

Body Armor and Connecticut Law

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Issue

Summarize Connecticut's laws on body armor. This report updates OLR Report [2022-R-0105](#).

Summary

State law makes it a crime for certain individuals to possess body armor or improperly transfer it. Specifically, it is a class A misdemeanor (punishable by up to 364 days in prison, a fine of up to \$2,000, or both) for anyone convicted of specific felonies or serious juvenile offenses to possess body armor ([CGS § 53a-217d](#)). Additionally, it is a class B misdemeanor (punishable by up to six months in prison, a fine of up to \$1,000, or both) to sell or deliver body armor to someone who does not have a local gun dealer permit, pistol or revolver (i.e., handgun) permit, eligibility certificate for a handgun or long gun, or ammunition certificate and without personally meeting the acquirer. However, sales and deliveries to certain law enforcement personnel, federal firearms licensees, armed forces reserve members, and other professionals (e.g., paramedics) are exempt from these restrictions ([CGS § 53-341b](#), as amended by [PA 23-53](#), § 35).

Criminal Possession of Body Armor

It is a class A misdemeanor for anyone convicted of the following offenses to possess body armor:

1. a capital felony (i.e., a death penalty case in effect before April 25, 2012);
2. any class A felony other than employing a minor in an obscene performance;
3. any class B felony other than 1st degree promoting prostitution, 1st degree larceny, or promoting a minor in an obscene performance;

4. any class C felony other than 2nd degree promoting prostitution, bribery of a juror, or bribe receiving by a juror;
5. a class D felony for the following:
 - a. 2nd degree assault with or without a firearm;
 - b. 2nd degree assault, with or without a firearm, of an elderly, blind, disabled, or pregnant person or a person with intellectual disability;
 - c. 3rd degree sexual assault with or without a firearm;
 - d. 1st degree unlawful restraint;
 - e. 3rd degree burglary with or without a firearm;
 - f. reckless burning;
 - g. 3rd degree robbery; or
 - h. criminal use of a firearm or electronic defense weapon (e.g., taser); or
6. any serious juvenile offense.

For the purposes of this law, “body armor” means any material designed to be worn on the body and to provide bullet penetration resistance ([CGS § 53a-217d](#)).

More than 50 crimes are listed as “serious juvenile offenses” ([CGS § 46b-120](#), as amended by [PA 23-46](#), § 11). They include most class A felonies, many class B and C felonies, and some class D felonies. Examples of the crimes include murder, manslaughter, and certain assaults; 1st degree sexual or aggravated sexual assault; kidnapping; home invasion; arson; certain drug or gun offenses; bomb manufacturing; and several loan-shark-type offenses. Juveniles convicted of serious juvenile offenses face more severe consequences than other juveniles.

Illegal Transfer of Body Armor

Generally, state law requires sales and deliveries of body armor be done in person and only to someone with a local gun dealer permit, handgun permit, eligibility certificate for a handgun or long gun, or ammunition certificate. A sale or delivery of body armor that does not satisfy these requirements is a class B misdemeanor; however, the law exempts sales or deliveries to:

1. authorized officials or sworn members of local police departments, the State Police, the Division of Criminal Justice, the Department of Correction, the Board or Pardons and Paroles, or the Department of Motor Vehicles;

2. authorized municipal or Department of Administrative Services' officials who buy body armor for the above agencies;
3. judicial marshals, probation officers, and authorized Judicial Branch officials who buy body armor for them;
4. National Guard or armed forces reserve members;
5. federal firearms licensees; and
6. emergency medical service organization employees (i.e., ambulance drivers, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics).

“Body armor” is defined under this law as any item designed to provide bullet penetration resistance and to be worn on or under clothing like a vest or other article of clothing ([CGS § 53-341b](#), as amended by [PA 23-53](#), § 35).

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