

Why AzCDL?



Wonder why there is an AzCDL?

It all started with a handful of activists who didn't like the status quo when it came to the right to bear arms in Arizona, and decided to do something about it.

The image of freedom in Arizona doesn't match reality. The state constitution says that our right to bear arms "shall not be impaired." Yet, in 1990 a state appellate court ruled that it was not an "impairment" to restrict "concealed" carry.

In 1994, the Arizona legislature, instead of simply affirming the right to carry openly or discreetly, declared that if you expected your clothing to cover your firearm you were required to undergo 16 hours of training, followed by a written and shooting test, and then submit a request for the privilege to carry "concealed"—but for only 4 years. After that, you had to take another 4 hour class, pass another test, and submit another set of fingerprints. The process had to be repeated every 4 years.

And, you could only take these courses from instructors approved by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). Even though it was not part of the law, DPS also decreed, via administrative "rulings," that training had an expiration date and could only be conducted in Arizona.

The same year that the permit system was created (1994), the appellate courts ruled in two decisions that "concealed" is in the eye of the observer. If a firearm in your vehicle could not be seen from outside the vehicle, it was concealed. If your openly carried firearm was not visible to an observer, it could be interpreted as concealed.

The only sure way to carry openly or in your vehicle, without breaking the law, was to obtain a CCW permit.

Then, in 1997 the legislature, at the urging of law enforcement, declared that you no longer had the right of "innocent until proven guilty" in a self-defense situation. The burden of proof was now on you to prove your innocence—after you admitted to the "crime."

Firearms preemption was Balkanized. Cities like Tucson were able to ban firearms, worn by law-abiding citizens, from their parks.

The disintegration of Arizona's right to bear arms seemingly went unnoticed. Longtime residents remembered the "good old days" when it seemed everyone wore a gun, and didn't seem to be aware that things were different now. People moving to Arizona from states with restrictive gun laws were happy that they would be "allowed" to carry a firearm. They confused "permission" with "freedom."

There were those of us who decided it was time to restore what had been lost. What began as online discussions became face-to-face strategy meetings, which led to formally organizing in 2005. That same year, we experienced success at the legislature—the first improvement in the CCW training requirements since they were created in 1994.

As our success grew, so did our membership. It took a few years for the legislature to realize we weren't a passing fad and that we are "the" gun lobby in Arizona fighting every year for YOUR right to bear arms.

Highlights of our accomplishments are on the reverse side of this brochure. You can find a complete list of what we've accomplished at our website.

CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?

Join us in our fight for YOUR freedom!
Apply online at www.AzCDL.org
or call (623) 242-9086 for an application.



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AzCDL Legislative Goals

AzCDL believes that the emphasis of gun laws should be on criminal misuse and that law-abiding citizens should be able to own and carry firearms unaffected by unnecessary laws or regulations. Towards that end, we are pursuing the following legislative improvements:

- ✓ "Freedom to Carry" – Restore and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to carry a firearm openly or discreetly anywhere they have a right to be.
- ✓ Fewer restrictions on the lawful carrying of firearms on Public property (buildings, parks, etc.).
- ✓ "Restaurant Carry" – The ability of law-abiding citizens to dine out while armed.
- ✓ Strengthening and preserving the right of presumed innocence in self-defense situations.
- ✓ Strong State Preemption – Firearms laws should be consistent throughout the State.
- ✓ Liability responsibility for property owners who ban firearms.
- ✓ Continued improvements to CCW laws.

We never rest! Every legislative session our lobbyists are at the State Capitol fighting for your rights! Between sessions we are working on the next year's legislative proposals, protecting the legislative wins we've accomplished in court, and getting gun-friendly candidates elected to office.

