

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 458
Author: Stefani (D)
Amended: 7/2/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORG. COMMITTEE: 11-0, 6/23/26
AYES: Rubio, Archuleta, Ashby, Blakespear, Cervantes, Hurtado, Padilla,
Richardson, Smallwood-Cuevas, Wahab, Weber Pierson
NO VOTE RECORDED: Valladares, Alvarado-Gil, Dahle, Ochoa Bogh

SENATE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/30/26
AYES: Arreguín, Caballero, Cortese, Pérez, Wiener
NO VOTE RECORDED: Seyarto

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-0, 8/13/26
AYES: Cervantes, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab
NO VOTE RECORDED: Seyarto, Dahle

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-3, 6/3/25 - See last page for vote

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

SOURCE: Brady California
Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

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” to mean 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 a “firearm accessory” to mean an attachment or device designed or adapted to be inserted into, affixed onto, or used in conjunction with a firearm that is designed, intended, or functions to increase a firearm’s rate of fire or to increase the speed at which a person may reload a firearm or replace the magazine, or any other attachment or device, as specified, that may render a firearm an assault weapon when inserted into, affixed onto, or used in conjunction with a firearm. The term firearm accessory also includes any other device, tool, kit, part, or parts set that is clearly designed and intended for use in manufacturing firearms.
- 6) Defines “ammunition” to mean 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% of crime guns recovered nationwide, 75% 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%.

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.

Purchases of Firearms by Law Enforcement and Effect of this Bill. According to the Senate Public Safety Committee analysis of this bill:

California has some of the strictest firearm purchasing policies in the nation. Subject to narrow exceptions, existing law generally requires all firearm sales or transfers to be completed through a licensed dealer. When both parties to a sale or transfer are not licensed, licensed dealers act as intermediaries, who must conduct the required background checks and deliver the firearm to the transferee. Only certain gun sales and transfers are exempt from participation by a licensed dealer, including infrequent transfers between immediate family members, certain government-sponsored transfers, transfers to historical societies, museums or institutional collections, and transfers to licensed firearms manufacturers and importers, among a few others. Existing law includes several grounds for the forfeiture of a license to sell firearms if the various procedures prescribed by law are not followed

Moreover, individuals who purchase a firearm are also subject to a 10-day waiting period that restricts a licensed dealer from delivering or transferring a firearm to a person within 10 days of the application to purchase the firearm, the submission of any correction to the application, or the submission of any fee required, after notice from the DOJ that the required fee has not been transmitted. Even though the required background checks can usually be completed within a few days, licensed dealers must wait the full 10 days before transferring possession of the firearm to the purchaser. In addition to the waiting period, prospective purchasers must undergo a rigorous background check process. California's Proposition 63, effective July 1, 2017, required the DOJ to serve as the point of contact for firearm purchaser background checks. Thus, dealers must initiate the background check required by federal law by contacting the DOJ, and must furnish the DOJ with various information about the purchaser. Collectively, this information is known as the Dealer's Record of Sale, or DROS, and includes 40 distinct pieces of information about the purchaser pursuant to Penal Code §28160.

California law enforcement agencies are exempt from all of the above requirements. Existing law, for each of the distinct requirements specified in

the previous two paragraphs, includes a specific exemption for law enforcement agencies. That is, law enforcement agencies do not necessarily have to purchase firearms from a licensed dealer, do not have to wait the 10 days that civilian purchasers must wait, and need not undergo a background check and provide information through the DROS system. Moreover, while Californians generally are restricted in what handguns they may purchase by a system known as the DOJ roster of “not unsafe” handguns, this statutory framework includes a tiered exemption scheme for specified law enforcement entities, set forth in Penal Code section 32000, establishing three groups of entities that are subject to varying prerequisites for purchase, eligibility to purchase for personal use, and restrictions on resale of un-rostered handguns.

Law enforcement agencies purchase a high volume of firearms – cities across the United States spend in excess of \$5 billion a year on guns alone, with ammunition and other firearm-related supplies costing a few billion more. Indeed, the number one purchase of firearms in the United States is the taxpayer. In support of this bill, the author cites a Brady Campaign report on public agency firearm procurement practices, which found that 67 California law enforcement agencies spent a total of \$18 million in California taxpayer funds between 2015 and 2021 at a dealer with a relatively poor compliance history with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). This report went on to cite data from the ATF highlighting that when ATF inspected the 1% of gun dealers that supplied almost 60% of crime guns nationwide, it found that 75% of these dealers had violated federal law, including significant recordkeeping violations and participation in sales to potential gun traffickers and prohibited persons. By comparison, when ATF inspected a random sample of dealers, the number that were found to be noncompliant dropped to 37%.

This bill takes a first step toward ensuring that the public procurement process for firearms adheres to, or can at least be informed by, a standard set of guidelines that applies to all state entities. Specifically, this bill requires DGS, no later than July 1, 2027 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, in consultation with DGS. The stated purpose of the model guidelines, pursuant to this bill, 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. The

author and Committee may wish to consider amending the bill to include a definition of “firearm accessories,” as no such definition currently exists in California law.

Related/Prior 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 Appropriations Committee)

AB 1191 (McCarty, Chapter 683, Statutes of 2021) required the DOJ to analyze information reported by law enforcement agencies regarding the history of a recovered firearm that is illegally possessed, has been used in a crime, or is suspected of having been used in a crime.

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

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, unknown one-time costs, potentially ranging from absorbable to the low hundreds of thousands of dollars (Service Revolving Fund), for DGS to develop the guidance and update the State Administrative Manual (SAM) and State Contracting Manual (SCM). The upfront workload to create this guidance is expected to be the primary cost driver, with ongoing costs likely decreasing as the department transitions to updating vendor selection best practices as necessary.

DOJ does not anticipate a significant fiscal impact to consult with DGS to develop the firearms procurement guidelines.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/13/26)

Brady California (co-source)

Brady Campaign (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 Courage to Prevent Gun Violence

Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

NeverAgainCA

Silicon Valley Alliance for Gun Safety
Students Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/13/26)

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.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-3, 6/3/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Connolly, Davies, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: DeMaio, Dixon, Sanchez

NO VOTE RECORDED: Castillo, Chen, Ellis, Flora, Hadwick, Hoover, Macedo, McKinnor, Ta, Tangipa

Prepared by: Brian Duke / G.O. / (916) 651-1530
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