

515 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

515 CMR 3.00: BASIC FIREARMS SAFETY COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND FIREARM INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION

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3.01: Purpose

(1) The purpose of 515 CMR 3.00 is to establish rules and regulations governing the issuance and form of basic firearms safety certificates, including minimum requirements for course curriculum and safety instructor certification required by M.G.L. c. 140, § 131P.

3.02: Definitions

Basic Firearms Safety (BFS) Certificate. Basic Firearms Safety Course Completion Certificate issued pursuant to 515 CMR 3.05(7).

Basic Firearms Safety (BFS) Course. A required training program for anyone who wishes to apply for a License to Carry (LTC) Firearms, Firearm Identification (FID) Card, or nonresident temporary license to carry firearms in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Basic Firearms Safety (BFS) Curriculum. The training topics included in Basic Firearm Safety courses, approved and certified by the Colonel, that include the minimum components required under M.G.L. c. 140, § 131P.

Basic Firearms Safety (BFS) Course Examination. A written examination, approved and certified by the Colonel, administered at the end of BFS courses, and which must be passed by anyone seeking to obtain an LTC, FID card, or nonresident temporary license to carry firearms in the Commonwealth, or to obtain a Massachusetts Basic Firearms Safety Certificate.

Colonel. The Superintendent of the Massachusetts Department of State Police or his or her designee.

The Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS). Agency established by M.G.L. c. 6, § 167A responsible for maintaining the Commonwealth's criminal justice information systems, providing services to the criminal justice community, and ensuring the public has appropriate access to certain records.

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Firearms Identification Card (FID). Allows the holder to purchase, transfer, possess and carry non-large capacity rifles and shotguns, and ammunition therefore pursuant to M.G.L. c. 140, § 129B.

License to Carry Firearms (LTC). Allows the holder to purchase, rent, lease, borrow, possess and carry firearms, including large capacity firearms and feeding devices, and ammunition therefore pursuant to M.G.L. c. 140, § 131.

Massachusetts Department of State Police (Department). Law enforcement agency with state-wide jurisdiction mandated to certify BFS instructors and approve BFS course curricula pursuant to M.G.L. c. 140, § 131P.

Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC). Agency within the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, that is responsible for the delivery of training to law enforcement officers in accordance with M.G.L. c. 6, §116.

Office of Law Enforcement within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (OLE). Agency established under M.G.L. c. 21A, §10a responsible for enforcement of laws protecting Massachusetts' environmental and natural resources and to ensure public safety in outdoor and marine environments.

Temporary License to carry Firearms. A nonresident license to carry firearms, feeding devices or ammunition therefor, within the Commonwealth, issued pursuant to M.G.L. c. 140, § 131F.

3.03: Basic Firearms Safety Course Requirements

(1) Basic Firearms Safety Course Curriculum. Curriculum for a BFS course shall include, at a minimum, the following topics as required by M.G.L. c. 140, § 131P(b)(ii):

- (a) the safe use, handling, and storage of firearms;
- (b) methods for securing and childproofing firearms;
- (c) the applicable laws relating to the possession, transportation, and storage of firearms;
- (d) knowledge of operation, potential dangers, and basic competency in the ownership and use of firearms;
- (e) injury and suicide prevention, and harm reduction education;
- (f) applicable laws relating to use of force;
- (g) disengagement tactics; and
- (h) live firearm training.

(2) Content. The Colonel may establish minimum teaching requirements for each of the topics listed in 3.03(1). The Department may, upon request, provide certified instructors with teaching materials regarding injury and suicide prevention and harm reduction, applicable laws relating to use of force, and disengagement tactics.

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(3) **Written Examination.** The Colonel shall approve and establish minimum requirements to pass a written examination that shall be used in all firearm safety courses or programs mandated under this section.

- (a) The written examination shall consist of a minimum of 25 multiple choice questions covering all topics outlined in 3.03(1) (a-g).
- (b) Participants taking a BFS course shall attain a passing score of 70 or higher in order to be issued a BFS certificate.

(4) Live Fire Components

- (a) BFS Instructors shall issue BFS certificates to students who demonstrate competency in the use of firearms through class participation, live firearms training, and satisfactory completion of the written examination as prescribed by the Colonel.
- (b) Student's may utilize a firearm with a caliber between .22 and .45. Students must demonstrate the ability to safely load, unload and fire the firearm used. (Basic Firearms Safety instructors are strongly cautioned to avoid exposing new shooters to larger capacity firearms until they have been taught shooting fundamentals).
- (c) Live fire shall satisfy the following parameters:
 - 1. A minimum of 20 rounds; and
 - 2. A minimum of 5 rounds from a distance of 3 yards; 5 rounds from a distance of 7 yards; 5 rounds from a distance of 10 yards; and
 - 3. A target size of 10.5 inches by 12 inches; and
 - 4. All 5 shots in any sequence must hit the target section to be counted; and
 - 5. Student's must display proficiency in safely loading no more than five (5) rounds into the firearm utilized, safely fire the rounds, safely load five (5) more rounds and safely fire those rounds. All loading shall be performed by the student.

3.04: Basic Firearms Safety Course Curriculum Approval Certification

- (1) Issuance of Basic Firearms Safety Course Curriculum Approval Certification. A BFS course curriculum approval application can be obtained by writing to the Department of State Police, Firearms Unit, 470 Worcester Road, Framingham, MA 01702. The application can be mailed or delivered to the same address. A letter approving the course or denying approval because the course does not meet the curriculum requirements will be transmitted to the applicant.
- (2) Approved Basic Firearms Safety Courses. The Department shall maintain a list of BFS courses that meet the requirements set forth in 515 CMR 3.03 and are therefore approved by the Colonel. The Department may amend the list as needed.

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3.05: Basic Firearms Safety Course Certificates

(1) Issuance. BFS course instructors may, in their discretion, issue a BFS certificate for any person who successfully completes the requirements of a BFS course. The instructor shall forward to DCJIS copies of all BFS certificates issued, which shall include a certification of each person's satisfactory completion of the BFS course and competency in the ownership and use of firearms, including live fire. Upon receipt, the DCJIS shall forward a copy of such certificate to the applicant.

(2) Transmittal and Form. Certificates shall be transmitted via electronic application established by MSP and DCJIS. BFS certificates shall be in a form prescribed by the Colonel and shall contain the following information:

- (a) Course title and the fact the course was approved in accordance with 515 CMR 3.00;
- (b) Name and date of birth of the student;
- (c) Date of course completion; and
- (d) Certified BFS course instructor's typed or printed name, signature, and BFS Course Instructor Certification number.

3.06: Basic Firearms Safety Course Instructors Certification

(1) Requirements. For certification as a BFS course instructor, a person shall be properly licensed with an LTC. A person may only offer instruction on those firearms for which they are licensed, and may only teach courses that they are certified to teach. Additionally, BFS course instructors shall provide documentation to verify status as to at least one of the following:

- (a) instructor certification by a nationally recognized organization that fosters safety in firearms;
- (b) a federal, state or municipal law enforcement firearms instructor;
- (c) a United States military firearms instructor;
- (d) an OLE basic hunter education instructor;
- (e) an MPTC certified instructor;
- (f) a firearms instructor of a firearms manufacturer or its academy, or a firearms instructor certified by such academy; or
- (g) any other person, in the discretion of the Colonel, competent to give instruction in a BFS course, including any person who operates a firearms safety course or program as described in M.G.L. c. 140, § 131P(b).

(2) Application. An application for certification as a BFS course instructor can be obtained by contacting the Department of State Police, Firearms Compliance Unit, 470 Worcester Road, Framingham, MA 01702. Upon filling out the application and submitting the application fee, as set forth in the application, and required documentation, the package can be submitted to the Department of State Police. The Colonel may require additional verifying information as

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deemed necessary before issuing certification. Notice of certification or non-approval will be mailed to the applicant.

(3) Fees. The Department may impose a fee of \$50 for initial issuance of BFS course instructor certification. The fee for certification renewal shall be \$10.

(4) BFS Course Instructor Certification. Certification as a firearms instructor shall be valid for a period of ten years, unless sooner revoked because of unsuitability, in the discretion of the Colonel. Each BFS course Instructor's Certificate shall be on a form prescribed by the Colonel and shall be designated a unique number.

3.07: Applicability

(1) Any person applying for the issuance of an LTC, FID or nonresident temporary license shall submit to the licensing authority a BFS certificate, provided, however, that a certificate issued under section 14 of chapter 131 evidencing satisfactory completion of a hunter education course shall serve as valid substitute for a BFS certificate for the issuance of an FID card.

(2) Any person properly licensed on or before August 1, 2024, at the time of their license or FID renewal, shall be exempt from the requirements of BFS course curricula as stated in M.G.L. c. 140, s. 131P(b)(ii), to include completion of live fire training.

(3) Any person possessing a firearms identification card or a license to carry firearms prior to the implementation of live firearms training shall be exempt from such requirement.

(4) A BFS certificate shall not be required for the following individuals in accordance with M.G.L. c 140, §131P(a)(i)-(iii), when such person is authorized by a competent authority to carry or possess the firearm so carried or possessed and while acting within the scope of their duties:

- (a) Any officer, agent or employee of the Commonwealth or any state of the United States;
- (b) Any member of the military or other service of any state or the United States; or
- (c) Any duly authorized law enforcement officer, agent, or employee of any municipality of the Commonwealth.

3.08: Severability

If any article, section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of 515 CMR 3.00 is for any reason determined to be unconstitutional, contrary to statute, in excess of authority, or otherwise inoperative, such determination shall not affect the validity of any other article, section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of 515 CMR 3.00.

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REGULATORY AUTHORITY

515 CMR 3.00: M.G.L. c. 140, §131P.