



Custer County Sheriff's Office **Verified CHP Firearms Instructor Program**

www.CusterColoradoSheriff.com

(719) 783-2270

702 Rosita Ave. ** PO Box 1489
Westcliffe, CO 81252

New application fee \$100
Renewal fee \$50

Please read through this information packet completely before submitting an application.

General Information

Effective July 1, 2025, all firearms training certificates submitted for a Colorado Concealed Handgun Permit must be completed through a firearms instructor verified by a Colorado County Sheriff's Office. To be verified by the Custer County Sheriff's Office, instructors must meet the following criteria:

- Principal place of firearms training must be located in Custer County
 - If your training takes place in another county, please contact that county for details about becoming a verified instructor.
- Hold a valid Colorado issued CHP – a temporary emergency permit does not qualify
- Be certified as a firearms instructor through one of the following entities:
 - A federal, state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency
 - A college or university
 - A nationally recognized organization that customarily offers firearms training
 - A firearms training school

Once approved, the Verified CHP Firearms Instructor status is valid for 10 years.

Please note, during this 10-year verification period, it is the responsibility of the instructor to inform the CHP Unit of firearms instructor certification renewals. Failure to do so will result in suspension of Verified Instructor status and the removal from the public list of Verified Instructors. There is no grace period for expired instructor certifications.

Additionally, if the instructor's principal place of business changes location, please notify the CHP Unit within 30 days of your new business address.

All CHP classes taught must meet the parameters found on the 2nd page.

By submitting a complete Custer County Sheriff's Office Verified Firearms Instructor application, you agree to release and hold harmless the issuing County Sheriff's Office, its agencies, elected officials, officers, agents, and employees from any and all liability or claims resulting from issuance of this permit and verification. The issuing County Sheriff's Office, its agencies, elected officials, officers, agents, and employees are not liable for any damages that may result from issuance or denial of this permit and verification.

General Requirements

- Classes must be taught in person by the Verified CHP Firearms Instructor.
- No portion of the class may be held online.
- Classes must meet the requirements of the federal “Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990”.

Concealed Handgun Training Class (For New CHPs)

Description: A class for people intending to apply for a **new** CHP.

Required Duration: Minimum of 8 hours. *This does not need to be consecutive.*

Required Elements

- Knowledge and safe handling of firearms and ammunition.
- Safe storage of firearms and child safety.
- Safe firearms shooting fundamentals.
- Federal and state laws pertaining to the lawful purchase, ownership, transportation, use, and possession of firearms.
- Extreme Risk Protection Orders described in Article 14.5 of Title 13.
- Requirements for reporting lost or stolen firearms as described in C.R.S. 18-12-113.
- Requirements for secure firearms storage as described in C.R.S. 18-12-114.
- State laws pertaining to the use of deadly force for self-defense.
- Instruction on any other state law enacted within 5 years before the class that pertains to the purchase, ownership, transportation, use, and possession of firearms.
- Best practices to ensure concealed handgun permit holders safely interact with law enforcement personnel who are responding to an emergency.
- Instruction regarding techniques for avoiding a criminal attack and how to manage a violent confrontation, including conflict resolution and judgmental use of lethal force.
- Require students to complete a live-fire exercise on a range, discharging at least 50 rounds with a minimum 70% accuracy score. *This does not need to be conducted in a single day.*
- Require students to complete a written Concealed Handgun Competency exam which tests a student’s knowledge of the subjects described in C.R.S 18-12-202.5 (3)(a) to (3)(f), with a minimum score of 80%. *This exam must be an open book exam.*

Concealed Handgun Refresher Class (For Renewing CHPs)

Description: A class for people intending to renew an **existing** CHP. *A certificate for this class will **not** suffice for new CHP applications.*

Required Duration: Minimum of 2 hours.

Required Elements

- Instruction on changes to federal and state laws related to firearms enacted within 5 years prior to the refresher class.
- Require students to complete a live-fire exercise on a range, discharging at least 50 rounds with a minimum 70% accuracy score.
- Require students to complete a written Concealed Handgun Competency exam which tests a student’s knowledge of the subjects described in C.R.S 18-12-202.5 (3)(a) to (3)(f), with a minimum score of 80%. *This exam must be an open book exam.*

Class Certificate Required Elements

Certificates issued to students must have the following information:

- The instructor’s name printed or typed
- The instructor’s original signature – digital/electronic signatures, stamps, cursive fonts are not acceptable
- The instructor’s Custer County Verified CHP Firearms Instructor ID.
 - This ID number will be found on your Custer County Sheriff’s Office Verified Instructor ID card and certificate.

- Certificates must clearly indicate whether the student completed a Concealed Handgun Training class (New) or a Refresher class.
 - **NOTE:** *Refresher class certificates are not valid for a new CHP application.*
- The student's printed name.
- The date the student completed the class.

How to Apply for the Verified CHP Firearms Instructor Program

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact the Custer County Sheriff's Office, Concealed Handgun Program Unit, at (719) 783-2270.

Steps to Apply if You Already Have a CHP

1. Fill out and sign the Custer County Sheriff's Office Verified CHP Firearms Instructor application.
2. Submit the following materials to our email address:
 - The completed and signed Verified Firearms Instructor Application
 - Your Colorado Driver's License or ID
 - Your valid Colorado Concealed Handgun Permit
 - Proof that you are a certified firearms instructor, such as an NRA instructor certificate or Colorado POST instructor certificate
 - A syllabus of what will be taught in your Concealed Handgun Training classes
3. You will receive an email response once your application has been received. If any required documents are missing or incomplete, your application will not be processed. Please do not send any additional documentation unless specifically requested.
4. This process may take up to 30 days to complete.

Once your complete application and all required documentation have been received and processed, a Custer County Verified Instructor certificate and ID card will be issued upon review and by the authority of the Sheriff, Lloyd R. Smith. Additionally, your name and verification expiration date will be added to our public list of Verified Instructors.

How Do I Apply if I Do Not Have a CHP?

If you need to apply for a CHP at the same time as the Verified CHP Firearms Instructor Program, please contact us at (719) 783-2270 to schedule an appointment.

How Verified Instructors are Revoked or Suspended

- If an instructor no longer meets the requirements for verification, your status as a Verified CHP Firearms Instructor will be revoked.
- If an instructor provides a certificate for the completion of a Concealed Handgun Training class or Refresher class that fails to meet the class requirements, your status as a Verified Instructor will be suspended. You may appeal for reinstatement no earlier than 30 days following the suspension per C.R.S. 18-12-202.7 (4)(b).
- Please note, if your Verified CHP Firearms Instructor status is revoked or suspended, you will be removed from our public list of Verified Instructors.

What if My Verified Instructor Application is Denied?

If your application is denied, you will receive a letter explaining the grounds for the denial, suspension, or revocation. The letter will also explain how the applicant may appeal this decision. Applicants may also seek judicial review of the Sheriff's decision, per C.R.S. 18-12-207 (4)(a).

Relevant Colorado Revised Statutes (HB 24 -1174)

C.R.S. 18-12-202. Definitions.

- (3.5) "Concealed Handgun Training Class" means a concealed handgun training class as described in section 18-12-202.5 and does not include a refresher class
- (6.5) "Refresher Class" means a concealed handgun refresher class as described in section 18-12-202.5 (4).
- (8) "Training Certificate" means a certificate issued by a Verified Instructor who conducts a concealed handgun training class or a refresher class that evidences an applicant's successful completion of the class requirements.
- (9) "Verified Instructor" means an instructor for a firearms safety course verified as a firearms instructor by a sheriff pursuant to section 18-12-202.7.

C.R.S. 18-12-202.5. Concealed Handgun Training Class - Refresher Class - Rules.

- (1) A concealed handgun training class is any of the following:
- (a) a law enforcement training firearms safety course; or
 - (b) a firearms safety course taught by a verified instructor and offered by a law enforcement agency; an institution of higher education; or a public or private institution, organization, or firearms training school, that is open to the general public and is taught by a verified instructor.
- (2) A concealed handgun training class must be held in person with the instructor of the class at the same location as the students, and no part of the class may be conducted via the internet. A concealed handgun training class must provide a minimum of eight hours of instruction, including the live-fire shooting exercise described in subsection (3)(g) of this section and the written concealed handgun competency exam described in subsection (3)(h) of this section. The eight hours of instruction in a course do not need to be consecutive.
- (3) A concealed handgun training class must include the following elements:
- (a) Instruction regarding knowledge and safe handling of firearms and ammunition;
 - (b) Instruction regarding safe storage of firearms and child safety;
 - (c) Instruction regarding safe firearms shooting fundamentals;
 - (d) Instruction regarding federal and state laws pertaining to the lawful purchase, ownership, transportation, use, and possession of firearms, including instruction on extreme risk protection orders described in article 14.5 of title 13, requirements for reporting lost or stolen firearms described in section 18-12-113, secure firearms storage requirements described in section 18-12-114, and any other state law enacted within five years before the class that pertains to the purchase, ownership, transportation, use, and possession of firearms;
 - (e) Instruction regarding state law pertaining to the use of deadly force for self-defense;

(e.5) Instruction regarding best practices to ensure concealed handgun permit holders safely interact with law enforcement personnel who are responding to an emergency;

(f) Instruction regarding techniques for avoiding a criminal attack and how to manage a violent confrontation, including conflict resolution and judgmental use of lethal force;

(g) A requirement that a student achieve a minimum seventy percent accuracy score, as determined by the instructor, in a live-fire shooting exercise conducted on a range, which requires discharging at least fifty rounds of ammunition and which does not need to be conducted in a single day; and

(h) A requirement that a student achieve a passing score of at least eighty percent on a written concealed handgun competency exam that tests a student's knowledge of the subjects described in subsections (3)(a) to (3)(f) of this section. The exam must be administered as an open book exam.

(4)

(a) A concealed handgun refresher class requires a student to demonstrate safety and competence with a handgun. A refresher class must be taught by a verified instructor and must include instruction on changes to federal and state laws related to firearms enacted within five years before the refresher class; a live-fire shooting exercise conducted on a range, which requires discharging at least fifty rounds of ammunition; and a written concealed handgun competency exam that tests a student's knowledge of the subjects described in subsections (3)(a) to (3)(f) of this section.

(b) A refresher class must be held in person with the instructor of the class at the same location as the students, and no part of the class may be conducted via the internet. A refresher class must include at least two hours of instruction, including the live-fire exercise and the written exam. In order to complete a refresher class, a student must achieve a minimum seventy percent accuracy score, as determined by the instructor, in the live-fire shooting exercise and a passing score of at least eighty percent on the written exam. The exam must be administered as an open book exam.

(c) A training certificate issued for the completion of a refresher class is valid for renewal of a permit to carry a concealed handgun pursuant to section 18-12-211 but is not valid for an initial application for a permit to carry a concealed handgun pursuant to section 18-12-203 (1)(h)(VI).

(5) A verified instructor shall provide a training certificate that includes the printed name and original signature of the class instructor to any student who completes a concealed handgun training class or a refresher class so that the student may submit the certificate to a sheriff as part of an initial application for, or an application for renewal of, a permit to carry a concealed handgun. The training certificate must clearly indicate whether the student completed a concealed handgun training class or a refresher class.

(6) A concealed handgun training class and a refresher class is subject to the requirements of the federal "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990", 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.

C.R.S. 18-12-202.7. Concealed Handgun Training Class – Instructor Verification.

(1) Each sheriff shall verify as a firearms instructor a person whose principal place to conduct firearms training is in the sheriff's county and who:

(a) Satisfies the requirements for verification described in this section; and

(b) Pays any fee required pursuant to subsection (5) of this section.

(2) To become a verified instructor, an applicant must:

(a) Hold a valid permit to carry a concealed handgun issued pursuant this part 2 that is not a temporary emergency permit issued pursuant to section 18-12-209; and

(b) Be certified as a firearms instructor by one of the following entities that has instructors certified by a nationally recognized organization that customarily offers firearms training:

(I) A federal, state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency;

(II) A college or university;

(III) A nationally recognized organization that customarily offers firearms training; or

(IV) A firearms training school.

(3)

(a) An instructor verification issued pursuant to this section is valid for ten years and may be renewed at any time prior to expiration.

(b) A sheriff shall issue evidence of verification to a verified instructor. The evidence of verification must include the date of expiration of the verification.

(c) Each sheriff shall maintain a record of firearms instructors verified by the sheriff and shall post a list of verified instructors on the sheriff's website. The list must include the expiration date of an instructor's verification.

(4)

(a) A sheriff shall revoke a verification issued pursuant to this section if the verified instructor ceases to meet the requirements for verification.

(b) A sheriff may revoke or suspend a verification issued pursuant to this section if the verified instructor provides instruction in a concealed handgun training class or refresher class that fails to meet the requirements for the class pursuant to this part 2 and that results in the issuance of a training certificate. A person who has had a verification suspended pursuant to this subsection (4)(b) may apply for reinstatement no earlier than thirty days following suspension.

(c) If a sheriff denies a person's application for verification as a firearms instructor or suspends or revokes a person's firearms instructor verification, the sheriff shall notify the person in writing. The notice must state the grounds for denial, suspension, or revocation and inform the person of the right to seek judicial review pursuant to section 18-12-207.

(5) A sheriff may establish and impose a fee to cover the actual direct and indirect costs of processing applications and issuing and renewing verifications pursuant to this section.

C.R.S. 18-12-207. Judicial Review - Permit Denial - Permit Suspension - Permit Revocation - Denial, Suspension, or Revocation of Instructor Verification.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, at a judicial review sought pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the sheriff shall have the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the applicant or permittee is ineligible to possess a permit under the criteria listed in section 18-12-203 (1) or, if the denial, suspension, or revocation was based on the sheriffs determination that the person would be a danger as provided in section 18-12-203 (2), the sheriff shall have the burden

of proving the determination by clear and convincing evidence. Following completion of the review, the court may award attorney fees to the prevailing party.

(4)

(a) If a sheriff denies a person's application for verification as a firearms instructor or suspends or revokes a person's firearms instructor verification, the person may seek judicial review of the sheriff's decision. The procedure and timelines described in subsection (2) of this section apply to judicial review of a sheriff's decision pursuant to this subsection (4).

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, at a judicial review sought pursuant to this subsection (4), the sheriff has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the person does not meet the requirements to be verified as a firearms instructor or satisfies the criteria for suspension or revocation of a firearms instructor verification.

C.R.S. 18-12-215. Immunity.

(2) A law enforcement officer or agency, medical personnel, and an organization that offers concealed handgun training classes or refresher classes and its personnel who in good faith provide information regarding an applicant are not liable for any damages that may result from issuance or denial of a permit.

6-1-707. Use of title or degree - deceptive trade practice.

(1) A person engages in a deceptive trade practice when, in the course of the person's business, vocation, or occupation, the person:

(f) Claims to be a verified instructor for a firearms safety course that satisfies the requirements for a concealed handgun training class described in section 18-12-202.5, unless the person is verified as a firearms instructor by a sheriff pursuant to section 18-12-202.7.