American Correctional Association

PUBLIC CORRECTIONAL POLICY ON FIREARM CONTROL

1999-3

Introduction:
As the possession of firearms by individuals involved in unlawful behavior greatly increases the potential for injury and death, corrections professionals have joined with other law enforcement organizations in calling for more restrictive firearm regulations and legislation at the local, state and federal levels. This increased chance of injury and death is particularly true for young people, as gunshot wounds are a leading cause of death among those ages 10 to 34. While a diversity of opinion exists within the correctional community regarding firearm ownership, there is a consensus that reasonable, common-sense gun-related policies are useful in preventing unauthorized persons from owning, possessing or unlawfully using firearms.

Policy Statement:
Corrections professionals work every day with people affected by the pervasive and potentially destructive nature of firearms in our society. Therefore, it is important for corrections officials to share their expertise and perspectives on the effect firearms have on crime and violence. Toward that end, the American Correctional Association urges:

A. Law enforcement organizations to join in calling for more restrictive firearm control at the federal, state and local levels;

B. Where possible, government agencies move toward registration of firearms;

C. Support of research efforts that monitor firearm-related injuries and fatalities to better inform the public of the costs associated with criminal violence. Additional support should be expressed for research efforts that identify the nature of criminal acquisition, use and trafficking of firearms;

D. Refinement and use of firearm security and safety technologies that minimize unauthorized access to firearms, especially through theft, including support for efforts that limit young children and teenagers from gaining access to firearms without proper adult supervision;

E. Promotion of educational efforts and programs that provide for violence prevention and incorporate conflict resolution techniques for young people;

F. Adoption of laws and policies that encourage personal responsibility and increase civil and criminal accountability for firearm owners, firearm manufacturers and firearms dealers who do not comply; and

G. Improved access to information regarding firearm ownership to law enforcement professionals in the field on an as-needed basis.
This Public Correctional Policy was unanimously ratified by the American Correctional Association Delegate Assembly at the Congress of Correction in Denver, Aug. 11, 1999. It was last reviewed and amended at the 2019 Winter Conference in New Orleans, LA on January 15, 2019.