
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

Senator Steve Padilla

Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 458 **Hearing Date:** 6/23/2026
Author: Stefani
Version: 5/23/2025 Amended
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Brian Duke

SUBJECT: Public contracts: firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories

DIGEST: This bill requires the Department of General Services (DGS), in consultation with the Department of Justice (DOJ), to develop model guidelines for state entities, as defined, on the procurement of firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories, as specified.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) States that DGS shall adopt, publish, and apply uniform standards of rating bidders, on the basis of questionnaires and required statements, with respect to contracts upon which each bidder is qualified to bid.
- 2) Provides that DGS may remove a bidder who has demonstrated a lack of reliability in complying with and completing previously awarded contracts with the state, based upon his or her performance on contracts previously awarded by the state.
- 3) Requires the Director of DGS to establish statewide acquisition standards, the purpose of which shall be to ensure the necessary quality of goods acquired, as specified.
- 4) Defines “firearm” as a device, designed to be used as a weapon, from which is expelled through a barrel, a projectile by the force of explosion or other form of combustion.
- 5) Defines “ammunition” as one or more loaded cartridges consisting of a primed case, propellant, and with one or more projectiles, but does not include blanks.

This bill:

- 1) Requires, no later than July 1, 2027, DGS, in consultation with the DOJ, to develop model guidelines for offices, officers, departments, divisions, boards, bureaus, and commissions of the state on the procurement of firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories.
- 2) Provides that the purpose of these guidelines is to help state entities choose vendors and contractors for the procurement of firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories that are in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal firearm laws.

Background

Author Statement. According to the author’s office, “the state of California can use the power of its purse to incentivize compliance with the laws and implementation of safe business practices for firearms vendors vying for state procurement contracts. Firearms vendors can promote public safety and help law enforcement prevent gun trafficking and gun violence. AB 458 takes the important step of ensuring that model guidelines are developed for state departments and agencies on the procurement of firearms and ammunition, which would reduce the likelihood of trafficking, gun crime, and violence.”

Public Procurement of Firearms. This bill requires DGS, in consultation with the DOJ, to develop model guidelines for state agencies and departments regarding the procurement of firearms, ammunition, and firearms accessories. According to the author’s office, one of the motivations of this bill is a recent report by the Brady Campaign titled [*Government Agencies Should Screen Firearms Vendors*](#) which examined public agency firearms procurement practices. The report found that California public agencies spent approximately \$18 million in taxpayer funds purchasing firearms from a dealer with a history of compliance issues identified by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The report also identified another dealer that had been cited for multiple federal recordkeeping violations and for unlawfully possessing prohibited firearms.

The report further argues that firearms dealers with histories of noncompliance with federal firearms laws are more likely to have firearms from their inventories later recovered during criminal investigations. In support of this claim, the report cites ATF inspection data showing that, among the approximately one percent of firearms dealers linked to nearly 60 percent of crime guns recovered nationwide, 75 percent were found to have violated federal law, including significant recordkeeping deficiencies and unlawful sales practices involving prohibited

purchasers of potential firearms traffickers. By comparison, ATF inspections of a random sample of dealers found noncompliance rates closer to 37 percent.

This bill provides that the purpose of the model procurement guidelines is to help state entities choose vendors and contractors for the procurement of firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories that are in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal firearms laws.

Firearm Dealer Licensing. Federal law requires firearms dealers to obtain a federal firearms license (FFL) from the ATF. The ATF issues different types of licenses for dealers, manufacturers, importers, collectors, and pawnbrokers. As of January 2026, California had approximately 1,300+ licensed firearms dealers and pawnbrokers and more than 12,000 FFL holders overall. However, an FFL alone is not sufficient to sell firearms in California. State law requires firearms dealers to obtain additional state and local licenses and permits, secure a Certificate of Eligibility from the DOJ, and be listed on the DOJ's centralized roster of firearms dealers. Only dealers meeting these requirements may lawfully sell, lease, or transfer firearms in California, subject to limited exemptions.

California firearms dealers are also subject to extensive state and federal regulations governing recordkeeping, inventory security, firearm transfers, storage requirements, and other operational practices. Research has consistently found a relationship between dealer compliance and the likelihood that firearms from a dealer's inventory will later be recovered in connection with criminal activity.

In 2021, the Legislature enacted AB 1191 (McCarty, Chapter 683, Statutes of 2021), requiring the DOJ to analyze and report on crime-gun trends and sources. DOJ's [most recent report](#), released in July 2025, found that more than one-third of crime guns recovered in the previous year had a prior transaction record in the State's Automated Firearms System, while more than one-quarter could be traced to a specific California dealer. The report further found that just 81 California dealers were associated with approximately half of all traceable crime guns recovered in 2024, highlighting the concentration of crime-gun traces among a relatively small number of dealers.

DGS Division and DOJ Bureau of Firearms. According to DGS's [internet website](#), the Procurement Division sets state procurement policies and provides purchasing services. It delegates purchasing authority; certifies small and/or disabled veteran businesses to do business with the state; sponsors the Small Business Council; participates in the Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise Council; and provides innovative purchasing methods that save taxpayer's dollars, integrating quality solutions to meet customer's needs.

The DOJ's Bureau of Firearms serves the people of California through education, regulation, and enforcement actions regarding manufacture, sales, ownership, safety training, and transfer of firearms. Bureau of Firearms staff are leaders in providing firearms expertise and information to law enforcement, legislators, and the general public in a comprehensive program to promote legitimate and responsible firearms possession and use by California residents.

Prior/Related Legislation

AB 1810 (Berman, 2026) requires the DOJ to annually inspect the 10 firearm dealer locations with the highest percentage of total sales that were recovered by law enforcement, as specified; to grant DOJ de-licensure authority for dealers who fail to comply with inspection-related requirements; and to modify DOJ's fee authority with regard to dealers. (Pending in the Senate Public Safety Committee)

AB 1486 (Jones-Sawyer, 2026) would have clarified that an assault weapon is not a "standard issue service weapon," for the purpose of local acquisitions of military equipment, and clarify that any vote by a local governing body to approve funding, acquisition, or use of military equipment must occur at least 30 days after the law enforcement agency requesting the equipment has held a community engagement meeting pursuant to existing law. (Held on the Senate Inactive File)

AB 481 (Chiu, Chapter 406, Statutes of 2021) requires a law enforcement agency to obtain approval of the applicable governing body, by adoption of a military equipment use policy, prior to taking certain actions relating to the funding, acquisition, or use of military equipment.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT:

Brady Campaign (Co-source)
Brady California (Co-source)
Brady United Against Gun Violence
Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
California Police Chiefs Association
Everytown for Gun Safety
GIFFORDS
Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
NeverAgainCA
Silicon Valley Alliance for Gun Safety
Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

OPPOSITION:

Gun Owners of California
National Rifle Association in California

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the Brady Campaign, “multiple state agencies and departments – such as the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation – purchase firearms, ammunition, and related accessories with California taxpayer funds. As a matter of common sense, the State, especially agencies tasked with protecting the public, should ensure that its procedures dangerous items in a manner that safeguards public safety.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: According to the National Rifle Association of California, “AB 458 imposes additional red tape and bureaucratic hurdles on those bidding or contracting with a state agency for the procurement of firearms, ammunition, or firearm accessories. Despite the extensive administrative procedures and requirements already existing in state law, this new ‘vigorous vetting process’ (as touted by the author) will only serve to unduly burden those seeking to contract with the state.”

DUAL REFERRAL: Senate Governmental Organization Committee and Senate Public Safety Committee