



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on November 30, 2015

## Kansas Universities Prepare for Students Carrying Concealed on Campus

Effective July 1, residents of Kansas may carry a concealed firearm without any type of permit or license, except for students at the state's universities. For them, the freedom to carry begins July 2, 2017.

The *Wichita Eagle* [conducted a survey](#) of students and some administration officials about the new freedom to carry and received mixed reactions. Some they called "hardliners" for taking the Second Amendment at face value and iterating the results from studies showing that more guns = less crime, including less chance of getting caught defenseless in a mass shooting.

Some they called "doomsayers" for holding the view that more guns = more crime, and an increased chance of campus violence among those carrying while drinking.

The remainder they referred to as "leaners": those who could go either way on the issue.

For Austin Gilpin, an 18-year-old Wichita State University (WSU) freshman, it's a no-brainer. He asserted,

I'm very supportive of the legislation [allowing students to carry concealed]. I think it's time the good guys can defend themselves on campus.

For Madelyn Johnson, who will graduate from Kansas State University (KSU) this spring, the new law is a disaster just waiting to happen: "I don't think it's fixing the problem of campus shootings," she declared. "It's just amplifying it. K-State is my home and I don't want to be any part of it."

One "leaner" is Kevin Dice, a student at K-State, who worries about "people who look at this as an opportunity to carry a gun just for the sake of carrying a gun."

The primary reason for the delay to July of 2017 was to allow school administration officials to craft rules acceptable under the new law. Incoming Kansas University President Michael Williams offered this faint hope: "[It] would be nice if they could ... change the law or extend exemptions." Instead, he is working with other administration officials to draft a policy concerning just where students can or cannot carry on campus. Proposed are rules prohibiting students from "displaying" their firearms, except when putting them on and taking them off their person, or "when necessary for self-defense." And metal-detector screening would be required in order to get into stadiums or arenas, where, according to the draft, guns would be prohibited.

The draft is being crafted to fall within the state's new law, while catering to the administration officials' determination to discourage those students wanting to carry. Said Kansas Board of Regents Chairman Shane Bangerter, only students over 21 will be allowed to carry, thus excluding the vast





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majority of students and, of those, only “a small percentage of the [total student] population is going to exercise that right. I’m estimating very few students will actually carry. Single digits is my guess.”

If current national trends are observed in Kansas, the “hardliners” will be vindicated, the “doomsayers” will be disappointed, and the “leaners” will likely be encouraged to recognize reality. According to the latest report from John Lott’s Crime Prevention Research Center, the more people carry, the lower gun violence and murder rates fall. From 2007 to 2014, the number of concealed handgun permits skyrocketed from 4.5 million to almost 13 million, and accordingly murder and violent crime rates dropped by 25 percent.

In individual states the results are even more dramatic, according to Lott:

We’ve seen a huge range in the research that’s been done, but this paper simply shows that the states with the biggest increases in the percentage of the population with permits have seen the biggest drop in murder rates and crime.

Students who are worried about those carrying on campus acting irresponsibly are also likely to see those concerns disappear. Said Larry Pratt, the executive director of Gun Owners of America:

The citizen concealed carrier ... never forgets that he’s a citizen on display, and he knows that he’s representative of a group of people.

The last thing a concealed carrier wants to do is get into a situation where he has to use the gun. Even if it were a legitimate use, they know just what kind of horrible mess their life will become once they use that gun.

Once Kansas students are allowed the freedom to carry under the new rules, observers will discover that concerns will decline along with gun violence, while carrying concealed will become increasingly commonplace.

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