governor or his designee may otherwise grant exemptions from the requirements of this Directive. To qualify for an exemption, the applying executive branch agency must show that an alternative policy, consistent with the Commonwealth's policy against firearms in State Offices, is appropriate.

---

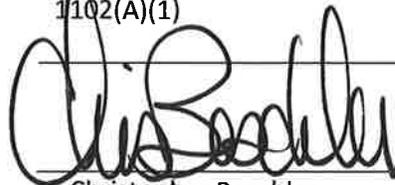
**Effective Date** November 15, 2015  
**Amended Date** June 29, 2016

---

**Authority** EO 50 (McAuliffe 2015); Va. Code § 2.2-1100(B), Va. Code § 2.2-1102(A)(1)

---

**Approved:**



Christopher Beschler  
Director, Department of General Services

6-29-2016

Date