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HOUSE BILL NO. 319

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 5, 2024

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 15.2-915.4, 18.2-308.02, 18.2-308.06, and 22.1-204.1 of the Code of Virginia and to repeal § 46.2-749.6 of the Code of Virginia, relating to firearms instructors and safety programs; National Rifle Association and United States Concealed Carry Association.

Patron—Helmer

Referred to Committee on Public Safety

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 15.2-915.4, 18.2-308.02, 18.2-308.06, and 22.1-204.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 15.2-915.4. Counties, cities, and towns authorized to regulate use of pneumatic guns.

A. A locality may prohibit, by ordinance, the shooting of pneumatic guns in any areas of the locality that are in the opinion of the governing body so heavily populated as to make such conduct dangerous to the inhabitants thereof; and may require supervision by a parent, guardian, or other adult supervisor approved by a parent or guardian of any minor below the age of 16 in all uses of pneumatic guns on private or public property. The ordinance may specify that minors above the age of 16 may, with the written consent of a parent or guardian, use a pneumatic gun at any place designated for such use by the local governing body or on private property with the consent of the owner. The ordinance may specify that any minor, whether permitted by a parent or guardian to use a pneumatic gun or not, shall be responsible for obeying all laws, regulations, and restrictions governing such use. Any penalty for a pneumatic gun offense set forth in such an ordinance shall not exceed a Class 3 misdemeanor.

B. No such ordinance authorized by subsection A shall prohibit the use of pneumatic guns at facilities approved for shooting ranges, on other property where firearms may be discharged, or on or within private property with permission of the owner or legal possessor thereof when conducted with reasonable care to prevent a projectile from crossing the bounds of the property.

C. Training of minors in the use of pneumatic guns shall be done only under direct supervision of a parent, guardian, Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps instructor, or a certified instructor. Training of minors above the age of 16 may also be done without direct supervision if approved by the minor's instructor, with the permission of and under the responsibility of a parent or guardian, and in compliance with all requirements of this section. Ranges and instructors may be certified by the National Rifle Association, a state or federal agency that has developed a certification program, any service of the Department of Defense, or any person authorized by these authorities to certify ranges and instructors.

D. Commercial or private areas designated for use of pneumatic paintball guns may be established and operated for recreational use. Equipment designed to protect the face and ears shall be provided to participants at such recreational areas, and signs must be posted to warn against entry into the paintball area by persons who are unprotected or unaware that paintball guns are in use.

E. As used in this section, "pneumatic gun" means any implement, designed as a gun, that will expel a BB or a pellet by action of pneumatic pressure. "Pneumatic gun" includes a paintball gun that expels by action of pneumatic pressure plastic balls filled with paint for the purpose of marking the point of impact.

§ 18.2-308.02. Application for a concealed handgun permit; Virginia resident or domiciliary.

A. Any person 21 years of age or older may apply in writing to the clerk of the circuit court of the county or city in which he resides, or if he is a member of the United States Armed Forces and stationed outside the Commonwealth, the county or city in which he is domiciled, for a five-year permit to carry a concealed handgun. There shall be no requirement regarding the length of time an applicant has been a resident or domiciliary of the county or city. The application shall be on a form prescribed by the Department of State Police, in consultation with the Supreme Court, requiring only that information necessary to determine eligibility for the permit. Additionally, the application shall request but not require that the applicant provide an email or other electronic address where a notice of permit expiration can be sent pursuant to subsection C of § 18.2-308.010. The applicant shall present one valid form of photo identification issued by a governmental agency of the Commonwealth or by the U.S. Department of Defense or U.S. State Department (passport). No information or documentation other than that which is allowed on the application in accordance with this section may be requested or required by the clerk or the court.

B. The court shall require proof that the applicant has demonstrated competence with a handgun in person and the applicant may demonstrate such competence by one of the following, but no applicant shall be required to submit to any additional demonstration of competence, nor shall any proof of demonstrated

59 competence expire:

60 1. Completing any hunter education or hunter safety course approved by the Department of Wildlife
61 Resources or a similar agency of another state;

62 2. Completing any ~~National Rifle Association or United States Concealed Carry Association~~ firearms
63 safety or training course *certified or approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services*;

64 3. Completing any firearms safety or training course or class available to the general public offered by a
65 law-enforcement agency, institution of higher education, or private or public institution or organization or
66 firearms training school utilizing instructors certified *or approved by the National Rifle Association, the*
67 ~~United States Concealed Carry Association~~, or the Department of Criminal Justice Services;

68 4. Completing any law-enforcement firearms safety or training course or class offered for security guards,
69 investigators, special deputies, or any division or subdivision of law enforcement or security enforcement;

70 5. Presenting evidence of equivalent experience with a firearm through participation in organized shooting
71 competition or current military service or proof of an honorable discharge from any branch of the armed
72 services;

73 6. Obtaining or previously having held a license to carry a firearm in the Commonwealth or a locality
74 thereof, unless such license has been revoked for cause;

75 7. Completing any in-person firearms training or safety course or class conducted by a state-certified,
76 ~~National Rifle Association-certified, or United States Concealed Carry Association-certified~~ *or Department*
77 *of Criminal Justice Services approved* firearms instructor;

78 8. Completing any governmental police agency firearms training course and qualifying to carry a firearm
79 in the course of normal police duties; or

80 9. Completing any other firearms training that the court deems adequate.

81 A photocopy of a certificate of completion of any of the courses or classes; an affidavit from the
82 instructor, school, club, organization, or group that conducted or taught such course or class attesting to the
83 completion of the course or class by the applicant; or a copy of any document that shows completion of the
84 course or class or evidences participation in firearms competition shall constitute evidence of qualification
85 under this subsection.

86 C. The making of a materially false statement in an application under this article shall constitute perjury,
87 punishable as provided in § 18.2-434.

88 D. The clerk of court shall withhold from public disclosure the applicant's name and any other information
89 contained in a permit application or any order issuing a concealed handgun permit, except that such
90 information shall not be withheld from any law-enforcement officer acting in the performance of his official
91 duties or from the applicant with respect to his own information. The prohibition on public disclosure of
92 information under this subsection shall not apply to any reference to the issuance of a concealed handgun
93 permit in any order book before July 1, 2008; however, any other concealed handgun records maintained by
94 the clerk shall be withheld from public disclosure.

95 E. An application is deemed complete when all information required to be furnished by the applicant,
96 including the fee for a concealed handgun permit as set forth in § 18.2-308.03, is delivered to and received by
97 the clerk of court before or concomitant with the conduct of a state or national criminal history records check.

98 F. For purposes of this section, a member of the United States Armed Forces is domiciled in the county or
99 city where such member claims his home of record with the United States Armed Forces.

100 **§ 18.2-308.06. Nonresident concealed handgun permits.**

101 A. Nonresidents of the Commonwealth 21 years of age or older may apply in writing to the Virginia
102 Department of State Police for a five-year permit to carry a concealed handgun. The applicant shall submit a
103 photocopy of one valid form of photo identification issued by a governmental agency of the applicant's state
104 of residency or by the U.S. Department of Defense or U.S. State Department (passport). Every applicant for a
105 nonresident concealed handgun permit shall also submit two photographs of a type and kind specified by the
106 Department of State Police for inclusion on the permit and shall submit fingerprints on a card provided by the
107 Department of State Police for the purpose of obtaining the applicant's state or national criminal history
108 record. As a condition for issuance of a concealed handgun permit, the applicant shall submit to
109 fingerprinting by his local or state law-enforcement agency and provide personal descriptive information to
110 be forwarded with the fingerprints through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the U.S. Federal
111 Bureau of Investigation for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information regarding the
112 applicant and obtaining fingerprint identification information from federal records pursuant to criminal
113 investigations by state and local law-enforcement agencies. The application shall be on a form provided by
114 the Department of State Police, requiring only that information necessary to determine eligibility for the
115 permit. If the permittee is later found by the Department of State Police to be disqualified, the permit shall be
116 revoked and the person shall return the permit after being so notified by the Department of State Police. The
117 permit requirement and restriction provisions of subsection C of § 18.2-308.02 and § 18.2-308.09 shall apply,
118 *mutatis mutandis*, to the provisions of this subsection.

119 B. The applicant shall demonstrate competence with a handgun in person by one of the following:

120 1. Completing a hunter education or hunter safety course approved by the Virginia Department of Wildlife

121 Resources or a similar agency of another state;

122 2. Completing any ~~National Rifle Association or United States Concealed Carry Association~~ firearms

123 safety or training course *certified or approved by the Department of Criminal Justice Services*;

124 3. Completing any firearms safety or training course or class available to the general public offered by a

125 law-enforcement agency, institution of higher education, or private or public institution or organization or

126 firearms training school utilizing instructors *certified or approved by the National Rifle Association, the*

127 ~~United States Concealed Carry Association, or~~ the Department of Criminal Justice Services or a similar

128 agency of another state;

129 4. Completing any law-enforcement firearms safety or training course or class offered for security guards,

130 investigators, special deputies, or any division or subdivision of law enforcement or security enforcement;

131 5. Presenting evidence of equivalent experience with a firearm through participation in organized shooting

132 competition approved by the Department of State Police or current military service or proof of an honorable

133 discharge from any branch of the armed services;

134 6. Obtaining or previously having held a license to carry a firearm in the Commonwealth or a locality

135 thereof, unless such license has been revoked for cause;

136 7. Completing any in-person firearms training or safety course or class conducted by a state-certified,

137 ~~National Rifle Association-certified, or United States Concealed Carry Association-certified or Department~~

138 ~~of Criminal Justice Services approved~~ firearms instructor;

139 8. Completing any governmental police agency firearms training course and qualifying to carry a firearm

140 in the course of normal police duties; or

141 9. Completing any other firearms training that the Virginia Department of State Police deems adequate.

142 A photocopy of a certificate of completion of any such course or class; an affidavit from the instructor,

143 school, club, organization, or group that conducted or taught such course or class attesting to the completion

144 of the course or class by the applicant; or a copy of any document that shows completion of the course or

145 class or evidences participation in firearms competition shall satisfy the requirement for demonstration of

146 competence with a handgun.

147 C. The Department of State Police may charge a fee not to exceed \$100 to cover the cost of the

148 background check and issuance of the permit. Any fees collected shall be deposited in a special account to be

149 used to offset the costs of administering the nonresident concealed handgun permit program.

150 D. The permit to carry a concealed handgun shall contain only the following information: name, address,

151 date of birth, gender, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, and photograph of the permittee; the

152 signature of the Superintendent ~~of the Virginia Department~~ of State Police or his designee; the date of

153 issuance; and the expiration date.

154 E. The Superintendent of ~~the~~ State Police shall promulgate regulations, pursuant to the Administrative

155 Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), for the implementation of an application process for obtaining a nonresident

156 concealed handgun permit.

157 **§ 22.1-204.1. Firearm safety education program.**

158 Local school boards may provide firearm safety education programs for students in the elementary school

159 grades. To assist local school boards electing to provide firearm safety education programs, the Board of

160 Education shall establish curriculum guidelines for a standardized program of firearm safety education for the

161 elementary school grades to promote the protection and safety of children enrolled in the public schools. The

162 curriculum guidelines shall incorporate, ~~among other~~ *the* principles of firearm safety; *and* accident prevention

163 ~~and the rules upon which the Eddie Eagle Gunsafe Program offered by the National Rifle Association is~~

164 ~~based.~~ Local school boards electing to provide firearm safety education shall offer instruction pursuant to the

165 Board's curriculum guidelines and shall integrate firearm safety education into appropriate subject areas, if

166 feasible, to ensure that every elementary grade student completes the course of study in firearm safety

167 education.

168 **2. That § 46.2-749.6 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.**