

HB 551-FN - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES

20Mar2025... 0818h
05/08/2025 1907s

2025 SESSION

25-0201
05/09

HOUSE BILL

551-FN

AN ACT repealing the license to sell pistols and revolvers and limiting liability for certain design features of firearms.

SPONSORS: Rep. Granger, Straf. 2; Rep. Sellers, Graf. 18

COMMITTEE: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill repeals the local licensing requirement for the sale of pistols and revolvers. This bill further limits liability for firearm manufacturers and federal firearm licensees regarding specific design features.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough]~~
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT repealing the license to sell pistols and revolvers and limiting liability for certain design features of firearms.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Immunity for Law Enforcement Officers; Cross-Reference Deleted. Amend RSA 159:6-g to
2 read as follows:

3 159:6-g Immunity for Law Enforcement Officers. A law enforcement officer who issues a license
4 in good faith under RSA 159:6 ~~[or 159:8]~~ shall be immune from liability resulting or arising from any
5 action or misconduct with a firearm committed by any individual to whom a license to carry a
6 firearm has been issued.

7 2 Firearm Purchase; Identity of Purchaser Required. Amend RSA 159:8 to read as follows:

8 159:8 ~~[License to Sell.]~~ **Purchase of Firearm; Identity of Purchaser.**

9 ~~[The selectmen of a town and the chief of police of a city may grant licenses, the form of which~~
10 ~~shall be prescribed by the director of the division of state police, effective for not more than 3 years~~
11 ~~from date of issue, permitting the licensee to sell at retail pistols and revolvers subject to the~~
12 ~~following conditions, for breach of any of which the licensee shall be subject to forfeiture:~~

13 I. ~~The business shall be carried on only in the building designated in the license or at any~~
14 ~~organized sporting show or arms collectors' meeting sponsored by a chartered club or organization.~~

15 II. ~~The license or a copy thereof, certified by the issuing authority, shall be displayed on the~~
16 ~~premises where it can easily be read.~~

17 III. ~~No pistol, revolver, or other firearm shall be delivered to a purchaser not personally~~
18 ~~known to the seller or who does not present clear evidence of his~~ **or her** ~~identity; nor to a person who~~
19 ~~has been convicted of a felony.~~

20 3 Pistols and Revolvers; Sale to Nonresidents. Amend RSA 159:8-a to read as follows:

21 159:8-a Sales to Nonresidents; Attorney General. No person ~~[holding a license issued under the~~
22 ~~provisions of RSA 159:8]~~ shall sell a pistol or revolver to a nonresident unless such nonresident has
23 authority under the laws of the state of his **or her** residence, to purchase a pistol or revolver in the
24 state of his **or her** residence, or unless the director of the division of state police, for good cause
25 shown, has issued to such nonresident a permit for the purchase of a pistol or revolver. The attorney
26 general shall, at least once annually, file with the secretary of state a summary of the laws of each
27 state of the United States relative to the purchase of pistols and revolvers in such states; and a
28 ~~[licensee]~~ **person** may rely upon such summary in determining if a nonresident offering to purchase

1 a pistol or revolver has authority to make such purchase under the laws of the state of his *or her*
2 residence.

3 4 Pistols and Revolvers; Penalties. Amend RSA 159:8-b to read as follows:

4 159:8-b Penalties. If a ~~[licensee]~~ **person** shall in any court be found guilty of a violation of any of
5 the provisions of RSA 159:8-a, such court, ~~[shall,]~~ for each such violation, ~~[order the suspension of his~~
6 ~~license for a period of 3 months, and]~~ may~~[-, in addition,]~~ impose a fine not in excess of \$100.

7 5 Repeal. RSA 159:10, relative to penalties for sale without a license required under RSA 159:8,
8 is repealed.

9 6 New Section; Limitation of Actions Against Firearm Manufacturers and Federal Firearms
10 Licensees. Amend RSA 507-D by inserting after section 5 the following new section:

11 507-D:6 Limitation of Actions Against Firearm Manufacturers and Federal Firearms Licensees.

12 I. In any product liability action involving a firearm, the manufacturer of the firearm and
13 any federal firearms licensee (FFL) who sold or transferred the firearm shall not be liable in tort
14 under any theory of defective product design, failure to warn, negligence, strict product liability, or
15 any other claim based on the absence or presence of any of the following features:

- 16 (a) A magazine disconnect mechanism;
17 (b) A loaded chamber indicator;
18 (c) Authorized user recognition technology; or
19 (d) An external mechanical safety, including but not limited to a hinged, pivoting, or
20 tabbed trigger safety.

21 II. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit liability for a firearm manufacturer or
22 FFL in cases where the claimant establishes that the firearm contained an actual manufacturing
23 defect or failed to operate in a manner consistent with the manufacturer's express warranty or
24 representations.

25 III. This section shall not alter or limit any other defense available to firearm manufacturers
26 or FFL under RSA 507-D or any other applicable law.

27 IV. If any provision of this section or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is
28 held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the chapter which can
29 be given effect without the invalid provision or application, to the fullest extent permitted by law,
30 and to this end the provisions of this chapter are declared to be severable.

31 V. In this section:

- 32 (a) "Firearm" shall have the same meaning as provided in RSA 173-B:1, XI.
33 (b) "Magazine disconnect mechanism" shall mean a mechanism that prevents a
34 semiautomatic firearm from firing when the detachable magazine is not fully inserted in the firearm.
35 (c) "Loaded chamber indicator" shall mean a mechanism or feature intended to indicate
36 to the user that a cartridge is in the firing chamber of a firearm.

1 (d) "Authorized user recognition technology" shall mean a mechanism, device, or
2 technology applied to a firearm that prevents a user not authorized by the owner from firing the
3 firearm.

4 (e) "External manual safety" shall mean a manually operated mechanism that, when
5 engaged, blocks the trigger from functioning.

6 7 Applicability. RSA 507-D:6 as inserted by section 6 of this act shall apply to any action filed
7 on or after the effective date of this section. It shall not affect any claim that has been fully
8 adjudicated, settled, or dismissed prior to the effective date of this section.

9 8 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**HB 551-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE (AMENDMENT #2025-0818h)**

AN ACT repealing the license to sell pistols and revolvers.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund</i>	None			
Expenditures*	Indeterminable			
<i>Funding Source</i>	General Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source</i>	None			

***Expenditure = Cost of bill**

***Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill**

Estimated Political Subdivision Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
County Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
County Expenditures	Indeterminable			
Local Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Expenditures	Indeterminable			

METHODOLOGY:

This bill, effective January 1, 2026, repeals the local licensing requirement for the sale of pistols and revolvers. To the extent a municipality currently collects a fee for such licenses, it may experience a decrease in revenue. There is no impact expected on state revenues or expenditures.

This bill adds, deletes, or modifies a criminal penalty, or changes statute to which there is a penalty for violation. Therefore, this bill may have an impact on the judicial and correctional systems, which could affect prosecution, incarceration, probation, and parole costs, for the state, as well as county and local governments. A summary of such costs can be found at: https://gencourt.state.nh.us/lba/Budget/Fiscal_Notes/JudicialCorrectionalCosts.pdf

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Judicial Branch, Judicial Council, Department of Justice, Department of Corrections,
Department of Safety, New Hampshire Association of Counties, and New Hampshire Municipal
Association