

Denver Accord

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO
REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE

Presented by GVPedia



The Denver Accord is a comprehensive gun violence prevention platform, led by GVPedia and supported by more than 40 organizations nationally, designed to guide policymakers' efforts to reduce gun violence in the United States. It combines best practices from across the country with evidence-based research to create a comprehensive and effective set of policies and programs intended to stop the scourge of gun violence.

The Denver Accord includes four guiding principles and nine policy positions that, working in conjunction with each other, will stem the epidemic. This is the first in a series of fact sheets outlining those nine policy positions. There is no single solution to gun violence in America but it is clear that more guns do not make people safer. It is a multifaceted problem that requires a comprehensive solution.

The Denver Accord Parts 1 & 2: Licensing and Registration Laws

What is licensing?

- Firearm owners must receive a "may issue" permit-to-purchase (license) from law enforcement.
- Applicants must pass a background check, be at least 21 years old, undergo live-fire training and substantive, standardized classroom training.
- In addition to existing prohibitions, applicants will be disqualified for convictions of any violent misdemeanors or hate crimes, stalking, two or more drug- or alcohol-related offenses within 3 years, or if are subject to domestic violence protective orders or extreme risk protection order.

What is registration?

- Firearms must be registered to the owner and include the make, model, and serial number.
- An electronic, searchable firearm registration database would be housed at and maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

Key Points of Licensing and Registration:

- Firearm licensing and registration laws are associated with lower levels of gun homicides and suicides.
- Background checks augmented by handgun purchaser licensing are more effective than background checks alone.
- Licensing and registration laws reduce trafficking and complicate efforts by juveniles and prohibited individuals to obtain firearms.
- Licensing laws are associated with significant reductions in firearm homicides in large urban counties.
- Mandatory registration requirements help law enforcement identify owners of firearms recovered from crime scenes, discourage illegal firearm sales, and disarm prohibited individuals.
- The National Firearms Act (NFA) of 1934 was created in response to a rise in machine gun shootings. Today, shootings with firearms registered under the NFA are very rare.

Licensing systems' requirements include comprehensive background checks. Mandatory registration requirements make it easier for law enforcement to trace firearms used in crimes to their last known legal owner and prosecute illegal transfers. Registration laws increase accountability and deter straw purchases.

Learn more about the Denver Accord at www.GVPedia.org.

The Research Showing How Licensing and Registration Reduces Gun Violence

The following summarizes the research on licensing and registration with a specific focus on: homicide rates, gun violence in urban areas, suicide rates, the use of guns in crimes, and public support.

In 1995, Connecticut strengthened its background check requirements by requiring potential handgun purchasers to obtain a license and complete eight hours of handgun safety training before purchasing a firearm. A [2015 study](#) found that Connecticut's licensing law was associated with a 40% reduction in firearm homicides over the first ten years after enactment. A [2019 study](#) showed that California's comprehensive background checks alone did not make a difference in firearm homicide rates.

In 2007, Missouri repealed its handgun licensing law. A [2019 study](#) estimates that repealing the requirement for Missouri purchasers to obtain a license is associated with a 17-27% increase in firearm homicides. Missouri did not see an increase in non-firearm homicides during the same time period. These findings are consistent with a [2014 study](#) also estimating the effects of the repeal of Missouri's licensing law.

In 2016, 63% of U.S. firearm homicides occurred in large, urban counties, which contain 56% of the U.S. population. A [2018 study](#) of large, urban U.S. counties found that permit-to-purchase laws were associated with an 11% reduction in firearm homicide. Comprehensive background check laws without licensing were associated with a 10% increase in firearm homicide.

A [2015 study](#) found that Connecticut's licensing law was associated with a 15.4% reduction in firearm suicide rates and Missouri's permit to purchase repeal was associated with a 16.1% increase in firearm suicide rates.

Studies suggest that mandatory registration and licensing requirements make it more difficult for individuals at high risk of committing crimes to acquire firearms. A [2001 study](#) found that U.S. cities located in states with licensing and registration systems had an average of 33.7% of crime guns first sold by in-state gun dealers, compared with 84.2% in cities without registration or licensing. States with registration and licensing systems have a lower portion of crime guns with in-state origins.

A [2013 study](#) found that the repeal of Missouri's licensing law was associated with an increase in the diversion of guns to criminals. The average share of crime guns originating from Missouri increased from 55.6% before repeal to 70.8% in 2011.

[National surveys](#) find that three-quarters of Americans, including a majority of gun owners, support requiring a permit before purchasing a handgun.

Conclusion: Strong evidence shows that licensing laws reduce gun death, but more research is needed to determine which specific aspects of licensing laws are most effective.

Recommended Reading:

- [The Impact of Handgun Purchaser Licensing Laws on Gun Violence:](#)
Licensing laws reduce gun death.
- [I looked for a state that's taking gun violence seriously. I found Massachusetts: Massachusetts as a model for policy.](#)
- [How This Piece of Paper Fights Gun Crimes and Saves Lives:](#)
An overview of licensing.
- [GVpedia: Firearm Laws and Firearm Homicides: A Systematic Review:](#)
An evaluation of the association between firearm laws and preventing firearm homicides in the U.S.

