

New York State Firearm Storage Survey: Methodology

In late 2020, the Rockefeller Institute of Government, in conjunction with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the New York State Police (NYSP), developed and distributed a survey gauging the realities of publicly-available, temporary firearm storage options across the state of New York. This survey was distributed electronically to law enforcement agencies and federal firearms licensed dealers across the state. Both groups were deemed potential locations for temporary firearm storage by DCJS and NYSP. Responses were reviewed for incomplete information and duplication. Supplemental outreach was conducted in fall 2021 to identify additional storage options. The data collected from the two efforts informed the creation of the [New York Firearm Storage Map](#) published by the Rockefeller Institute.

Survey Methodology

[The survey](#) was distributed electronically to Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and Federal Firearms Licensed Dealers (FFLs) indicated as potential temporary storage sites.

- Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs). Survey links were distributed to and responses were received from LEAs at both the municipal and county levels across the State of New York. Some respondents represented specialized units internal to non-LEA government departments.
- Federal Firearms Licensed Dealers (FFLs). Survey links were distributed to private businesses licensed to legally engage in firearm sales and transfers in the State of New York. However, it is important to note that possession of an FFL by a private business does not necessarily mean that business is a gun shop or other firearm-related business. Some respondents indicated their businesses were partially removed from the firearm retail process, such as firearm part manufacturers who held a license to comply with legal requirements for parts transfers. In some instances, businesses were wholly removed from firearm business dealings, holding a license as a matter of convenience, such as a photography studio desiring to possess a license to better serve clients seeking photographs of firearms.

The form requested basic information about a site that could be included in a directory (i.e., registered name of location, address). It also included structured and unstructured questions about a location's existing firearm storage practices. Follow up questions asked about any restrictions on storage services and obstacles faced by the respondent in offering storage services. Follow up questions provided respondents an opportunity to further describe restrictions and obstacles.

Due to the open-ended response collection, respondents could identify multiple restrictions and obstacles. These responses were reviewed by researchers and categorized.

Classifications: Restrictions

The following is a listing of the different classifications used to categorize survey response entries that indicated a location offered storage, with one or more restrictions in place. Locations offering conditional storage often only described those conditions with few words, with varying free-form responses. The following six restrictions categories were developed in order to better report responses and provide individuals seeking temporary firearm storage a better idea of what constraints were to be expected at a given location seen on the map.

- *Type*: Locations labeled with the “Type” restriction do not accept all types of firearms, or may only offer storage specifically for one type of firearm (e.g., long guns only). Additionally, some locations with a restriction on type may require the firearms be unloaded before being entered into storage, or require that ammunition be stored separately.
- *Quantity*: Locations labeled with the “Quantity” restriction have a limit on the number of firearms accepted at one time, either in total or per individual.
- *Time*: Locations labeled with the “Time” restriction impose either a minimum or maximum amount of time that a firearm may be stored.
- *Accepted on a Limited Basis*: Locations labeled with the “Accepted on a Limited Basis” restriction only offer storage under specific circumstances, such as emergencies (e.g., death of a relative).
- *Residential Status*: Locations labeled with the “Residential Status” restriction only offer storage to individuals living within a specific jurisdiction (e.g., town residents only).
- *Situational*: Locations labeled with the “Situational” restriction offer storage based on a number of factors that do not fit neatly within one of the above restriction categories. An individual seeking firearm storage at one of these locations should call the location directly for more information.

Classifications: Obstacles

While some of the respondents did not elaborate on their decision to forgo offering public storage, many did, listing obstacles to offering storage. Obstacles were given a category in order to better sort and digest the responses received. While not included on the map publication, “No” responses were still narrowed down into the below eight obstacle categories in order to better capture general reasons why an LEA or FFL might not offer storage.

- *Space Constraints*: Respondents labeled with the “Space Constraints” obstacle indicated that there was a lack of available space in their given facility to store firearms.
- *Security Constraints*: Respondents labeled with the “Security Constraints” obstacle indicated that there was a lack of security measures in the storage area, such as a lack of proper storage lockers or the storage area was not separate from publicly accessible areas of their facility.
- *Personnel Constraints*: Respondents labeled with the “Personnel Constraints” obstacle indicated that there was a lack of staff available to help. LEAs citing Personnel Constraints included small or part-time agencies. FFLs citing Personnel Constraints included mostly arms dealers working out of their homes (e.g., one-person businesses).
- *Liability Concerns*: Respondents labeled with the “Liability Concerns” obstacle indicated that they were uncomfortable with or unwilling to take on the liability responsibilities that came with offering firearm storage to the public (e.g., more paperwork).
- *Legal Constraints*: Respondents labeled with the “Legal Constraints” obstacle indicated that federal and/or state laws barred them from offering firearm storage to the public (e.g., New York State prohibiting firearms on college campuses).
- *Policy Decision*: Respondents labeled with the “Policy Decision” obstacle indicated that their decision to not offer firearm storage was not based on physical or legal limitations, but rather a simple disinterest in the practice (e.g., simply not wanting to store the firearms of others).
- *Beyond Scope of Duty*: Respondents labeled with the “Beyond Scope of Duty” obstacle indicated that their organization’s day-to-day operations were either partially or wholly unrelated to firearms, and as a result, offering public storage of firearms was unrelated to organizational goals. This was commonly seen in businesses that occasionally handled firearms or firearm parts (e.g., auctioneers).
- *No Protocol*: Respondents labeled with the “No Protocol” obstacle indicated that their organization did not have a protocol in place for public inquiries for firearm storage, and were not open to creating one for future inquiries. Some respondents with this label mentioned that they had not received any requests or did not have the facilities to begin with.

A Note on Additional Outreach

The initial survey received approximately 367 responses after nonvalid responses and double entries were excluded during the review process. The survey yielded 176 viable storage options across the state.

In an effort to identify potential storage options in counties with no respondents, the Rockefeller Institute of Government conducted additional outreach to LEAs and FFLs over telephone and added 10 new sites to the storage map. Directory information was collected from these respondents but they are not included in discussions of survey results.

Because LEAs and FFLs open to offering storage are able to seek and fill out the survey after the publication of the blog post in November 2020, this gap between the number of entries seen on the map and the number of entries described in the blog post is expected to grow.

New York State Firearm Storage Survey

To reduce firearm thefts, injuries, and deaths, New York State is creating an online firearm storage map of law enforcement agencies and federal firearm licensed businesses that offer voluntary, temporary storage to the public.

This survey will help create a publicly-accessible map that will provide New Yorkers with potential storage options in their community, so that all gun owners can find convenient, secure locations if they need short-term storage.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. On behalf of the New York State Police, Division of Criminal Justice Services, and Regional Gun Violence Research Consortium, thank you for your time and attention.

***Required**

Email*

Name of Respondent*

Title of Respondent*

Which is your organization: a law enforcement agency or a federal firearms licensed business?*

- Law enforcement agency
 Federal firearms licensed business

Name of Agency/Business*

Address of Agency/Business*

Public Phone Number of Agency/Business*

Website of Agency/Business (if applicable)

Does your agency/business offer temporary, voluntary storage of firearms to the public?*

- Yes
 No
 Other: _____

If your agency/business does offer storage, does your agency/business have any restrictions on the number or type of firearms stored (e.g. rifles, pistols, etc.)?

- Yes
 No

If your agency/business has restrictions on the number or type of firearms stored (e.g. rifles, pistols, etc.), please describe those restrictions.

If your agency/business does offer storage, do you charge a fee for such services?

- Yes
- No
- Other: _____

If your agency/business does offer storage, what is the best way for the public to contact your organization if they are interested in storing their firearm(s)?

Do you consent to publicly sharing your agency/business contact information to provide New Yorkers with options for temporary, voluntary storage of their firearms?*

- Yes
- No

If you consent to sharing your agency/business information, would you also be willing to share periodic data with New York State on how often storage services are requested and used? (Note: We will not request any identifiable information from your organization, only the number of requests that are received and fulfilled.)

- Yes
- No

If you do not offer storage, have you previously received inquiries from the public or customers to store firearms?

- Yes
- No

If you do not offer storage, what are the primary obstacles or barriers for not doing so (e.g. space, personnel, etc.)?
