
BELIZE:

FIREARMS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

1. Short title.
2. Amendment of section 2.
3. Insertion of new sections.
4. Amendment of section 3.
5. Amendment of section 3A.
6. Amendment of section 3B.
7. Amendment of section 3C.
8. Amendment of section 4A.
9. Amendment of section 7.
10. Amendment of section 8.
11. Amendment of section 9.
12. Amendment of section 10.
13. Amendment of section 11.
14. Amendment of section 14.
15. Amendment of section 20A.
16. Amendment of section 20B.
17. Amendment of section 26.
18. Amendment of section 27.
19. Amendment of section 27A.
20. Amendment of section 31C.

21. Amendment of section 34.
22. Amendment of section 36.
23. Amendment of section 37.
24. Amendment of section 40.
25. Amendment of section 41.

BELIZE:

BILL

for

AN ACT to amend the Firearms Act, Chapter 143 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2020; to establish the Firearms and Ammunition Control Board; to empower the Board to issue and revoke firearm licences, certificate or permit; to reform the regulatory structure in respect to firearms and ammunition; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Gazetted, 2023)

BE IT ENACTED, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and Senate of Belize and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the

FIREARMS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2023,

and shall be read and construed as one with the Firearms Act, which, as amended, is hereinafter referred to as the principal Act.

CAP. 143.

2. The principal Act is amended in section 2 by inserting the following term and its corresponding definition in its proper alphabetical sequence—

Amendment of section 2.

““Board” means the Firearms and Ammunition Control Board established under section 2A of this Act;”.

3. The principal Act is amended by inserting immediately after section 2, the following new sections—

Insertion of new sections.

“Establishment of Firearms and Ammunition Control Board.

2A.—(1) A body to be known as the Firearms and Ammunition Control Board is established for the purposes of this Act.

(2) The Board shall be comprised of the following members, who shall be appointed by the Minister—

-
- (a) a representative of the Commissioner of Police from the Dangerous Goods Department of the Police Department;
- (b) a magistrate; and
- (c) the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for the police department.
- Qualifications of members of the Board.
- 2B.** A person shall be eligible for appointment as a member of the Board if the person—
- (a) is a citizen of Belize and is eighteen years of age or older;
- (b) is, in the opinion of the Minister, of high integrity and able to exercise sound judgment in the fulfilment of the responsibilities as a member of the Board; and
- (c) is not the holder of, or concerned with, any license in relation to a firearm shooting range, a firearm dealership, a facility providing training in firearms, gunsmith business, a private security organisation, or any other business in connection with which a firearm authorisation is granted or required.
- Code of conduct.
- 2C.** A person who is a member of the Board shall conduct themselves in such a way as not to place themselves in any position in which they have, or could have, or be perceived to have, a conflict of interest.
- Powers and functions of the Board.
- 2D.** The powers and functions of the Board shall include, but are not limited to—
- (a) receiving, screening, and processing firearm applications;
- (b) designating approved Firearm Safety Instructors for the purposes of sections 3(9) and 3(10);

-
- (c) prescribing the procedures of application for, and considerations relevant to, the designation of Firearm Safety Instructors under paragraph (b);
 - (d) receiving and investigating complaints in respect to a breach of any term or condition of a firearm authorisation;
 - (e) ensuring general compliance with the provisions of this Act;
 - (f) causing to be conducted audits of firearms and ammunitions;
 - (g) causing to be conducted reviews of the issuance and denials of licenses;
 - (h) causing to be conducted inquisitions and investigations;
 - (i) implementing a digital management of firearms and ammunition system;
 - (j) causing the digitization of records for input into a digital management of firearms and ammunition system;
 - (k) doing all things that are necessary, incidental or conducive to the attainment of its functions under this Act.

4. The principal Act is amended in section 3—

Amendment of
section 3.

- (a) in sub-section (2), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
- (b) in sub-section (3)(e), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
- (c) in sub-section (3)(f), by deleting the word “Commissioner” in its two occurrences and substituting them with the word “Board”;
- (d) in sub-section (3)(g), by deleting the word “Commissioner” wherever it occurs and substituting it with the word “Board”;
and

(e) by inserting the following new sub-sections immediately after sub-section (8)–

“(9) A person who applies for a firearm licence shall complete the requisite training with a Firearm Safety Instructor.

(10) A person who applies for a firearm licence shall submit a certificate of competence from a Firearm Safety Instructor along with Form 1.”

Amendment of section 3A.

5. The principal Act is amended in section 3A–

(a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”;

(b) in sub-section (2), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and

(c) in sub-section (3), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of section 3B.

6. The principal Act is amended in section 3B–

(a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and

(b) in sub-section (3), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of section 3C.

7. The principal Act is amended in section 3C by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of section 4A.

8. The principal Act is amended in section 4A–

(a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”;

(b) in sub-section (3), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and

(c) in sub-section (8), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

~~9. The principal Act is amended in section 7~~

Amendment of section 7.

- (a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
- (b) in sub-section (2)–
 - (i) in paragraph (d), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
 - (ii) in paragraph (f), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
 - (iii) in paragraph (g), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
- (c) in sub-section (3)–
 - (i) in the chapeau, by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” in its two occurrences and substituting them with the word “Board”;
 - (ii) in paragraph (a), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
 - (iii) in paragraph (b), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
- (d) in sub-section (4), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
- (e) in sub-section (6), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

10. The principal Act is amended in section 8(1) by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of section 8.

11. The principal Act is amended in section 9(2) by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” in its first occurrence and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of section 9.

12. The principal Act is amended in section 10–

Amendment of section 10.

- (a) by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and

-
- (b) by deleting the word “him” and substituting it with the word “it”.
- Amendment of section 11. **13.** The principal Act is amended in section 11–
- (a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
- (b) in sub-section (2), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.
- Amendment of section 14. **14.** The principal Act is amended in section 14(1) by deleting the word “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.
- Amendment of section 20A. **15.** The principal Act is amended in section 20A–
- (a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”;
- (b) in sub-section (2)(f), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
- (c) in sub-section (4), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.
- Amendment of section 20B. **16.** The principal Act is amended in section 20B–
- (a) in sub-section (1)–
- (i) in paragraph (b), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
- (ii) in paragraph (d), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and
- (b) in sub-section (2)–
- (i) in the chapeau, by deleting the word “Commissioner” in its two occurrences and substituting them with the word “Board”;

~~(ii) in paragraph (a), by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and~~

(iii) in paragraph (b), by deleting the words “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

17. The principal Act is amended in section 26 in the chapeau by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”. Amendment of section 26.

18. The principal Act is amended in section 27– Amendment of section 27.

(a) in sub-section (1)–

(i) by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”;

(ii) by deleting the word “him” and substituting it with the word “it”;

(b) in sub-section (2)–

(i) by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and

(ii) by deleting the word “him” and substituting it with the word “it”.

19. The principal Act is amended in section 27A by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”. Amendment of section 27A.

20. The principal Act is amended in section 31C(2) by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”. Amendment of section 31C.

21. The principal Act is amended in section 34(1) by deleting the word “Commissioner” and substituting it with the word “Board”. Amendment of section 34.

22. The principal Act is amended in section 36(1) by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”. Amendment of section 36.

23. The principal Act is amended in section 37– Amendment of section 37.

(a) in sub-section (1), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”; and

(b) in sub-section (3), by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of
section 40.

24. The principal Act is amended in section 40(1)(c) by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.

Amendment of
section 41.

25. The principal Act is amended in section 41(1) by deleting the words “Commissioner of Police” and substituting it with the word “Board”.