

Assembly Bill No. 424

CHAPTER 779

An act to amend Sections 626.9, 26370, and 26405 of the Penal Code, relating to firearms.

[Approved by Governor October 14, 2017. Filed with
Secretary of State October 14, 2017.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 424, McCarty. Possession of a firearm in a school zone.

Existing law makes it a crime to possess a firearm in a place that the person knows, or reasonably should know, is a school zone, unless it is with the written permission of the school district superintendent, his or her designee, or equivalent school authority.

This bill would delete the authority of a school district superintendent, his or her designee, or equivalent school authority to provide written permission for a person to possess a firearm within a school zone. By expanding the scope of a crime, the bill would create a state-mandated local program. The bill would exempt from that crime the activities of a program involving shooting sports or activities that are sanctioned by a school, school district, college, university, or other governing body of the institution, as specified, and the activities of a certified hunter education program, as specified. The bill would make other conforming changes to related provisions.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 626.9 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

626.9. (a) This section shall be known, and may be cited, as the Gun-Free School Zone Act of 1995.

(b) Any person who possesses a firearm in a place that the person knows, or reasonably should know, is a school zone, as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (e), shall be punished as specified in subdivision (f).

(c) Subdivision (b) does not apply to the possession of a firearm under any of the following circumstances:

(1) Within a place of residence or place of business or on private property, if the place of residence, place of business, or private property is not part of the school grounds and the possession of the firearm is otherwise lawful.

(2) When the firearm is an unloaded pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed on the person and is in a locked container or within the locked trunk of a motor vehicle.

This section does not prohibit or limit the otherwise lawful transportation of any other firearm, other than a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed on the person, in accordance with state law.

(3) When the person possessing the firearm reasonably believes that he or she is in grave danger because of circumstances forming the basis of a current restraining order issued by a court against another person or persons who has or have been found to pose a threat to his or her life or safety. This subdivision does not apply when the circumstances involve a mutual restraining order issued pursuant to Division 10 (commencing with Section 6200) of the Family Code absent a factual finding of a specific threat to the person's life or safety. Upon a trial for violating subdivision (b), the trier of a fact shall determine whether the defendant was acting out of a reasonable belief that he or she was in grave danger.

(4) When the person is exempt from the prohibition against carrying a concealed firearm pursuant to Section 25615, 25625, 25630, or 25645.

(5) When the person holds a valid license to carry the firearm pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 26150) of Division 5 of Title 4 of Part 6, who is carrying that firearm in an area that is not in, or on the grounds of, a public or private school providing instruction in kindergarten or grades 1 to 12, inclusive, but within a distance of 1,000 feet from the grounds of the public or private school.

(d) Except as provided in subdivision (b), it shall be unlawful for any person, with reckless disregard for the safety of another, to discharge, or attempt to discharge, a firearm in a school zone, as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (e).

The prohibition contained in this subdivision does not apply to the discharge of a firearm to the extent that the conditions of paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) are satisfied.

(e) As used in this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Concealed firearm" has the same meaning as that term is given in Sections 25400 and 25610.

(2) "Firearm" has the same meaning as that term is given in subdivisions (a) to (d), inclusive, of Section 16520.

(3) "Locked container" has the same meaning as that term is given in Section 16850.

(4) "School zone" means an area in, or on the grounds of, a public or private school providing instruction in kindergarten or grades 1 to 12, inclusive, or within a distance of 1,000 feet from the grounds of the public or private school.

(f) (1) A person who violates subdivision (b) by possessing a firearm in, or on the grounds of, a public or private school providing instruction in

kindergarten or grades 1 to 12, inclusive, shall be punished by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for two, three, or five years.

(2) A person who violates subdivision (b) by possessing a firearm within a distance of 1,000 feet from the grounds of a public or private school providing instruction in kindergarten or grades 1 to 12, inclusive, shall be punished as follows:

(A) By imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for two, three, or five years, if any of the following circumstances apply:

(i) If the person previously has been convicted of any felony, or of any crime made punishable by any provision listed in Section 16580.

(ii) If the person is within a class of persons prohibited from possessing or acquiring a firearm pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 29800) or Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 29900) of Division 9 of Title 4 of Part 6 of this code or Section 8100 or 8103 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(iii) If the firearm is any pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person and the offense is punished as a felony pursuant to Section 25400.

(B) By imprisonment in a county jail for not more than one year or by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for two, three, or five years, in all cases other than those specified in subparagraph (A).

(3) A person who violates subdivision (d) shall be punished by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for three, five, or seven years.

(g) (1) A person convicted under this section for a misdemeanor violation of subdivision (b) who has been convicted previously of a misdemeanor offense enumerated in Section 23515 shall be punished by imprisonment in a county jail for not less than three months, or if probation is granted or if the execution or imposition of sentence is suspended, it shall be a condition thereof that he or she be imprisoned in a county jail for not less than three months.

(2) A person convicted under this section of a felony violation of subdivision (b) or (d) who has been convicted previously of a misdemeanor offense enumerated in Section 23515, if probation is granted or if the execution of sentence is suspended, it shall be a condition thereof that he or she be imprisoned in a county jail for not less than three months.

(3) A person convicted under this section for a felony violation of subdivision (b) or (d) who has been convicted previously of any felony, or of any crime made punishable by any provision listed in Section 16580, if probation is granted or if the execution or imposition of sentence is suspended, it shall be a condition thereof that he or she be imprisoned in a county jail for not less than three months.

(4) The court shall apply the three-month minimum sentence specified in this subdivision, except in unusual cases where the interests of justice would best be served by granting probation or suspending the execution or imposition of sentence without the minimum imprisonment required in this subdivision or by granting probation or suspending the execution or

imposition of sentence with conditions other than those set forth in this subdivision, in which case the court shall specify on the record and shall enter on the minutes the circumstances indicating that the interests of justice would best be served by this disposition.

(h) Notwithstanding Section 25605, any person who brings or possesses a loaded firearm upon the grounds of a campus of, or buildings owned or operated for student housing, teaching, research, or administration by, a public or private university or college, that are contiguous or are clearly marked university property, unless it is with the written permission of the university or college president, his or her designee, or equivalent university or college authority, shall be punished by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for two, three, or four years. Notwithstanding subdivision (k), a university or college shall post a prominent notice at primary entrances on noncontiguous property stating that firearms are prohibited on that property pursuant to this subdivision.

(i) Notwithstanding Section 25605, any person who brings or possesses a firearm upon the grounds of a campus of, or buildings owned or operated for student housing, teaching, research, or administration by, a public or private university or college, that are contiguous or are clearly marked university property, unless it is with the written permission of the university or college president, his or her designee, or equivalent university or college authority, shall be punished by imprisonment pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 1170 for one, two, or three years. Notwithstanding subdivision (k), a university or college shall post a prominent notice at primary entrances on noncontiguous property stating that firearms are prohibited on that property pursuant to this subdivision.

(j) For purposes of this section, a firearm shall be deemed to be loaded when there is an unexpended cartridge or shell, consisting of a case that holds a charge of powder and a bullet or shot, in, or attached in any manner to, the firearm, including, but not limited to, in the firing chamber, magazine, or clip thereof attached to the firearm. A muzzle-loader firearm shall be deemed to be loaded when it is capped or primed and has a powder charge and ball or shot in the barrel or cylinder.

(k) This section does not require that notice be posted regarding the proscribed conduct.

(l) This section does not apply to a duly appointed peace officer as defined in Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Title 3 of Part 2, a full-time paid peace officer of another state or the federal government who is carrying out official duties while in California, any person summoned by any of these officers to assist in making arrests or preserving the peace while he or she is actually engaged in assisting the officer, a member of the military forces of this state or of the United States who is engaged in the performance of his or her duties, or an armored vehicle guard, engaged in the performance of his or her duties, as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 7582.1 of the Business and Professions Code.

(m) This section does not apply to a security guard authorized to carry a loaded firearm pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 26000) of Chapter 3 of Division 5 of Title 4 of Part 6.

(n) This section does not apply to an existing shooting range at a public or private school or university or college campus.

(o) This section does not apply to an honorably retired peace officer authorized to carry a concealed or loaded firearm pursuant to any of the following:

(1) Article 2 (commencing with Section 25450) of Chapter 2 of Division 5 of Title 4 of Part 6.

(2) Section 25650.

(3) Sections 25900 to 25910, inclusive.

(4) Section 26020.

(5) Paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) of Section 26300.

(p) This section does not apply to a peace officer appointed pursuant to Section 830.6 who is authorized to carry a firearm by the appointing agency.

(q) (1) This section does not apply to the activities of a program involving shooting sports or activities, including, but not limited to, trap shooting, skeet shooting, sporting clays, and pistol shooting, that are sanctioned by a school, school district, college, university, or other governing body of the institution, that occur on the grounds of a public or private school or university or college campus.

(2) This section does not apply to the activities of a state-certified hunter education program pursuant to Section 3051 of the Fish and Game Code if all firearms are unloaded and participants do not possess live ammunition in a school building.

SEC. 2. Section 26370 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

26370. Section 26350 does not apply to, or affect, the open carrying of an unloaded handgun within a school zone, as defined in Section 626.9, if that carrying is not prohibited by Section 626.9.

SEC. 3. Section 26405 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

26405. Section 26400 does not apply to, or affect, the carrying of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun in any of the following circumstances:

(a) By a person when carried within a place of business, a place of residence, or on private real property, if that person, by virtue of subdivision (a) of Section 25605, may carry a firearm within that place of business, place of residence, or on that private real property owned or lawfully occupied by that person.

(b) By a person when carried within a place of business, a place of residence, or on private real property, if done with the permission of a person who, by virtue of subdivision (a) of Section 25605, may carry a firearm within that place of business, place of residence, or on that private real property owned or lawfully occupied by that person.

(c) When the firearm is either in a locked container or encased and it is being transported directly between places where a person is not prohibited from possessing that firearm and the course of travel shall include only

those deviations between authorized locations as are reasonably necessary under the circumstances.

(d) If the person possessing the firearm reasonably believes that he or she is in grave danger because of circumstances forming the basis of a current restraining order issued by a court against another person or persons who has or have been found to pose a threat to his or her life or safety. This subdivision may not apply when the circumstances involve a mutual restraining order issued pursuant to Division 10 (commencing with Section 6200) of the Family Code absent a factual finding of a specific threat to the person's life or safety. Upon a trial for violating Section 26400, the trier of fact shall determine whether the defendant was acting out of a reasonable belief that he or she was in grave danger.

(e) By a peace officer or an honorably retired peace officer if that officer may carry a concealed firearm pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 25450) of Chapter 2, or a loaded firearm pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 25900) of Chapter 3.

(f) By a person to the extent that person may openly carry a loaded firearm that is not a handgun pursuant to Article 4 (commencing with Section 26000) of Chapter 3.

(g) As merchandise by a person who is engaged in the business of manufacturing, importing, wholesaling, repairing, or dealing in firearms and who is licensed to engage in that business, or the authorized representative or authorized agent of that person, while engaged in the lawful course of the business.

(h) By a duly authorized military or civil organization, or the members thereof, while parading or while rehearsing or practicing parading, when at the meeting place of the organization.

(i) By a member of a club or organization organized for the purpose of practicing shooting at targets upon established target ranges, whether public or private, while the members are using firearms that are not handguns upon the target ranges or incident to the use of a firearm that is not a handgun at that target range.

(j) By a licensed hunter while engaged in hunting or while transporting that firearm when going to or returning from that hunting expedition.

(k) Incident to transportation of a handgun by a person operating a licensed common carrier, or by an authorized agent or employee thereof, when transported in conformance with applicable federal law.

(l) By a member of an organization chartered by the Congress of the United States or a nonprofit mutual or public benefit corporation organized and recognized as a nonprofit tax-exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service while on official parade duty or ceremonial occasions of that organization or while rehearsing or practicing for official parade duty or ceremonial occasions.

(m) Within a gun show conducted pursuant to Article 1 (commencing with Section 27200) and Article 2 (commencing with Section 27300) of Chapter 3 of Division 6.

(n) Within a school zone, as defined in Section 626.9, if that carrying is not prohibited by Section 626.9.

(o) When in accordance with the provisions of Section 171b.

(p) By a person while engaged in the act of making or attempting to make a lawful arrest.

(q) By a person engaged in firearms-related activities, while on the premises of a fixed place of business that is licensed to conduct and conducts, as a regular course of its business, activities related to the sale, making, repair, transfer, pawn, or the use of firearms, or related to firearms training.

(r) By an authorized participant in, or an authorized employee or agent of a supplier of firearms for, a motion picture, television, or video production or entertainment event, when the participant lawfully uses that firearm as part of that production or event, as part of rehearsing or practicing for participation in that production or event, or while the participant or authorized employee or agent is at that production or event, or rehearsal or practice for that production or event.

(s) Incident to obtaining an identification number or mark assigned for that firearm from the Department of Justice pursuant to Section 23910.

(t) At an established public target range while the person is using that firearm upon that target range.

(u) By a person when that person is summoned by a peace officer to assist in making arrests or preserving the peace, while the person is actually engaged in assisting that officer.

(v) Incident to any of the following:

(1) Complying with Section 27560 or 27565, as it pertains to that firearm.

(2) Section 28000, as it pertains to that firearm.

(3) Section 27850 or 31725, as it pertains to that firearm.

(4) Complying with Section 27870 or 27875, as it pertains to that firearm.

(5) Complying with Section 27915, 27920, or 27925, as it pertains to that firearm.

(w) Incident to, and in the course and scope of, training of, or by an individual to become a sworn peace officer as part of a course of study approved by the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

(x) Incident to, and in the course and scope of, training of, or by an individual to become licensed pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 26150) as part of a course of study necessary or authorized by the person authorized to issue the license pursuant to that chapter.

(y) Incident to and at the request of a sheriff, chief, or other head of a municipal police department.

(z) If all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) The open carrying occurs at an auction or similar event of a nonprofit public benefit or mutual benefit corporation at which firearms are auctioned or otherwise sold to fund the activities of that corporation or the local chapters of that corporation.

(2) The unloaded firearm that is not a handgun is to be auctioned or otherwise sold for that nonprofit public benefit or mutual benefit corporation.

(3) The unloaded firearm that is not a handgun is to be delivered by a person licensed pursuant to, and operating in accordance with, Sections 26700 to 26915, inclusive.

(aa) Pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 171c.

(ab) Pursuant to Section 171d.

(ac) Pursuant to subparagraph (F) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 171.7.

(ad) On publicly owned land, if the possession and use of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun is specifically permitted by the managing agency of the land and the person carrying that firearm is in lawful possession of that firearm.

(ae) By any of the following:

(1) The carrying of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun that is regulated pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 18710) of Division 5 of Title 2 by a person who holds a permit issued pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 18900) of that chapter, if the carrying of that firearm is conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit.

(2) The carrying of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun that is regulated pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 30500) of Division 10 by a person who holds a permit issued pursuant to Section 31005, if the carrying of that firearm is conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit.

(3) The carrying of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun that is regulated pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 32610) of Division 10 by a person who holds a permit issued pursuant to Section 32650, if the carrying of that firearm is conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit.

(4) The carrying of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun that is regulated pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 33300) of Chapter 8 of Division 10 by a person who holds a permit issued pursuant to Section 33300, if the carrying of that firearm is conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit.

(af) By a licensed hunter while actually engaged in training a dog for the purpose of using the dog in hunting that is not prohibited by law, or while transporting the firearm while going to or returning from that training.

(ag) Pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (d) of Section 171.5.

(ah) By a person who is engaged in the business of manufacturing ammunition and who is licensed to engage in that business, or the authorized representative or authorized agent of that person, while the firearm is being used in the lawful course and scope of the licensee's activities as a person licensed pursuant to Chapter 44 (commencing with Section 921) of Title 18 of the United States Code and regulations issued pursuant thereto.

(ai) On the navigable waters of this state that are held in public trust, if the possession and use of an unloaded firearm that is not a handgun is not prohibited by the managing agency thereof and the person carrying the firearm is in lawful possession of the firearm.

SEC. 4. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.