

Understanding the new Firearm Concealed Carry Act

By Police Chief Steve Neubauer

The Illinois Legislature passed a bill (HB-0183) known as the Firearm Concealed Carry Act which allows qualified people in Illinois to carry a concealed weapon. In order to obtain a concealed carry permit, qualified adults must submit to a fingerprint background check and complete the training required by law. The Illinois State Police webpage at www.isp.state.il.us has helpful information and guidelines about obtaining a concealed carry permit.

Tinley Park residents should be aware of some of the implications of this new law. The law requires applicants for concealed carry pass a fingerprint background check and attend an approved 16-hour course. The police department does not facilitate any of the required training, nor is the police department firearms range available for training or practice to the public. Also, note that the police department does not provide the required fingerprint background check. The state police website has a list of private vendors that will do the fingerprint background check for a fee.

Once a candidate for a concealed carry permit applies to the state police, part of the background check includes notification of the pending application to the local police department. The law provides that the local police department may object to the issuance of a license if the police department has information that a candidate may not be suited for the concealed carry permit. The Tinley Park Police Department will work with the state police to provide a review of the candidates as prescribed by law.

The law identifies many places that a concealed carry permit holder cannot bring a firearm. These prohibited locations will be identified to the permit holders in their training. For example, concealed weapons are not allowed in schools, bars (any establishment that derives more than 50 percent of sales through alcohol sales), hospitals, government buildings and public events such as parades and festivals, to name a few. Concealed carry permit holders are responsible for knowing and understanding the limitations of those prohibited areas.

Business owners, if they choose, can prohibit concealed carry weapons by posting an approved sign at all entrances. The requirements of the signage can be found at the Illinois State Police webpage. For further information about concealed carry, please go to the Illinois State Police homepage at www.isp.state.il.us.

Finally, the concealed carry law does not change the requirement to secure your firearms in your home. Laws governing the security of firearms prescribe how weapons must be secured in the residence, particularly if children have access to the home. It is important that we protect our families and loved ones from improperly secured weapons.