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A State-by-State Analysis of Concealed Carry Permit Revocations

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A large number of dueling articles have been published claiming concealed carry weapons (CCW) laws increase, decrease, or have no effect on crime rates. Rather than adding to this dueling literature, this paper aims to test the underlying theories behind the results of past studies. Among the articles which purport that increased weapon carrying increases crime, varying hypothesis have been generated explaining the results. The simplest theory is that permit holders themselves commit violence after permit issuance. Other theories include hampered police effectiveness or increased rates of firearm theft, especially from vehicles. This paper tests the first thesis—that permit holders themselves may commit crime. By surveying the rates of CCW permit revocations, this study concludes permit holders are, on average, extremely law abiding. Support for the theory that permit holders themselves could be responsible for any crime increase after the adoption of "shall-issue" concealed carry laws is found wanting.

Introduction

Do concealed carry laws increase violent crime? The question has been subject to a significant amount of academic inquiry since the publication of John Lott and David Mustard's seminal article, published in 1997.[1] In it, the authors found a correlation between liberalized "shall-issue" concealed carry laws with *lower* rates of violent crime. While this

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[1] John R. Lott, Jr. & David B. Mustard, *Crime, Deterrence, and Right-to-Carry Concealed Handguns*, 26 J. LEGAL STUD. 1 (1997).

may seem like an implausible result at face value, the authors—both economists—pointed to economic theory which hypothesizes harsher and more certain punishment can reduce crime.[2] The theory states that some criminals, if they perceive a higher "risk"—whether that be imprisonment, arrest, or successful resistance by an armed victim—will be less likely to commit crime than they otherwise would. In other words, the public carrying of firearms was hypothesized to have a deterrent effect.

Subsequent researchers, utilizing different datasets, time periods, and methods, have come to dueling conclusions as to the effect of liberalized CCW laws on crime. Some recent publications have found these laws increase crime.[3] Other studies have found these laws have no effect on crime.[4] Others still find these laws reduce crime.[5] Given the varying results in the literature, instead of adding yet another econometric study to the debate, it is more fruitful to disentangle the *plausability* of the underlying theories between the competing models. If it is shown the underlying theories behind different models are implausible, but other theories supported, it may allow policymakers and academics to finally determine what impact, if any, these laws have on rates of violence. Further, if the theory undergirding one side's research are found to be incorrect, it suggests errors used in the underlying methodology employed.

Some research has already been conducted as to the plausibility of the deterrence theory proposed by those who believe increased weapons carrying may reduce crime. As noted, for deterrence to apply in this case, there must be an increased perception of firearms carrying among criminals; that is, for criminals to be deterred from attacking armed victims, they must perceive a greater risk to themselves *after* the implementation of a shall-issue concealed carry law as compared to before. There is at least one survey which concluded that liberalized concealed carry laws *do not* affect public perceptions as to how many people are actually

[2] Gary S. Becker, *Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach*, 76 J. POL. ECON. 169 (1968).
[3] *See*, e.g., Mitchell L. Doucette et al., *Officer-Involved Shootings and Concealed Carry Weapons Permitting Laws, 2014-2020*, 99 J. URB. HEALTH 373 (2022); John J. Donohue et al., *Right-to-Carry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive Assessment Using Panel Data and a State-Level Synthetic Control Analysis*, 16 J. EMPIRICAL LEGAL STUD. 198 (2019); Emma E. Fridel, *Comparing the Impact of Household Gun Ownership and Concealed Carry Legislation on the Frequency of Mass Shootings and Firearms Homicide*, 38 JUST. Q. 892 (2021).
[4] K. Alexander Adams, *Is It Wild Out West? Permitless Carry and State Level Murder Rates*, 24 EMPIRICAL ECON. LETTERS 129 (2025); Mark E. Hamill et al., *State Level Firearm Concealed-Carry Legislation and Rates of Homicide and Other Violent Crime*, 228 J. AM. COLL. SURGEONS 1 (2019).
[5] Carl E. Moody & John R. Lott, *Do Right to Carry Laws Still Reduce Violent Crime?*, ACADEMIA LETTERS 1 (2022); Mehdi Barati, *New Evidence on the Impact of Concealed Carry Weapon Laws on Crime*, 47 INT'L REV. L. & ECON. 76 (2016).

carrying firearms.[6] If true, one could argue the deterrent effect would be impossible—and, thus, any econometric study concluding deterrence from these laws likely obtained their results due to flawed study design, flawed data, or simply random chance.[7] Future research is still needed, however, before definitively concluding the deterrent effect is impossible in this case. While surveys among the general populace are hypothesis generating, it does not tell us whether *criminals* have a heightened perception of the risk of encountering an armed citizen after a liberalized CCW law is implemented. Indeed, some have speculated that "criminals have different, perhaps more sensitive, perceptions of carrying prevalence than does the general public. After all, criminals have a professional need to know about the risks of armed victims, and law-abiding citizens have little need to know about whether a law-abiding person might have a firearm to resist a violent attack."[8] More research is required on the possibility of the deterrence hypothesis among different CCW legal regimes.

While the underlying theories behind the studies claiming CCW laws reduce crime require scrutiny, so too do the theories behind studies claiming the opposite. Just how, exactly, would legalizing concealed carry increase crime? Perhaps the most obvious explanation would be that permit holders themselves commit crime. The introduction of a firearm could lead to what otherwise would have been a peaceful confrontation into a deadly one. Donahue et al. (2019), for example, speculate that CCW permit holders are more susceptible to violent road rage than non-permit holders.[9] Even though CCW permit holders must undergo a criminal background check before being issued a permit, the legislative director of the Violence Policy Center has argued: "Just because you're a law-abiding citizen today doesn't mean you're going to be one tomorrow."[10] The Violence Policy Center regularly updates an online resource titled "Concealed Carry Killers" which has identified 2,817 individuals who have been killed by CCW permit holders. This number includes 38 mass shootings perpetrated by CCW permit holders, 65 murder-suicides, and 24 law enforcement

[6] David Fortunato, *Can Easing Concealed Carry Deter Crime?*, 96 SOC. SCI. Q. 1071 (2015).
[7] In statistics, even when the null hypothesis (i.e., no effect) is true, one can find statistically significant associations due to random chance. This is why scholars use constructs such as p-values to calculate the probability, assuming the null hypothesis is true, that one would observe an effect size as large as the study found. Typically, "statistically significant" means the probability of such result is less than or equal to 5%. Note, however, the probability is not zero, so even in a perfect study, aberrant results are possible.
[8] NICHOLAS J. JOHNSON ET AL., FIREARMS LAW AND THE SECOND AMENDMENT: REGULATION, RIGHTS, AND POLICY 55 (3d ed. 2021).
[9] John J. Donohue et al., *Right-to-Carry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive Assessment Using Panel Data and a State-Level Synthetic Control Analysis*, 16 J. EMPIRICAL LEGAL STUD. 204 (2019).
[10] Patrik Jonsson, *Gun Debate: Is Price of an Armed America a More Dangerous America?*, MINNPOST (Feb. 3, 2014), https://www.minnpost.com/christian-science-monitor/2014/02/gun-debate-price-armed-america-more-dangerous-america.

officer deaths as of October 2025.[11] Other theories, which will not be examined in this present paper, include increased rates of gun theft due to liberalized concealed carry laws and reduced police effectiveness.

This study aims to analyze the claim that liberalized concealed carry laws contribute to crime via direct violence committed by permit holders by analyzing CCW permit revocation rates across thirteen U.S. states. Permits can be revoked for a multitude of reasons, but in every state, if one is convicted of a violent crime, the permit is to be revoked. Overall, permit revocation rates are extremely low and, when states publish reasons for revocation, it is often shown that many of the revocations are not for violent offenses at all. The data demonstrate that permit holders can be described as extremely law abiding. If CCW laws do increase crime, it is likely not primarily any direct mechanism associated with the character of permit holders themselves; rather, it would be due to indirect mechanisms which require future research to evaluate.

I. Why Study Permit Revocations?

There exists limited data as to the rates of criminal activity among permit holders—especially violent criminal activity. Permit revocation rates are the most accessible administrative proxy to analyze illegal behavior among CCW permit holders. Using permit revocation rates to study CCW permit holder misbehavior has one glaring flaw: it almost certainly represents the *upper bound* rate of misbehavior. Existing data on criminal *conviction* rates of permit holders shows conviction rates are much lower than permit revocation rates.[12] The reason for the discrepancy is simple: CCW permits can be revoked for a multitude of mundane reasons, such as loss of eligibility status, administrative irregularities, and relocation.

Ohio state statutes, for example, state a license is to be revoked if it is found that, at the time of issuance, the licensee did not meet the residency requirements to obtain a permit.[13] Likewise, Texas will revoke a permit if the applicant failed to pay the required fees to obtain the permit or if a permit holder loses eligibility, which includes loss of residency. Nonviolent reasons for revocation include being (or becoming) a "chemically dependent person," tax delinquency, child support delinquency, various misdemeanors, or misrepresentations

[11] *Concealed Carry Killers*, VIOLENCE POL'Y CTR., https://concealedcarrykillers.org (last updated Aug. 20, 2025). It should be noted this study has come under much scrutiny, but that will not be explored here.
[12] *See infra* Section III.B.
[13] OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 2923.128(B)(1)(g).

during the application process.[14] Utah will revoke permits for crimes of moral turpitude, which the state can define as acts "immoral in itself regardless of whether the crime is punishable by law; and involves an element of falsification or fraud or of harm or injury directed to another person or another person's property." Moral turpitude also includes crimes involving the simple consumption of controlled substances.[15]

While there is an argument to be made that CCW permit holder should be held to a higher standard, when scholars argue CCW laws increase crime, they typically are not referring to simple drug use or DUIs, and they certainly are not referring to individuals who happen to move to an adjacent state or lose eligibility for an administrative reason. Permit revocation rates are, therefore, an *overestimate* of CCW permit holder violent misbehavior.

Another point to consider is even if a CCW permit holder commits a violent crime, not all of these crimes would have been committed in an environment related to one's CCW permit status. For example, if a permit holder engages in a drunken brawl at a bar (not using their weapon—and, perhaps, the weapon was not even on their person), their permit status played no role in the commission of the crime. A permit holder, in this case, *happened* to commit a violent assault and also *happened* to be a CCW permit holder, but their permit status played no role in triggering the event, nor did it have an impact on the event's outcome. It would be impossible to claim liberalized concealed carry was responsible for that specific crime. Likewise, if a permit holder commits a crime within their own home or on their own property, it is impossible to ascribe that violent action to their ability or lack thereof to legally carry a firearm in public.[16] Thus, *even if* every permit revocation were due to a violent incident, it would still represent an upper bound estimate as to the direct effect a CCW law could have on violent crime.

Despite these limitations, permit revocation rates are, in many cases, the only proxy we have to measure CCW permit holder rates of violence. Only a handful of states, like Texas, publicly release violent conviction rate data of permit holders. Some states, like Utah, do publish the reasons for revocation as well, but of the few states that report revocation rate data, most simply provide a topline number. Despite all of the reasons to think permit revocation rates are an upper bound estimate of CCW permit holder violence, the rates of overall permit revocation are still extremely low.[17]

[14] TEX. GOV'T CODE ANN. § 411.186(a); § 411.172(a).
[15] UT Code § 53-5-704(2)(v); § R82-2-107(2).
[16] While crimes of this nature should be disqualifying, that is not under dispute, it is impossible, from a policy perspective, to ascribe the violence to the legality of public carrying.
[17] *See infra* Section III.A.

II. Data Sources and Methodology

The states selected in this study were states that publicly generate reports on rates of permit issuance and/or revocation. These thirteen states are: Michigan, Colorado, Minnesota, Florida, Texas, Ohio, South Dakota, South Carolina, Hawaii, Utah, Kentucky, and Wisconsin. While not all 50 states are represented, this collection of states represent a diverse demographic, political, and geographic profile. Florida and Texas are large heterogeneous states which, even in isolation, represent a diverse subsection of the American population. The sample also includes smaller homogenous states such as South Dakota. Hawaii, Colorado, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin are "blue" or "purple" states, in contrast to Kentucky and South Carolina which skew politically "red." These states also are spread across the United States in different regions.

In every state, the revocation data was taken straight from the governmental agency which publishes data related to the state's concealed carry permit program. Some states publicly post the total number of active permits (e.g. Minnesota, Texas, Hawaii, South Dakota, and South Carolina). In these states, the number of active permits was taken from the relevant official documentation. Other states do not report the total number of active permits, but the total number of active permits was estimated using the following equation:

$$ActivePermits_t = \sum_{i=t-4}^{t} Renewals_i + \sum_{i=t-4}^{t} New\ Issuances_i - \sum_{i=t-4}^{t} Revocations_i$$

Where $ActivePermits_t$ represents the number of active permits in year t, $Renewals_i$ represents the sum of permit renewals over a 5-year period ending in year t, $New\ Issuances_i$ represents the sum of newly issued permits over a 5-year period ending in year t, and $Revocations_i$ represents the sum of permit revocations over a y-year period ending in year t.

In each of the states which did not provide active permit data, permits are considered valid for 5 years, allowing us to use the above equation to estimate the number of permits in each state in our sample in any given year. Given that a permit issued before the 5-year cutoff, if not renewed during the 5-year period, would have lapsed, this equation allows us to calculate the number of active permits in any given state in our study. Once the number of active permits in year t and the number of revocations in year t are obtained, the revocation rate can be calculated using the following equation:

$$\frac{Number\ of\ Revocations_t}{Number\ of\ Active\ Permits_t} \times 100$$

For most states, the data is current through 2024. The oldest data comes from Louisiana, which last published a report in 2018. Kentucky's data is current through 2023, and Florida's data is current through September 30, 2025. The sources for the data used can be viewed below in Table 1.

Table 1: Data Sources For Permit Revocations and Active Permits

State	Year	Permit Revocation Source	Active Permit Source
Michigan	2023–24	https://archive.is/n7Tji	Calculated using past 5 years of renewals plus past 5 years of new issued permits minus past 5 years of permit revocations.
Colorado	2024	https://archive.is/hC7g2	Calculated using past 5 years of renewals plus past 5 years of new issued permits minus past 5 years of permit revocations.
Minnesota	2024	https://archive.is/mKJK9	https://archive.is/R2z5X
Florida	2025	https://archive.is/y6qCK	https://archive.is/2BF0w
Texas	2024	https://archive.is/PbyE8	https://archive.is/PbyE8
Louisiana	2018	https://archive.is/npnic	https://archive.is/npnic
Ohio	2024	https://archive.is/ohM2a	Calculated using past 5 years of renewals plus past 5 years of new issued permits minus past 5 years of permit revocations.
South Dakota	2024	https://archive.is/ANJau	Records request: Kayla.Boxley@state.sd.us
South Carolina	2024	https://archive.is/hRzHh	https://archive.is/hRzHh
Hawaii	2024	https://archive.is/nuj9D	https://archive.is/nuj9D
Utah	2024	https://archive.is/gwbCe	https://archive.is/o/gwbCe/https://bci.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2025/03/2024Q4.pdf
Kentucky	2023	https://archive.is/dPpr8	Calculated using past 5 years of renewals plus past 5 years of new issued permits minus past 5 years of permit revocations.
Wisconsin	2024	https://archive.is/OkyQp	https://archive.is/OkyQp

III. Results

A. *General Results*

The general permit revocation rates across states in the sample can be viewed in Table 2. The table contains the number of permits revoked in the most recent year data was available at the time of writing as well as the number of active permits (either from official data sources or estimated using the methodology outlined in Part II). Using those two numbers, the revocation rate in the year listed is displayed in the final column of the table.

Table 2: Permit Revocations by State

State	Year	Permits Revoked	Active Permits	Revocation Rate
Michigan	2024	2,466	864,811	**0.29%**
Colorado	2024	405	305,723	**0.13%**
Minnesota	2024	47	408,356	**0.01%**
Florida	2025	2,125	2,358,993	**0.09%**
Texas	2024	2,607	1,539,879	**0.17%**
Louisiana*	2018	1,463*	236,344*	**0.62%***
Ohio	2024	339	623,691	**0.05%**
South Dakota	2024	18	51,373	**0.03%**
South Carolina	2024	1,676	517,709	**0.32%**
Hawaii	2024	6	2,207	**0.27%**
Utah	2024	490	666,693	**0.07%**
Kentucky	2023	365	309,796	**0.12%**
Wisconsin	2024	1,166	508,046	**0.23%**

* Data is since inception; i.e., total revocations divided by total licenses issued since the law's start.

The most recent permit revocation rates in the dataset range from 0.01% in Minnesota to 0.32% in South Carolina. Louisiana has the highest revocation rate in the table (0.62%), but the revocation rate was calculated differently in Louisiana than in other states due to data limitations. Instead of being the revocation rate in the most recent year, Louisiana's revocation rate covers the entire period since the start of the law. Florida data allows us to make a similar calculation, which returns a total revocation rate since 1987 of 0.38%.[18] By

[18] *Concealed Weapon or Firearm License Summary Report*, FLA. DEP'T OF AGRIC. & CONSUMER SERVS. (2025), https://ccmedia.fdacs.gov/content/download/7499/file/cw_monthly.pdf.

contrast, Florida's 2025 revocation rate was only 0.09%, or 4 times lower than the revocation rate over the entire period. Falling permit revocation rates over time are to be expected as improved administrative procedures and improved background check processes have been developed and implemented over time.

Overall, it is clear that permit revocation rates for any reason are extremely low. The reasons for revocations, as well as comparisons to other groups, will now be examined in Section III.B and Section III.C.

B. *Disaggregating the Results*

As noted in Part I, permit revocations are, at best, a rough proxy of CCW permit holder violence. CCW permits can be revoked for a plethora of reasons, including nonviolent offenses and administrative rules totally unrelated to crime (like a change in residency). Because of this, even though the rates of permit revocation are extremely low, they still represent an upper-bound estimate of permit holder violence. While most states do not routinely publish the reasons for CCW permit revocations, among the states that do, we can, at the very least, qualitatively discuss the amount permit revocations overstate violence among CCW permit holders using the limited quantitative data at our disposal.

Wisconsin is one such state that publishes detailed statistics as to the reasons CCW permits are revoked.[19] Of the 1,166 permits revoked in 2024, 253 of them, or 21% of the total, were revoked because the license holder ceased being a Wisconsin resident, and 292 were for nonviolent drug use. A total of 46.7% of Wisconsin revocations in 2024 can be ascribed to changes in residency or simple drug use. If we remove the revocations for drug use and residency from the number of revocations, we would have an adjusted permit revocation rate of 0.12%.

Wisconsin's data also allows us to look at the second reason permit revocation rates may overstate the amount of violence CCW laws cause: crimes committed unrelated to one's permit status, such as crimes committed in the home. While crimes committed at home *should* be disqualifying, it is important to reiterate that these crimes would have occurred *even if* CCW laws were never implemented, as CCW laws only regulate one's behavior in public. Of the 1,166 permit revocations in Wisconsin in 2024, 147 were due to domestic abuse injunctions, 54 were for misdemeanor domestic abuse convictions, 29 were due to involuntary commitments, 9 were for crimes outside of the state of Wisconsin, and 4 were for child abuse. While these are all arguably good reasons to restrict one's ability to carry a weapon concealed

[19] *Concealed Carry Annual Report*, WISC. DEP'T OF JUSTICE (2024), https://www.wisdoj.gov/Law%20Enforcement%20Services/2024_Annual_CCW_Statistical_Report_%20-%20Final.pdf.

in public, most of these crimes were not facilitated by one's ability to carry in public.[20] Thus, even the adjusted CCW permit revocation rate of 0.12% is likely too high when trying to estimate the direct impact Wisconsin's shall-issue CCW law could have had on rates of violence. These cases represent a total of 243 revocations, or 20.8% of the total. If one wished to subtract these domestic crimes from the topline revocation rate reported in Table 2, we are left with only 378 permit revocations (mostly due to felony convictions, some of which are also likely nonviolent in nature or occurred at home). This would lead to an adjusted CCW permit revocation rate as low as 0.07%. If we wish to only count revocations due to felony convictions (291), Wisconsin's permit revocation rate is only approximately 0.06%. The rate of felony conviction in Wisconsin among permit holders in 2024 is only 57.28 offences per 100,000 permit holders. Regardless of how one wishes to cut the data, Wisconsin's topline CCW permit revocation rate overstates the level of violence among permit holders by at least a factor of 1.9 (if we remove only changes in residency and nonviolent drug use), but it could overestimate levels of violence by a factor of up to 4 if we zero in on felony convictions.

Michigan and Colorado also publish some basic statistics on permit revocation reason, but they are not as detailed as Wisconsin. Of the 2,466 permits revoked in Michigan in 2024, 1,941 were due to conviction of a crime—not necessarily a violent crime, but a crime nonetheless. This leads to an adjusted revocation rate of 0.22%.[21] In the same year, 370 of those who had their permits revoked were convicted of a felony.[22] This gives us a rate of 42.78 felony convictions per 100,000 CCW permit holders, which is generally in line with what we saw in Wisconsin. A majority of the permit revocations in Michigan were for misdemeanor convictions. Colorado's revocation statistics are not disaggregated enough to speculate about adjusting revocation rates to correspond with violent behavior. However, 5 (1.2%) were revoked due to residency and 13 (3.2%) were revoked due to drug addiction or mental illness. 25 (6.1%) were revoked due to "discretionary" reasons, 197 (48.6%) were revoked due to arrest, and 165 (40.7%) were revoked due to restraining orders.[23]

[20] And, for the 29 who were committed, they may not have committed any crime at all, but were simply deemed at risk of harm to themselves or others preemptively.
[21] *Concealed Pistol Licensing Annual Report*, CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION CTR., MICH. STATE POLICE (2024), https://www.michigan.gov/msp/-/media/Project/Websites/msp/reports/2024_CPL_Annual-Report.pdf?rev=6056b38aaa234c2fb0b09503c9d243b8&hash=F35C24B6AD271A44FF837E4BF1555D91.
[22] *Id.* This was calculated by adding those under the "Federal Disqualification: Felony Conviction" row, the "Felony Conviction" row, and the "Juvenile felony adjudication" row.
[23] *Report to the Colorado General Assembly: Concealed Handgun Permits Issued by Colorado Sheriffs for 2024*, COUNTY SHERIFFS OF COLO. (2024), https://cdn.myocv.com/ocvapps/a132480125/files/2024%20CHP%20Report_Final.pdf.

In Utah, only 132 (26%) of revocations were due to felonious offenses.[24] This represents a rate of 19.8 offenses per every 100,000 permit holders. It should be noted, however, that not all of these felonies were violent in nature. While Utah did not provide the number of felonious offenses in each category, the report did state that some of the felonies included: identify theft, fraud, stealing public money, securities fraud, embezzlement, DUI, counterfeiting, vandalism, prostitution, and drug possession. While these are serious crimes, there is no theoretical link between carrying a firearm in public and rates of embezzlement. Likewise, it would be impossible to ascribe securities fraud to a state's concealed carry legal regime. Some of the felonies that involved the death of another person also did not include a firearm at all—for example, vehicular homicide makes an appearance in Utah's report. In 2024, a large number of revocations (206, or 42% of the permit revocations) were ascribed to "alcohol violation[s]."

Texas publishes detailed statistics on CCW permit holder convictions.[25] In Texas, the CCW permit holder conviction rate is 20.06 per 100,000 permit holders (309 total convictions), a mere 0.7% of total convictions in the state. This calls into question the plausibility of results which claim liberalized concealed carry laws increase crime from anywhere between 13-15%.[26] The murder conviction rate among Texan permit holders is 0.97 per 100,000 permit holders (15 total convictions). Both in Texas and in the states above, it is clear that criminal conviction rates are significantly lower than is the rate of permit revocation overall. Texas's permit revocation rate is 169.3 per 100,000 permit holders—8.44 *times* the rate of criminal conviction and over 174 *times* the murder conviction rate. In Utah, the rate of permit revocation is 3.7 times the rate of felony conviction, Michigan's permit revocation rate overshadows the felony conviction rate by a factor of 6.66, and revocation rates top felony convictions in Wisconsin by a factor of 4.

C. *Comparing CCW Permit Holders to Other Groups*

Texas's detailed conviction data allows us to compare the law abidingness of CCW permit holders versus the general population. As noted, permit holders are convicted at a rate of 20.06 per 100,000 and have a murder rate of 0.97 per 100,000 permit holders. In contrast, the total conviction rate among the general public is 137.94 per 100,000 persons and the

[24] These data were calculated using Utah's Q1-Q4 2024 concealed carry reports. *See Firearm Transfer & Concealed Firearm Permit Statistics*, UTAH BUREAU OF CRIM. IDENTIFICATION https://bci.utah.gov/firearm-transfers/history-overview-statistics/firearm-transfer-concealed-firearm-permit-statistics/ (last visited Oct. 23, 2025).
[25] *Conviction Rates for Handgun License Holders*, TEX. DEP'T OF PUB. SAFETY (Mar. 18, 2025), https://www.dps.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/rsd/ltc/reports/convictionratesreport2024.pdf.
[26] *See supra* note 8.

murder conviction rate is 2.58 per 100,000.[27] This means a CCW permit holder is 6.87 times less likely to be convicted of a crime and 2.6 times less likely to be convicted of a murder than the general population.

In 2024, there were 1.2 million violent crimes, 5.9 million property crimes, and 11,679 hate crimes in the United States according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.[28] This represents 7,219,424 criminal incidents across the reporting agencies which contain 325,100,512 inhabitants. This leads us to a rate of 2,218.63 crimes per 100,000 persons in the United States. In contrast, using the average permit revocation rate from Table 2, there is a total permit revocation rate across the thirteen states surveyed of 184.6 per 100,000. Rates of criminality among the general population in 2024 are 12 times greater than rates of permit revocation for any reason across the states in our sample (recall permit revocations include non-criminal revocations, and this is therefore an underestimate of the law-abidingness of CCW permit holders).

One could argue the general population is not the correct comparison group. GVPedia, a pro-gun control organization, argues that "[t]he real debate is whether permit holders are more or less law-abiding than the rest of the population who could pass a background check, but don't obtain a permit."[29] In other words, instead of the general population, we should look at other law-abiding populations for comparison. While one could go back and forth on this point, it seems valuable to simply take it at face value and test the hypothesis.

Police officers may serve as a more appropriate comparison. In order to become a police officer, one not only needs to undergo a background investigation, but one goes through rigorous training in firearms use and firearms law. Despite that training, between 2005-2007, there were 2,119 criminal cases that involved the arrest of 1,746 police officers.[30] Simultaneously, there were 685,464 full-time police officers during the same period.[31] This is

[27] The population denominator for the general public in Texas was taken from: Texas Demographic Center, *Texas Population: Trends and Characteristics* (Mar. 26, 2025), https://demographics.texas.gov/Resources/TDC/Presentations/ffa33698-85e2-432a-b3df-a8ac9b05b5d1/20250326_TxDOTCongestionReliefTaskForce.pdf.

[28] U.S. Dep't of Just., *UCR Summary of Reported Crimes in the Nation, 2024* (Aug. 2025), https://primarynewssource.org/wp-content/uploads/UCR-Summary-of-Reported-Crimes-in-the-Nation-2024.pdf.

[29] *Myth: Concealed Handgun Permit Holders Commit Virtually No Crimes*, GVPedia https://www.gvpedia.org/gun-myths/no-crimes/?doing_wp_cron=1761154949.7892310619354248046875 (last visited November 5, 2025).

[30] Philip Matthew Stinson et al., *Exit Strategy: An Exploration of Late-Stage Police Crime*, *13*(4) POLICE Q. 413 (2010).

[31] John R. Lott, Jr., et al., *Concealed Carry Permit Holders Across the United States: 2024* (Nov. 29, 2024), https://ssrn.com/abstract=5040077 (unpublished manuscript).

a rate of 102.4 crimes per 100,000 officers. That is five times *higher* than the rate of criminal convictions among Texas permit holders. One may object that the police officer statistic is derived from arrests whereas the Texas data is derived from convictions. However, the Utah permit revocation rate due to felonies is also approximately five times lower than the police arrest rate. The overall CCW permit revocation rates in multiple states—Florida, Minnesota, Utah, South Dakota, and Ohio—are still lower than the rate of police arrest, and, as noted in Section III.B, many of these revocations are for noncriminal reasons. The rate of overall CCW permit revocation rates in Kentucky and Colorado is extremely close to the rate of police arrest. Thus, in over half of the states in the sample, the total revocation rate equals or is below the police arrest rate. Other scholars have observed that if you limit the comparison to firearms violations, permit holders typically come out ahead of police officers.[32] Thus, if we compare permit holders to police officers, who also undergo a background check and receive much more extensive legal and firearms training (and must *continue* training throughout their career), CCW permit holders are equally, and sometimes *more*, law-abiding than police.

One could also compare rates of misbehavior between CCW permit holders and members of the military. Most military occupations require a Secret security clearance which involves an extensive background check, and some occupations require a Top-Secret security clearance which also involves an extensive background check. In 2023, with an active-duty strength of 454,625, the United States Army had a rate of Article 15s of 3,849 per 100,000.[33] Article 15s are nonjudicial punishments, but the reasons one would get an Article 15 roughly aligns with what a civilian may consider a misdemeanor: drug abuse or possession, disobeying orders, theft, fraud, or absences without leave (AWOL). This is similar to CCW permits which can be revoked for a multitude of nonviolent and even noncriminal reasons. The rate of nonjudicial punishment for the U.S. Army is over 20 times higher than the rate of total CCW permit revocation in our sample of states. Limiting the data to the number of convictions in a court martial, which involve more serious offenses, the U.S. Army in 2023 had a conviction rate of 94.13 per 100,000, 4.6 times the rate of criminal conviction among Texas permit holders.

The results are similar for the Navy and Marine Corps. The Navy and Marine Corps had a court martial conviction rate of 52.18 per 100,000 servicemembers, 2.6 times the rate of criminal conviction of Texas CCW permit holders.[34] The Air Force had a conviction rate in

[32] *Id.* at 43.
[33] *Report on the State of Military Justice for Fiscal Year 2023*, THE OFF. OF THE JUDGE ADVOC. GEN. 18 (Dec. 2023), https://jsc.defense.gov/Portals/99/Article%20146%20reports/Joint%20Service%20Article%20146a%20reports%20-%20FY%202023.pdf?ver=gw-c6FaSPdIjO4_hmIHYeQ%3d%3d.
[34] *Id.* at 15, 17.

2023 of 80.93 per 100,000, 4.03 times the rate of conviction of Texas permit holders and 1.4 times the rate of Wisconsin permit holders.[35]

Overall, the rate of criminal conviction among permit holders is significantly lower than the rate of criminal conviction of military members who, like permit holders, undergo extensive background checks as part of their security clearance investigations. Thus, whether the point of comparison is the general public, the police, or the military, the general law-abidingness of CCW permit holders is apparent.

Conclusion

Is CCW permit holder criminality a significant contributor to violent crime? The results of this study suggest the answer is likely "no." Liberalized concealed carry laws can impact crime, both up and down, through multiple pathways: deterrence, gun theft, police effectiveness, rates of defensive gun use, and crime by permit holders themselves. Studies which have found correlations between CCW laws and crime in either direction have speculated on which mechanisms explain their underlying results. While more research is needed to determine if deterrence, gun theft, defensive gun use, and police effectiveness are actual pathways through which these laws may impact rates of violence, this study suggests rates of violence by permitholders themselves is likely to play a negligible role.

Rates of overall permit revocation are 12 times *lower* than rates of violence among the general population. Even when comparing permit holders to other groups that undergo extensive background examinations, like the police and active-duty military members, CCW permit holders are extremely law-abiding. The fraction of violent crimes committed by licensed CCW permit holders is miniscule and unlikely to explain any significant increase in crime after the adoption of a liberalized concealed carry law.

Despite what this study contributes to the dialogue surrounding concealed carry, more research remains to be done. This study was only able to include data from thirteen states with public facing data, and more states may be able to provide data upon request. Further, as noted, there are other theoretical indirect mechanisms through which CCW laws may impact public safety that warrant more evaluation. While dueling econometric studies have given policymakers much to think about, more research on the plausibility of the results of these econometric studies is needed to determine the true effect of liberalized concealed carry on rates of violent crime.

[35] *Id.* at 24, 27.