

Senate Bill 25-003

Frequently Asked Questions



What is Senate Bill 25-003?

Senate Bill 25-003 (SB003), signed on April 10, 2025, prohibits the purchase or transfer of specified semiautomatic firearms (SSF) unless the person completes the appropriate firearms safety course. Under this law, those who have been verified as having taken a hunter education course will be assigned the Basic Course; those without hunter education will be assigned the Extended Course.

What is a specified semiautomatic firearm (SSF)?

An SSF is a semiautomatic rifle or shotgun with a detachable magazine, or a gas-operated handgun with a detachable magazine.

SSF does not include:

- Most semiautomatic hunting shotguns
- Rimfire .22-caliber or lower firearms, unless the firearm has a separate upper and lower receiver
- A firearm that is manually operated by a bolt, pump, lever or slide action
- A semiautomatic firearm with a permanently affixed magazine that is limited to 15 rounds of ammunition or fewer
- A single- or double-action semiautomatic handgun that uses recoil to cycle the action of the handgun
- A firearm that has been made permanently inoperable
- An antique firearm or curio or relic
- Certain models of firearms, as they exist and are configured on August 1, 2026 as described in CRS 18-12-116(1)(d)(II)(e)

How will SB003 affect CPW?

Per statute, CPW will be implementing the program and is responsible to do the following:

1. **Develop an application that an individual can submit to the sheriff's office of the county they live in.** Based on the application, the sheriff's office will either issue that individual a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card or deny the request.
2. **Establish the material that will be covered in both the Basic and Extended firearms safety courses,** including — but not limited to — safe handling of semiautomatic firearms and ammunition magazines, child safety and the safe storage of firearms, firearms deaths associated with mental illness, extreme risk protection orders, and victim awareness and empathy.
3. **Establish a course fee to cover CPW's administrative costs to run these trainings.** This fee is separate from any assessed by the sheriff's office or a private course instructor.
4. **Develop and operate a system of records with information on individuals' eligibility to purchase an SSF.** This information will include whether they were issued a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card (which allows them to enroll in a safety course) and if they have completed the appropriate course. The system will also allow sheriffs, course instructors and firearms dealers to access this information.
5. **Write and submit an annual report.** On or before Dec. 31, 2025, and on or before December 31 of each year thereafter, CPW will submit a report to the Judiciary committees of both the Colorado House and Senate on the expenses incurred by CPW to implement the bill, along with any additional resources CPW needs to effectively implement SB003.

Does this law prohibit the use of SSFs?

No. The law requires the successful completion of a firearms safety course in order to purchase or transfer an SSF after August 1, 2026.

Does this law affect users who already own an SSF?

No. This law only affects those who wish to purchase and transfer SSFs.

Do I need to take a course to purchase ammunition for an SSF?

No.

When does the law go into effect?

SB003 goes into effect August 1, 2026.

Can a Firearms Safety Course be completed online?

No. The course must be completed in person with an instructor on site.

Will CPW provide and teach the Basic and Extended required courses?

No. CPW will not teach or provide the courses; these will be done by private individuals or companies, with course costs being set by each instructor or company. CPW will provide course content for the instructor or company so that all verified instructors around the state provide the same training.

Does the course have a test?

Yes. A participant must score at least a 90% on the final test in order to successfully complete the course.

Do I need to complete a course if I've already taken a hunter education course?

If you have already taken CPW-certified hunter education, you only need to take the Basic Course within five years before you purchase your SSF. The Basic Course is four hours in length. Hunter education courses taken outside of Colorado must be certified in the CPW system to be counted. The process of verifying hunters' hunter education credentials has not changed under SB003.

Which course do I need to take?

If you have taken a CPW-certified hunter education course (in or outside Colorado) at any time, you only need to take the Basic Course within five years before you purchase an SSF.

If you have never taken a CPW-certified hunter education course, you must take the Extended Course within five years before you purchase an SSF.

If you took the Extended Course more than five years ago, you only need to take the Basic Course within five years before you purchase an SSF.

Does a concealed-carry course take the place of a firearms safety course?

No. All background checks and courses taken for a CCW are *not* reciprocal for the Firearms Safety Program.

How long is the course?

The Extended Course is 12 hours over at least two days. The Basic Course is four hours.

How long am I certified after I take a Firearms Safety Course?

You must complete the Basic or Extended Firearms Safety Course within five years before purchasing an SSF.

How do I sign up for a course?

On your county sheriff's office's website, you can find a list of Verified Firearms Safety instructors to contact.

Before you sign up for a course, you must apply for a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card. See "How do I apply for a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card?" below for a description of the application process.

How do I apply for a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card?

You must submit an online application. In addition to the online application submitted, you must physically present at the Sheriff's Office a government issued photographic identification of the applicant and the results of a completed name-based background check of national and Colorado public criminal history and judicial databases completed by a third party vendor with an attestation from the vendor that the background check was performed by the vendor. If the

application is approved, the county Sheriff will enter your eligibility card information to your application ID, into the Firearms Safety System database.

The online application will not be available until July. All applications need to be filled out online, assistance can be obtained at any CPW Office or your local Sheriff's Office. Internet access will be required to access the application link.

Does the application and course cost anything?

In total, you will pay three separate fees from the time of submitting an application to completing the applicable course.

There are two application fees. When you apply for a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card, your sheriff's offices will assess a fee to cover their own administrative costs. A second fee will cover CPW's administrative costs; this amount for this second fee will be proposed to the Parks and Wildlife Commission in March 2026 and approved the following May. You must pay the CPW fee whether your application for a card is approved or denied.

These application fees are separate from the cost of the course itself, which the instructor or company running the course will set. You must pay this third fee at the time you sign up for the course.

What material is covered in the course?

- Safe handling of SSFs and ammunition magazines
- Safe storage of firearms and child safety
- Firearm deaths associated with mental illness
- Extreme risk protection orders
- Victim awareness and empathy

What is the overall process to purchase an SSF?

- You will complete an application to secure a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card. You must submit a name-based background check from a third party vendor and a government-issued photo ID with the application. The application will be reviewed by the county sheriff.

- If you're approved, the sheriff's office will issue you a Firearms Safety Course Eligibility Card. Whether or not you're approved for a card, the sheriff's office will collect a fee to cover CPW's administrative costs.
- To sign up for the appropriate class, you will contact a Verified Firearms Safety Instructor listed on the sheriff's office website.
 - The instructor will have access to CPW's database to determine whether you are eligible for the Basic Firearms Safety Course or if they must take the Extended Firearms Safety Course.
 - You will pay the course fee, set by the instructor or organization running the course.
 - You must attend the course in person with the instructor on site.
 - You must complete the appropriate course with a passing grade of 90%.
 - The instructor will add your score in the CPW firearms safety database within three days.
- You will begin the SSF purchase or transfer process with a Federal Firearms Licensed (FFL) dealer.
 - The FFL will conduct a Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Instacheck and access the CPW firearms safety database to determine if you have completed the applicable firearms safety course.
 - The FFL will complete the purchase or transfer process according to applicable state and federal law (with three-day waiting periods, etc.).
- You will receive your SSF.

What if I fail my background check or Instacheck?

You can fill out and submit an Online Appeal Form through the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) if you are denied the ability to purchase a firearm. The appeal process is handled entirely by CBI, and is outside of what is covered in SB003. More information can be found [here](#).