Secure Storage in Colorado

Gun owners in Colorado are required to store guns securely in their homes and vehicles to prevent unauthorized access by children/teens and theft.

To comply with state law, gun owners must do one of the following when their firearm is not in use or being carried (or close enough to be accessed as if it were being carried) and is being stored upon any premises they own or control:

- Store the firearm in a locked gun safe or secure container,
- Properly install a locking device on the firearm, or
- Activate the safety characteristics of a personalized firearm ("smart gun").

In addition, if a gun owner leaves a gun in an unattended vehicle they must do the following to comply with a new state law that went into effect January 1, 2025:

- For handguns:
  - Store the handgun in a locked hard-sided container* that is out of plain view, and
  - Lock the vehicle or place the locked container in the locked trunk of the vehicle.
- For long guns:
  - Store the long gun in a locked hard-sided container,* or
  - Store the long gun in a locked soft-sided container and install a locking device on the firearm, and
  - Lock the vehicle or place the locked container in the locked trunk of the vehicle.

Gun owners may be subject to criminal penalties if they fail to follow these requirements. There are limited exceptions to the requirements related to vehicles for antique firearms, long guns stored in vehicles on a private farm or ranch, firearms stored in a vehicle while hunting, and active duty military.

** A locked glove compartment or center console is considered a hard-sided container. Individuals with disabilities may store handguns in a locked soft-sided container.*

Keeping Your Homes and Vehicles Safe with Secure Storage

If you've made the decision to bring a gun into your home, it's important to know how responsible gun owners work to keep their families safe by mitigating the inherent risks associated with firearm ownership. Every responsible gun owner securely stores their guns so that they are inaccessible to children and other people who are at risk of harming themselves or others. Here's why:

- **More than 700 children die by gun suicide each year**, most often using guns belonging to a family member.
- **Nearly 360 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves** or someone else each year.
- At least **one-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented** with increased secure storage.
- **More than 200,000** guns are stolen from individuals every year—a significant portion of those are stolen from cars.

Safety is always an adult responsibility. Kids will be kids, so it's always an adult's responsibility to keep children safe. Always assume that curious or impulsive kids may find and touch an unsecured gun, even if they've been told not to. If a child handles a gun, a bad decision can quickly become a fatal one. Be SMART adults protect kids by making sure all guns are stored securely, which means they are inaccessible to kids, and by making sure children are never in the presence of unsecured guns.

The information provided here is not legal advice and should not be understood as such. Consult with an attorney if you have questions about how this law applies to your specific circumstances.

Learn more at BeSMARTforKids.org

©2025 Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, Inc., all rights reserved. [Be SMART and the Be SMART logo are registered trademarks of Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund, Inc. Reproduction or distribution without permission is prohibited.]
Updated: May 2025