

Your how-to guide to getting a CCW in Kern County

Powers Firearms Training Corporation is a training company focusing upon Concealed Weapons Permit, defensive training with firearms and basic firearm familiarity courses.

Our website, www.kernccw.com is devoted to your quest to obtain a Concealed Weapons Permit. Information included in this article is aimed at getting the permit from the Kern County Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Youngblood has a history of being fair and open as regards your requests for a permit to carry a concealed weapon and Powers Firearms Training Corporation is here to walk you through the process.

Step #1 – Get the Application

The first step is to obtain the application packet. But I thought I had to take the class first? No, you do not have to take the class first. In fact, as will be discussed elsewhere on this page, taking the class first does not help you get the permit and the certificate from class is only valid for 90 days. If you take the class first, and are delayed past the 90 days in submitting your application, you may have to retake the class. Our advice is for you to apply first. The application costs you nothing and the Sheriff's Department will notify you when you are approved to take the class. However, the Sheriff's office has recently indicated to us that you may turn in your application for the permit along with the certificate from class. However, remember it costs you nothing to submit the application. If you take the class and are denied the permit, you will be out the money for the class.

You can drive to your local substation in the outlying areas of Kern County or to the Norris road facility and ask for an application. However, if you wish, just click on this link, and you will be able to print the application in the comfort of your own home or office:

<http://calgunsfoundation.org/downloads/documents/Kern.pdf>,

Step #2 – Fill out the application

Read pages 1-2 and do it carefully.

Beginning with Page 3 and write neatly or type the application. Be truthful, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth is what is important as you begin to fill out the application.

Section 2

Beginning with number 1 and proceeding through. Answer all questions with a brief and concise answer. Do not leave anything out, ever. No detail is too small. If you need additional space to explain a detailed problem, do a type written attachment, or at least in very easy to read handwriting. When you get to question number 8, be sure to pull a DMV printout if you have any questions. You want to include each and every one of the traffic violations, no matter how small. This would include only moving violations.

Section 3

List three weapons, if you have that many, that you wish to place on the permit. The specifics of the weapons may change and you can add or delete the weapon at the actual time the permit is issued or at a later time. Please be considerate of the staff as regards adding and deleting weapons. There is a certain amount of paperwork they must do when they add or delete a gun from your permit and the Sheriff charges a very nominal fee. Please do not be that person who changes the guns on his/her permit five times in a calendar year. Once or twice during the two year permit process is reasonable, perhaps more often if there is a change of circumstances, but try not to be excessive about this.

Sections 4 through 6

Please read this section carefully. While you will learn much of this in the class you will take, you are signing this form understanding that you will be held accountable for the contents of the form and the Sheriff is NOT making a joke when they have you sign the restrictions on the permit. This is serious!

Section 7

Proceed with Section 7 and once again, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Numbers 1 through 5 are self explanatory. Number 6 is very important. List any and ALL arrests even if there were no charges filed. This would include things such as things as a "detox only" arrest when you were 22 years old and were having a few too many beers during Mardi Gras in New Orleans, and yes this might just show up on your background check.

Now you must articulate the Good Cause Statement

In order for you to be issued a concealed weapons permit, you must present the Sheriff with "good cause" to issue you a permit. California law, Penal Code Section 12050 states that a permit to carry a concealed weapon ("CCW") may be issued to an applicant by the sheriff of the county or police chief or head of a municipal police department of the city in which the applicant lives. Or, in cases of employment or business in a different county, the sheriff of the different county may issue a temporary 90 day permit that is valid only in that county. An applicant must have "good cause", be of "good moral character", and undergo specific training

One definition of what constitutes a "good cause" was written by California Attorney General Evelle J. Younger, in August 23, 1977:

OPINION NO. CR. 77/30 I.L. 'the issuing authority must determine whether the threat to the applicant (or other causal situation) is as real as the applicant asserts (e.g., is there a clear and present danger to the applicant, his spouse, his family or his employees)? Finally, if the danger is manifest, the authority should determine whether that danger cannot be significantly alleviated by alternative means of security and whether in fact can be lawfully mitigated by the applicant's obtaining a concealed weapon license.'

Ok, so what does this mean to me?

Well, it means it is very unlikely the Sheriff will issue you a permit based upon your 2nd amendment rights. Get over it. He will only issue it based upon his belief that you have “good cause”. We live in California and we have to deal with what is the law, not what we wish was the law. While there are some recent case law decisions which assist us in this matter and another case was recently filed that will hopefully clarify this matter, we are dealing with what is law and procedure on this day and in this time. Fortunately Sheriff Youngblood, and his predecessor’s, have a generous interpretation of what constitutes “good cause”. So let’s start by giving Sheriff Youngblood a break here, and let’s give him a good, “good cause” statement so that he can issue you a concealed weapons permit. I can’t write this for you, only you can articulate your good cause. So, do yourself a favor and put forward your best possible good cause statement, even if it appears that the Sheriff might accept something less.

Some basic ground rules about writing your good cause statement:

- Don’t Lie – ever – anywhere on the application
- Do NOT copy someone else’s good cause statement. This is YOUR statement and it needs to come from you, from your life, your experience, your circumstance and in your words.
- Do not ask for your 2nd amendment rights – as discussed above, the Sheriff can only issue you the permit if you articulate a “good cause”. Nothing in the law allows the Sheriff to issue you a permit based upon your constitutional rights. Remember that the Heller case was decided upon based upon keeping a weapon in your home and you are asking for a concealed carry permit.
- Do not say that you want the permit because the local cops don’t come to your call in a timely manner. This may in fact be true, but we don’t need to make this point to a Sheriff who is severely strapped for public funds and has many fewer deputies to put on the street than he would like. Feel free to say something about response times being extended if you live, work or travel in a remote area of the county. But if you live in a metropolitan area, you are advised to avoid this topic.
- Do not overplay that you have permits in other states, such as Utah and Florida. These out of state permits are valuable to you and we encourage those who travel outside of California to take a good look at the Utah permit, but the topic is not germane to your “good cause”. Many people feel this only hurts your good cause statement and may give the impression that you are a “junior ninja/Rambo” type. If you travel frequently out of state to check on your out of state property or do business in other states, it doesn’t hurt to mention you have an out of state permit but you are advised to not overplay it if you have five other permits in other states as it may convey the wrong impression and you don’t want to give the impression that you are a CCW collector instead of a sincere individual who needs the permit as you are at risk. The application demands you list the permits. Do so as requested. But we suggest this not be part of your “good cause” as explained above.
- Don’t Lie – ever – I already said that but it is worth saying again – DON’T LIE - EVER!
- Have a friend who will be honest with you, read and ask you questions about the good cause statement. Have them help you correct your spelling and grammar.

Feel free to email us a copy and we will ask questions and make suggestions, however we cannot write this for you. Only you can articulate this we cannot and will not write this for you!.

Ok, so what kinds of things should I include in writing my good cause statement?

Let us start with the Sheriff's written policy:

“Good cause to obtain the CCW license is viewed in part, but is not limited to, self defense, defending the life of a third party, and preventing a crime in which human life is in serious jeopardy. The applicant does not need to fear his or her life is being threatened, but rather the potential for a life-threatening situation exists. The following are examples of situations that could illustrate Good Cause:

- Business owners or employees who handle large sums of money or respond to alarms at their place of business
- Persons who are in reasonable fear for their safety due to a set of facts that place them in danger.
- Spouses of family members of law enforcement officers
- Avid hunters or persons who camp or frequent in the backcountry”

So now you need to do is to sit down at the old computer or with a pencil and pad and begin to jot down some notes. Think about the circumstances in your life that would cause you to be at risk of being attacked and sustaining great bodily injury or death. These need to be unavoidable things, not avoidable circumstances.

What do you mean avoidable circumstances?

Well, for instance, if you think it is too dangerous for you to go for walks in your neighborhood and you want a permit to go for walks, the answer to that is to not go for walks in your neighborhood.

But what if you do not possess a driver's license, have a heart condition, the doctor has directed you to walk for your health and you live in a high crime neighborhood? Well, let us take another look at the Attorney General's letter for a second.

“...the authority should determine whether that danger cannot be significantly alleviated by alternative means of security and whether in fact can be lawfully mitigated by the applicant's obtaining a concealed weapon license.”

So in the above scenario, where you must exercise, cannot drive from the neighborhood, must walk to the bus stop and live in a high crime neighborhood, the Sheriff could possibly issue you a permit as the “danger cannot be significantly alleviated by alternative means..”. What we need to do is articulate how the danger cannot be alleviated.

We believe that the applicant needs to think about these unavoidable things and so we have some questions for you to ask yourself:

Do you have a physical disability or condition which would make it difficult for you to run away from an attack, would place in you grave danger if you were struck in an attack, or otherwise limits your mobility and ability to avoid trouble?

Do you have a physical condition which would make you more to susceptible to death or great bodily injury if physically assaulted?

Do you live in a remote area of the county?

Do you have to travel for medical treatment?

Do you work outside of the county or in remote areas of the county?

Do you hire and fire employees? Are you concerned an ex-employee will target you outside of the work environment? Do you have a restraining order against an ex-employee or co-worker?

Do you carry tools in the course and scope of your employment? Are you concerned an opportunistic thief will target you to steal from you or attack you in an effort to steal your expensive tools?

Do you carry expensive equipment in the course and scope of your employment? Are you concerned an opportunistic thief will target you to steal from you or attack you in an effort to steal your expensive equipment?

Do you run a small "side" business where you carry equipment or tools and have a concern an opportunistic thief will target you to steal from you or attack you in an effort to steal your expensive equipment or cash?

Are you the owner or responsible employee of a business, responsible for making deposits, withdraws, responding to alarm calls, opening and closing the business, hiring and firing employees? Are you concerned you may be the target of a thief or robber while going about the activities of your business?

As a business owner, are you a contractor doing business in high crime areas? Do you travel to remote locations to conduct your business? Do you work odd hours, before daylight and after darkness? Are you concerned someone will attack you in an effort to steal your tools, cash or supplies?

Have you been threatened?

Do you have a restraining order designed to keep someone away from you?

Are you an Attorney or do you have some sort of business or employment where the clients or customers can be very unhappy with your performance, so unhappy that they might want to cause you harm? For instance, do you make financial decisions which can determine whether or not someone stays in their home or loses their property?

Are you an “inspector”, real estate personage or appraiser who visits abandoned or foreclosed homes and often confronts “squatters” or others in homes?

Do you make decisions which might deny someone government benefits to which they may feel entitled?

Do you own property, collect rents, inspect property or monitor vacant properties? Perhaps you are in charge of keeping a property up while it is in foreclosure?

Do you own foreclosed properties and have had trouble with the former owners?

Are you in real estate where you show properties and are at risk of meeting a violent person while you are alone and showing properties?

Are you a mental health professional who works with, well, crazy people? Or perhaps you have counseled someone who is in the midst of a divorce or separation and are afraid someone will blame you for their divorce/ separation or personal problems or perhaps that a mentally unstable person will seek you out and harm you as the result of your clinical practice.

Are you a medical, dental or veterinary professional who might fear addicts who want the drugs you carry or the prescription pad you carry? Do you fear an opportunistic addict will attack you in a fit of drug induced rage in order to obtain the drugs they believe they need?

Do you carry valuables or large sums of money? Not that you carry the money as an excuse to shoot someone who is robbing you, but that you fear in the midst of a robbery some felon may use the moment to eliminate all witnesses? Do you fear preemptive death or great bodily injury from an armed thief even though you would normally comply and surrender all in exchange for escaping harm?

Do you have a small business where you deal with hobby items, guns, collectables and transport those valuable items around the State in the pursuit of your small business? But it is just a hobby some say. Yes, perhaps, but if it is something you do for a profit, it becomes a small business. So if you have filed a tax return on your small hobby business or have a license to operate as a business perhaps it is a business? But remember, never lie.

Do you travel in rough neighborhoods? If so why? If it is to care for a relative or friend or because of your employment, you need to articulate why you fear death or great bodily injury if you are accosted.

What about camping, hunting and fishing? Well again, if camping is your recreation, it is optional but if you engage in these activities, the Sheriff will look at these for good cause. But you need to know, it is legal to have a weapon at your campsites under some circumstances without a permit. So, think about why you might need to have a loaded weapon with you while traveling to and from these excursions. Have you ever encountered any nefarious type persons in these wilderness areas? Had a near brush with bad guys in these areas? Walked into a marijuana grow? Been threatened? Articulate why you are at risk and what you are afraid might happen.

Check out this link:

<http://www.calguns.net/calgunforum/showthread.php?t=186457&highlight=carrying+a+gun+in+public>

The above questions are only some of the questions you can ask yourself. Make a full assessment of your situation, articulate it the best you can. Now our suggestion is to break down the areas where you feel at risk into separate paragraphs and include all of the reasons you believe you are at risk. There might be 1,000 reasons and you would need that many paragraphs. Have someone read it for you. Make sure the spelling and the grammar are correct. You want it to look really clean and professional. Remember you will have to substantiate any and all statements you made in your written statement. If you put down an employment related reason, and you will be carrying while working, you may need a letter from your employer.

Please feel free to email us with your good cause statement. We can't write it for you, you have to do that, but we can ask you further questions which can help you write it out.

Our email address is listed on our website: WWW.kerncew.com

Step #3 – put together all of your documentation, turn in your application and wait for the approval letter.

Many people believe they should do the class before turning in the application. You need to know that **the certificate for your class is only good for 90 days from the date of issue**. If you take longer than 90 days to turn in your application, you will need to take the class again. Also, taking the class has nothing to do with your “good cause”. Taking the class will not help you get the permit or make the Sheriff happy with you in any way. The Sheriff's Department has told us they want you to apply first. It costs you nothing to apply, so apply and then take the class.

The wait to hear from the sheriff will typically take about five weeks or as long as three or four times that amount of time. If it takes longer, do not call and pester the Sergeant or the ladies who run the office. The wait to review your good cause will depend upon how many people have applications in and how many staff they have available to assist in reviewing the application.

Step #4 – Take your Concealed Carry Weapons class

Woohoo! You have received your letter. After you do the little dance around the mailbox, you have to make the decision about who to take the class from. We have offered the above procedural information because we believe you should be able to put your best foot forward in getting your permit. While we would love to have you take the class from us, we want you to do what works best for you. We offer classes in the Bakersfield area and at 5 Dogs range along with classes in rural areas and the Eastern Sierra. We have a weekday and weekend schedule.

Please follow this link to our other website and our schedule of classes.

<http://www.kernccw.com/>

What you should know about the initial class.

- State law allows the class to be a maximum of 16 hours or a 24 hour PC 832 course at a local college may be substituted in some counties; however, The Kern County Sheriff allows the class to be a “one day” class. This generally means the class lasts about 8 hours. Sometimes the classes are broken up into two or three evenings depending upon the venue.
- You will need to shoot a firearm for the class. The Sheriff allows you to have three firearms on your permit. You need to shoot only one firearm for the class. While we recommend you shoot one of the guns that will be on your permit, there is no current mandate that requires you to shoot one of the guns that will be on your permit. The gun you shoot does not need to be registered to you as long as you are legally in possession of it. The capacity of the magazines you use in class is not an issue. We suggest you bring at least two magazines for a semi-automatic firearm. You will need a nominal 100 rounds for class and this can be any ammo of your choosing, it need not be “green” ammo.
- There is no legal requirement for the firearm you use to be on the State list. However, certain agencies currently require you to carry only guns that are on the “list”.
- Powers Firearms Training Corp. takes the view that the training class is to train you to shoot. While you have to have a minimum score to “qualify”, we see it as our responsibility to train you and assist you in your shooting. If you don’t qualify on your first try, you will be given additional opportunities to qualify. This is not something to be nervous about unless you have some reason to be nervous ie: you have not shot in a number of years; you are an absolute novice; you have a recently acquired disability. So if there is a reason to be nervous, tell us what that is and we will work with you to work around the problem. Just remember, you have to shoot so you might as well have some fun and enjoy the experience.
- These courses cover subjects which include the legal, moral and ethical issues regarding the use of a firearm for self defense, range qualification, and firearms safety.

Step #5 – Turn in your certificate from class, get the fingerprints done and pay your fees.

This is the final step in acquiring your permit. As long as nothing turns up on your California Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation record check which would prohibit you from obtaining the permit, the sheriff will complete the process and notify you within a few months to come into the office and pick up your permit!

Step#6 – Renewal

There is a step 6? But I have my permit? Yes, you have a permit that is valid for 2 years. You may renew your permit 30 days prior to the expiration date and you have to take another class in order to renew the permit. The renewal class is an update on the law, the moral and legal aspects of firearms use in self defense, a qualification course with the firearm and a general firearms safety brief. The State of California has made this renewal class a law. This is not optional. The Sheriff cannot renew your permit until you have completed a minimum of four hours of update training. This class cannot, as a function of law, be less than four hours and the Sheriff of Kern County will only accept a class that was taken 60 days prior to the expiration of your permit.

We believe each citizen must take responsibility for their own safety in a way that citizen feels best. This is an individual responsibility and an individual decision. Not every person should try to obtain a permit. If you feel the obligation to do so however, we are here to help you in any way we can. We offer individual and group instruction, please contact us with your inquiries.

Craig and Becky Powers

KernCCW.com