

GIFFORDS Law Center: Wisconsin earns a D+ for laws that protect Wisconsinites from gun violence

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Washington DC — GIFFORDS Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence released the latest edition of its [Annual Gun Law Scorecard](#), which grades and ranks each state on its gun laws, and found that 26 states received a F. This comprehensive, 50-state analysis clearly shows fewer people per capita die from gun violence in states with strong gun laws. 2022 marked the 10 year anniversary of the tragedy at Sandy Hook—and since the shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, nearly every single state has passed a gun safety law, with more than 525 enacted nationwide.

In the latest edition of the [Annual Gun Law Scorecard](#), **GIFFORDS Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence** graded and ranked each state on the strength of its gun laws, showing that states **with stronger gun laws have lower gun death rates and save more lives**. Wisconsin received a D+ due to the state not passing any significant gun safety legislation.

- **[Scorecard](#)**: Learn more about Wisconsin's ranking by visiting this year's *Scorecard*.
- **[Fact Sheet](#)**: Read more about how gun violence impacts Wisconsin.

“Last year, we saw some of the worst mass shootings in American history in Uvalde and Buffalo. In 2021, a record-breaking 48,830 people were killed by guns. This violence takes a devastating toll on our communities. Many states listened to their citizens and passed lifesaving gun safety laws, while too many others listened to the gun lobby and passed laws that will undoubtedly endanger their communities,” said **Peter Ambler, Executive Director of GIFFORDS**.

Of the 10 states with the lowest gun death rates, seven have some of the strongest gun laws in the country, receiving a B+ or better on this year's *Gun Law Scorecard*.

(Beginning with the lowest gun death rate)

- Massachusetts (A-)
- Hawaii (A-)
- New Jersey (A)
- New York (A-)
- Rhode Island (B+)
- Connecticut (A-)
- New Hampshire (F)
- California (A)
- Minnesota (C+)
- Nebraska (C)

Of the 10 states with the highest gun death rates, nine received F grades on this year's *Scorecard*. Despite powerful data demonstrating the correlation between gun law strength and gun death rates, several states have ignored public cries for action and done little or nothing to strengthen their gun laws in recent years.

(Beginning with the highest gun death rate)

- Mississippi (F)
- Louisiana (F)
- New Mexico (C+)
- Alabama (F)
- Wyoming (F)
- Alaska (F)
- Montana (F)
- Arkansas (F)
- Missouri (F)
- Tennessee (F)

Gun Owner Licensing Is Popular and Essential to Saving Lives

The data is clear—states that require prospective gun purchasers or owners to pass

a background check and obtain a license save lives. When Connecticut passed a licensing law, its firearm homicide rate decreased by 28% and its firearm suicide rate decreased by 33%. In contrast, when Missouri repealed its licensing law, its firearm homicide rate increased by an astonishing 47%, and its firearm suicide rate increased by 24%.

Gun owner licensing can also prevent mass shootings: states that require people to apply for a license in-person or get their fingerprints taken have a remarkable 56% fewer fatal mass shootings. Furthermore, states that require licenses have far fewer guns diverted to criminal use.

Despite the enormous benefits of gun owner licensing to gun violence prevention, only 12 states require some or all gun owners to get a license to purchase or possess firearms. Oregon is the most recent state to pass this policy, by voter initiative in 2022.

As demonstrated in Oregon, support for this policy is strong. A 2019 survey found that 77% of Americans support purchasing license laws. This support includes more than two-thirds of gun owners.