



## CONCEALED WEAPONS LAWS IN AMERICA FROM 1981 TO TODAY

Over the past three decades, state gun laws surrounding who can carry concealed weapons in public have changed dramatically. A determined gun lobby has succeeded in convincing state after state to ignore public safety and adopt weak “shall issue” laws that remove law enforcement discretion from the permitting process.

“Shall issue” laws force law enforcement to issue permits to practically anyone, including people who law enforcement may already know pose significant safety risks to the community (such as domestic abusers who have not yet been convicted of crimes). Several states have gone even further, and no longer require a permit to carry concealed; in these states, it is easier to legally carry a handgun than it is to legally drive a car. Relatively few states continue to have discretionary “may issue” systems.

These weak permitting laws have radically increased the number of people who are carrying hidden, loaded handguns in neighborhoods and communities across the country.

