

## Assembly Bill No. 624

### CHAPTER 659

An act to amend Section 626.9 of the Penal Code, relating to schools.

[Approved by Governor October 8, 1995. Filed  
with Secretary of State October 10, 1995.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 624, Allen. Schools: gun-free school zones.

(1) Under existing law, any person who possesses a firearm in a place that he or she knows, or reasonably should know, is a school zone is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 2, 3, or 5 years, unless specified permission is granted to possess a firearm in that place.

This bill would provide instead that a violation of this provision is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for 2, 3, or 5 years if the person possesses a firearm in, or on the grounds of, a public or private school providing instruction in kindergarten or grades 1 to 12, inclusive, or if the person possesses a firearm within 1,000 feet from the grounds of the public or private school and any of several specified circumstances apply. The bill would provide that all other cases subject to these provisions shall be punished by imprisonment in a county jail for not more than one year or by imprisonment in the state prison for 2, 3, or 5 years. The bill also would provide, except in the unusual case, for a 3-month minimum sentence for every person convicted under these provisions who has been convicted previously of specified misdemeanor offenses, any felony, or certain firearms offenses. By changing a criminal penalty so as to increase the costs of operating local jail facilities, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) Existing law provides exemptions from the firearms prohibition in (1) above, including the lawful possession of a firearm within a place of residence or business or on private property.

This bill would include in these exemptions persons who are licensed or otherwise authorized to engage in the business of manufacturing, importing, wholesaling, repairing, or dealing in firearms, duly authorized military or civil organizations, specified guards or messengers, and persons operating a licensed common carrier.

(3) 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 (1) of subdivision (e), unless it is with the written permission of the school district superintendent, his or her designee, or equivalent school authority, shall be punished as specified in subdivision (f).

(c) Subdivision (b) shall 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) 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 shall 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 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 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) The person is exempt from the prohibition against carrying a concealed firearm pursuant to subdivision (b), (d), (e), or (h) of Section 12027.

(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 (1) of subdivision (e).



The prohibition of this subdivision shall 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) “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, and within a distance of 1,000 feet from the grounds of the public or private school.

(2) “Firearm” has the same meaning as that term is given in Section 12001.

(3) “Locked container” has the same meaning as that term is given in subdivision (c) of Section 12026.1.

(4) “Concealed firearm” has the same meaning as that term is given in Sections 12025 and 12026.1.

(f) (1) Any 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 in the state prison for two, three, or five years.

(2) Any 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 in the state prison 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 Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 12000) of Title 2 of Part 4.

(ii) If the person is within a class of persons prohibited from possessing or acquiring a firearm pursuant to Section 12021 or 12021.1 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 12025.

(B) By imprisonment in a county jail for not more than one year or by imprisonment in the state prison for two, three, or five years, in all cases other than those specified in subparagraph (A).

(3) Any person who violates subdivision (d) shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for three, five, or seven years.

(g) (1) Every person convicted under this section for a misdemeanor violation of subdivision (b) who has been convicted previously of a misdemeanor offense enumerated in Section 12001.6 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) Every 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 12001.6, 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) Every 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 Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 12000) of Title 2 of Part 4, 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) Any person who brings or possesses a loaded firearm upon the grounds of any university or college campus, including the University of California, the California State University, the California Community Colleges, or any private university or college, 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 in the state prison for two, three, or four years.

(i) Any person who brings or possesses a firearm upon the grounds of any university or college campus, including the University of California, the California State University, the California Community Colleges, or any private university or college, 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 in the state prison for one, two, or three years.

(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 which 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 shall not require that notice be posted regarding the proscribed conduct.

(l) This section shall 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, a person holding a valid license to carry the firearm pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 12050) of Chapter 1 of Title 2 of Part 4, or an armored vehicle guard, engaged in the performance of his or her duties, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 7521 of the Business and Professions Code.

(m) This section shall not apply to a security guard authorized to carry a loaded firearm pursuant to Section 12031.

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

(o) This section shall not apply to an honorably retired peace officer authorized to carry a concealed or loaded firearm pursuant to subdivision (a) or (i) of Section 12027 or paragraph (1) or (8) of subdivision (b) of Section 12031.

SEC. 2. 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.

Notwithstanding Section 17580 of the Government Code, unless otherwise specified, the provisions of this act shall become operative on the same date that the act takes effect pursuant to the California Constitution.

