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Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

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Lieutenant Governor

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Law Enforcement Agencies, Licensing Authorities, Licensed Firearms Dealers, Firearms Instructors, LTC and FID holders, and all other Interested Parties

FROM: The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

DATE: September 30, 2024

RE: *An Act Modernizing Firearm Laws*

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The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) and its agencies are in the process of developing plans to implement Chapter 135 of the Acts of 2024, *An Act modernizing firearm laws (Act)*, signed into law by Governor Healey on July 25, 2024. We understand that many individuals, including licensed firearms dealers, law enforcement officers, advocates, and others have questions and concerns about the new firearm laws. We hope that the information provided in this memorandum will allay some of these concerns, particularly concerns relating to the ability of individuals to obtain firearm identification (FID) cards and licenses to carry (LTC) now and in the near future, and the ability of licensed firearms dealers to continue to sell firearms. We will continue to provide guidance and relevant information as various provisions of the new law go into effect.

The new law strengthens the Commonwealth's firearms laws in several critical areas, in addition to enhancing the basic firearms safety (BFS) course and including a live fire requirement. Section 74 of the *Act* requires the Colonel of the Massachusetts State Police (MSP), in consultation with the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC), to set minimum requirements for BFS courses according to specific criteria specified in the *Act*. The *Act* provides that, "[p]ersons lawfully possessing a firearm identification card or license to carry firearms on August 1, 2024, shall be exempt from this section upon expiration of such card or license and when applying for renewal of such licensure as required under this chapter; provided, however, that persons

possessing a firearms identification card or license to carry firearms prior to the implementation of live firearms trainings as required in this section shall also be exempted from such requirement.”

On September 16, 2024, the Governor signed, *An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2024 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain other Activities and Projects*, which amended the effective date of section 74 of the new firearms law. The new requirements for the BFS course contained in section 74 will not become effective until 18 months following the *Act* taking effect. Until section 74 takes effect, local licensing authorities should continue to accept and process applications for FID cards and LTC’s in the ordinary course, consistent with the governing law. Pursuant to the *Act*, any person who has been issued a firearms identification card or license to carry on or before August 1, 2024, will not be required to complete the new BFS requirements or the live fire component, including when seeking to renew the card or license.

The MSP, in conjunction with the MPTC, is in the process of developing curriculum to address the new BFS requirements. Individuals who apply for an FID or LTC after August 1, 2024, but before section 74 goes into effect, may be issued an FID or LTC if the applicant is otherwise eligible under the law. Individuals issued an FID or LTC during this period (August 1, 2024 - effective date of section 74) will not be required to take a new BFS course, including the live fire component, until they seek to renew their FID or LTC.

The Secretary of EOPSS, pursuant to section 131 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of chapter 140 of the General Laws, is required to compile and publish a roster of large capacity rifles, shotguns, firearms and feeding devices, all as currently defined in section 121 of chapter 140. The Secretary may amend the rosters on his own initiative. Section 51 of the *Act* also allows the Secretary to amend any roster on his own initiative. Therefore, the Secretary is hereby approving the current “Approved Firearms Roster,” in its current form. Licensed firearms dealers may continue to sell firearms contained on the rosters.<sup>1</sup> Upon formation of the new Firearms Control Advisory Board (FCAB), the Secretary will consider any advice or guidance the board may offer and will approve any amendments to the rosters as necessary.

To address some common questions and to provide some further guidance, below is a list of answers to frequently asked questions. We look forward to working with all our partners and stakeholders to implement this important legislation that will enhance public safety across the Commonwealth.

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<sup>1</sup> The currently approved rosters may be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/approved-firearms-rosters>.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. When will the new BFS course be ready?
  - a. EOPSS is diligently working with the MSP and the MPTC to operationalize the requirements of section 74 of the *Act*, including the new curriculum requirements for the BFS course, in accordance with the deadlines prescribed by the new law.
2. May a licensing authority accept a basic firearms safety certificate pursuant to the requirements of the current law prior to the *Act* taking effect?
  - a. Yes, and a licensing authority may continue to do so until section 74 takes effect.
3. If I am issued an FID or LTC after August 1, 2024, but before the law goes into effect, will I have to take a new BFS course and complete the live fire requirement when I renew my license?
  - a. Yes, but only if you applied for the permit or license after August 1, 2024.
4. I am a BFS instructor. What are the new requirements for the issuance of satisfactory basic safety firearms certificate?
  - a. Course instructors will be required to upload copies of completed certificates to the MIRCS Portal created by DCJIS. Individuals who completed the course will have access to the certificate via the MIRCS Portal. Specific information will be forthcoming.
5. Can I renew or apply for a new resident alien permit to possess non-large capacity rifles and shotguns?
  - a. No. This is no longer a valid license type.
6. Can I apply for or renew a LTC in the town where I own a business?
  - a. No. Applicants can only apply for or renew a firearms license in the city/town where they reside, or a non-resident of the Commonwealth through the Firearms Records Bureau.
7. Will I need to register all my firearms?
  - a. Yes. However, you will not be required to register your firearms into the new registration system until 10/23/2026. The Commonwealth is working on building the registration system and will provide additional guidance at a later date on how to register firearms.

8. I am moving to Massachusetts – do I need to register my firearms?
  - a. Yes. A new resident of Massachusetts has 60 days to obtain a firearms license. Firearms must be registered once the license is issued.
9. When will the FCAB convene?
  - a. EOPSS is currently working with the offices and stakeholders who have representation on the board so that individuals may be selected, and the Chair may convene the board's first meeting as soon as practicable.
10. Are firearms dealers permitted to sell handguns currently on the “Approved Firearms Roster”?
  - a. Yes, please see the information above concerning the firearms rosters.
11. Will DCJIS be updating the MIRCS system to reflect the requirements of the new law?
  - a. Yes. DCJIS will be updating the MIRCS system based on data shared with its agency by the Trial Court and other agencies. Further information will be made available at a later date regarding the updates to the MIRCS.
12. When will the section 12 database, as required by Section 12 of the *Act*, be operational?
  - a. DCJIS, in consultation with I.T. partners, is in the process of developing the database and expects to be ready to launch once the *Act* takes effect. DCJIS, in consultation with the MPTC, will be providing trainings on all new systems and processes.
13. How will the recording of ammunition sales be implemented, and will it be in place by the time the *Act* takes effect?
  - a. An electronic record of ammunition sales will not be required by DCJIS at this time. A written record that complies with the requirements as specified in Section 37 of the *Act* will suffice.