

# Wisconsin Coalition for Gun Safety: 48-hour waiting period could save lives and reduce gun violence

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MADISON- Today, in honor of National Gun Violence Awareness Day, the Wisconsin Coalition for Gun Safety introduced legislation to reinstate the 48-hour waiting period for firearm purchases. This waiting period or “cooling off” period was repealed by 2015 Wisconsin Act 22 which eliminated the nearly 40-year requirement that a federally licensed firearm dealer wait 48-hours to transfer a handgun. As the legislative history of the original waiting period makes clear, the 48-hour waiting period has an important purpose. As stated by then Governor Lucey, the waiting period was needed “to prevent crimes committed in a moment of passion or fit of rage that so often result in senseless tragedies among families and friends.”

We know a 48 hour waiting period makes a difference in de-escalating domestic conflict or delaying suicide for individuals in a situational crisis. [According to the CDC](#), suicide rates are up 30% since 1999, with a consistent trend of primarily rural, white men comprising [70% of all cases of suicide](#). Further, [the CDC reports](#), that the rate of firearm suicide in the most rural counties is over 2 times higher than the most urban counties.

By reinstating the waiting period, we can prevent impulsive violence and save countless lives. Waiting periods have been shown to [reduce suicide rates by 7-11%](#) and reduce [homicide rates by 17%](#), according to Harvard Business School. Members of the Wisconsin Coalition for Gun Safety issued the following statements:

“Over the last eight years, Republican lawmakers have not only refused to act to reduce gun violence, but they have actually made it easier for those who wish to do harm to themselves or others to get firearms,” said Rep. Chris Taylor (D-Madison), the lead author of this bill. “Doing nothing to curb the devastation and death resulting from gun violence is not an option. This bill will save lives.”

“In 2017, firearms were the weapons used in 70% of the domestic violence homicide incidents,” said Patti Seger, Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin. “Additionally, abused women are more than five times more likely to be killed if their abuser owns a firearm and domestic violence assaults involving a gun are 12 times more likely to end in death than assaults with other weapons or physical harm. If our state leaders are serious about preventing domestic violence related deaths in Wisconsin, they will take steps to ensure that abusers are not able to quickly and easily acquire deadly weapons when victims take steps to leave them, the period when they are at highest risk of homicide.”

“My daughter, [Caroline Nosal](#), was murdered by a male co-worker who she reported to store management because of sexual harassment. The co-worker blamed Caroline for losing his job so the day he was fired he went to a sporting gun store and bought a handgun. The following day he murdered my daughter. Caroline’s story can be no more fitting reason why that the law was instituted and the fact it was repealed for convenience is unconscionable. I have talked to people throughout the state and have yet to find anyone who feels that troubled individuals should have easy access to firearms. It is time to reinstate the 48 hour waiting period,” said Jim Nosal, advocate and gun violence victim.

“Because acts of gun violence frequently stem from emotions and thoughts that are impulsive and short-lived, a waiting period law can create a lifesaving shield,” said Jeri Bonavia, Executive Director of WAVE Educational Fund. “Studies confirm that waiting periods are associated with reduced rates of firearm suicides and homicides, so it is really pretty simple: Waiting just 48 hours can be the difference between life and death.”

The founding legislative members of the Wisconsin Coalition for Gun Safety include, Representatives Melissa Sargent, Lisa Subeck, and Shelia Stubbs and Senator



LaTonya Johnson.