

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 1101

An Act to amend and reenact § 18.2-287.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to carrying assault firearms in public areas prohibited; penalty.

[H 1524]

Approved April 22, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-287.4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-287.4. Carrying loaded firearms in public areas prohibited; penalty.

~~It shall be is~~ unlawful for any person to carry a loaded (a) semi-automatic center-fire rifle or pistol that expels single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material and is equipped at the time of the offense with a magazine that will hold more than 20 rounds of ammunition or designed by the manufacturer to accommodate a silencer or equipped with a folding stock or (b) shotgun with a magazine that will hold more than seven rounds of the longest ammunition for which it is chambered *an assault firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2* on or about his person on any public street, road, alley, sidewalk, public right-of-way, or in any public park or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public ~~in the Cities of Alexandria, Chesapeake, Fairfax, Falls Church, Newport News, Norfolk, Richmond, or Virginia Beach or in the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Henrico, Loudoun, or Prince William.~~

The provisions of this section shall not apply to law-enforcement officers; ~~licensed security guards in the performance of their official duties,~~ military personnel in the performance of their ~~lawful~~ official duties, ~~or any person having a valid concealed handgun permit~~ *any member of a cadet corps who is recognized by a public institution of higher education while such member is in the performance of sanctioned military training or such member is participating in an official ceremonial event for the Commonwealth,* or ~~to~~ any person actually engaged in lawful hunting or lawful recreational shooting activities at an established shooting range or shooting contest. Any person violating the provisions of this section ~~shall be~~ *is* guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

The exemptions set forth in §§ § 18.2-308 ~~and 18.2-308.016~~ shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the provisions of this section.

2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025 requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.