



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 21, 2021

South Carolina Now an “Open Carry” State, But Not “Constitutional Carry”

When South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster last week signed into law an “open carry” bill that barely squeaked by the State Senate, [he said](#), “I will proudly support any legislation that protects or enhances a South Carolinian’s ability to exercise their 2nd Amendment rights.”

What he got was close to “constitutional carry,” i.e., no infringements on citizens’ right to keep and bear arms. Unfortunately, the state’s senators aren’t quite ready to allow the citizenry to exercise the full and robust nature of those rights.



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The title of the bill — Open Carry With Training Act — gives it away. To enjoy the freedom to carry a handgun openly, a citizen of South Carolina must first undergo “training” to ensure that he or she knows how to holster a handgun properly and knows some basic “de-escalation” techniques in the event of a hostile confrontation. The training also requires that he or she fires a minimum of 25 rounds to qualify for an open carry permit. For this reason, South Carolinians will not, starting on August 15 when the new law takes effect, have their full constitutional rights guaranteed under the Second Amendment.

The good news is that South Carolina has now joined the vast majority of states that allow some form of open carry, with just four states not permitting it for handguns, except under very limited circumstances: California (in most jurisdictions), Florida, Illinois, and New York. California (in most jurisdictions), Florida, Illinois, New York, and Tennessee prohibit open carry of long guns, except under limited circumstances.

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There’s more good news in the new South Carolina law: It makes the state a Second Amendment sanctuary state. Officers of the state “cannot be compelled by the federal government to take any legislative or executive action to implement or enforce a federal law, treaty, executive order, rule, or regulation related to an individual’s right to keep and bear arms.”

This directly challenges efforts by the current administration to restrict those rights through “executive action.” In that regard, South Carolina has lots of company. According to the U.S. Concealed Carry Association (USCCA), a total of 45 states now allow open carry in some form, with about half of them allowing it without first requiring a permit or training or other infringements. At present, more than 1,300 counties nationwide have declared themselves to be Second Amendment sanctuaries.

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