

My name is Elisabeth Ryan and I am Policy Counsel at Everytown for Gun Safety. I am writing in strong support of H7755 to reform the “blue card” process and H8069 to require warning signs in all gun ranges.

### [H7755 - The Responsible Firearms Purchasing Act](#)

H7755 would reform the current “blue card” system to create a meaningful training requirement for everyone who purchases a firearm. Under [current law](#), a person must obtain a “safety certificate” - known colloquially as a “blue card” - from the Department of Environmental Management in order to purchase a handgun in the state. This blue card is supposed to signify that the purchaser has undergone a safety training course or, has taken and passed a test on its contents if they “believe that they do not need the required handgun safety course.” In reality, however, **no safety course exists in the state**, meaning that everyone who wishes to purchase a handgun takes the same multiple-choice and true/false 50 question test that has not changed in years, if not decades. The test - which is easy to find online, along with the answers - is even available to take at firearms retail locations and does not require any proctoring or supervision of any kind.

H7755 would create a meaningful and effective safety training requirement for anyone who seeks to purchase a firearm. The bill would require a standardized curriculum comprehensively covering topics such as safe firearm handling, firearm shooting basics, state and federal firearm laws, secure storage of firearms, and firearm suicide prevention. It would also include a live fire training component. Rhode Island law has long recognized that safety training should be a necessary prerequisite of purchasing a firearm, but the current reality does not meaningfully carry out the intent behind the law, which has been in place for decades. This update would ensure that firearm purchasers in the state receive critical, comprehensive safety training that will help keep them, their families, and their communities safe.

This bill would bring Rhode Island in line with nine other states including its neighbors that require comprehensive safety training before purchasing a firearm; this includes its neighbors Connecticut and Massachusetts, both of which also include live fire training. Notably, one study found that 39% of firearm owners [have not received](#) any firearms training but 80% agreed that individuals should undergo training before owning their first firearm. In another survey of gun owners, live fire training stood out as [the most important component](#) of a concealed carry permit law. And law enforcement experts, firearms trainers, and military personnel all overwhelmingly [agree](#) that citizens carrying concealed weapons in public should undertake firearm training, including live fire. Courts have also found comprehensive safety training requirements for firearm licenses to be [constitutional](#).

Rhode Island is long overdue to create a meaningful, impactful firearms safety training requirement that consists of more than just taking a rote test, unchanged for years, the answers to which are readily available to anyone online. The current “blue card” safety training requirement is too weak to actually be effective and H7755 is necessary to create and implement a commonsense and comprehensive safety training requirement for firearm purchasers to promote responsible gun ownership and help keep gun owners and all Rhode Islanders safe.

### [H8069 - Suicide awareness at shooting ranges](#)

H8069 would require gun ranges that rent firearms for use on their premises to post specific language about suicide prevention and resources for individuals in crisis, as well as mandate that range employees be trained in recognizing the warning signs of individuals in crisis and at risk of firearm suicide.

Since 2024, Rhode Island has [required](#) licensed firearms dealers to post specific signage about secure firearms storage and suicide prevention resources. The law further requires that such dealers distribute printed information (developed by the state) about firearms laws and suicide prevention resources to every purchaser of firearms. This law is designed to ensure that Rhode Islanders understand the risks associated with access to a firearm in the home - including the increased risk of firearm suicide - and the best ways to mitigate those risks. However, Rhode Island law only requires that [handgun](#) dealers be licensed, so this warning sign mandate does not extend to businesses (like ranges) that only rent firearms for on-site use. The expanded signage mandate would mirror part of what is already required by state law at dealer locations: “WARNING: If you or a loved one is experiencing distress and/or depression, call the 988 Suicide and Crisis hotline or text “HOME” to 741741.”

In 2025, [two people died](#) by self-inflicted gunshot wounds on two separate occasions on the premises of Sakonnet River Outfitters in Tiverton, RI. That specific business is both a licensed retailer and a range, so the law already requires it to have signage that includes suicide prevention resources in the retail portion of the business. But these tragedies have made clear that people in crisis who are experiencing suicidal ideation have specifically sought out gun ranges that rent firearms and have used those firearms to take their own lives on site. Requiring straightforward, simple signage to make clear that resources are available to help those in crisis and requiring gun range employees to undergo training to recognize the signs of suicidality in patrons of these gun ranges could help keep guns - by far the most [lethal](#) means of self-harm - out of the hands of Rhode Islanders in crisis, help them access the resources they need, and help prevent similar tragedies like the ones in Tiverton in the future.