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Government of Canada extends list of prohibited assault-style firearms and moves forward on regulatory changes to strengthen gun control

News Release
For Immediate Release

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Today, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant, and the Honourable Bill Blair, Minister of National Defence, announced that 324 additional unique makes and models of assault-style firearms are now prohibited in Canada. The Ministers also announced that the Government of Canada will move forward with regulatory measures to ensure that all firearms in the Canadian market are accounted for as well as to strengthen provisions to combat gender-based violence.

Today's announcement is part of the Government of Canada's comprehensive approach to tackle gun violence in Canada, which includes investments in border security to stop firearm smuggling and trafficking, strengthened firearms controls, tougher firearms legislation through C-21 – which codified a freeze on the sale, transfer and importation of handguns by individuals, and tougher penalties for gun traffickers – and support for intervention and prevention programs to stop gun and gang violence.

On May 1, 2020, after the worst mass shooting in Canadian history in Portapique, Nova Scotia, the Government of Canada prohibited 1,500 makes and models of assault style firearms (ASF). As of November 2024, more than 2,000 models and variants are prohibited. The additional assault-style firearms prohibited today share the same technical characteristics as those prohibited in May 2020.

The prohibition of these additional unique makes and models takes effect immediately. These firearms can no longer be legally possessed, sold in, or imported into Canada, and can only be transferred or transported under limited circumstances. These firearms must be securely stored in accordance with the storage requirements for their classification prior to the prohibition.

Following the May 2020 prohibition, the Government introduced an Amnesty Order as a companion to the firearms prohibition at that time. That Amnesty Order remains in force. A new Amnesty Order has been introduced, which also expires on October 30, 2025, for the prohibition announced today. Each Amnesty Order protects individuals and businesses, who lawfully possessed

the firearms prior to each of the bans, from criminal liability while taking steps to come into compliance with the law. During the amnesty period, there is an exception to allow Indigenous Peoples exercising a right under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, as well as those who use firearms for sustenance hunting, to continue to use their now prohibited firearms to hunt (if previously non-restricted) until a suitable replacement can be found.

An Expert Panel has been convened to provide advice on firearms remaining on the market.

Sending firearms to Ukraine

The Government of Canada has committed to the Ukrainian Government to work with businesses with a view to identifying how these and previously prohibited guns could be donated to support the fight for democracy in Ukraine. These guns are military-style guns and Ukraine has indicated interest in those with NATO caliber.

New regulations

The Government intends to table regulatory amendments in Parliament on December 13, 2024, following through on commitments to make sure that all makes and models of firearms are accounted for prior to entering the Canadian market.

The Government also continues to act to fully implement former Bill C-21, with remaining provisions to come into force early in the new year. In particular, by no later than January 2025, the Government will table measures in Parliament to address the rates of gun violence in situations of gender-based and intimate partner violence, including to define “protection order” to support the implementation of these additional harm reduction measures. New Red Flag laws – already in force – allow anyone to apply to the court to temporarily remove a firearm from an individual who may pose risks to themselves or others. An awareness campaign will be launched this Spring to support the new Red Flag laws.

In addition, the Government will also introduce regulations concerning large-capacity magazines in March 2025.

Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program

The Government will provide fair compensation for businesses and owners affected by this prohibition, as well as the prohibition announced in May 2020. All newly prohibited firearms will be included in the Assault Style Firearms Compensation Program (ASFCP). The first phase of the ASFCP process has already begun with a few businesses for testing and will be open to all firearms businesses across the country in the coming days. These firearms businesses will be notified on how and when to participate in the program.

Quote

“Firearms designed for the battlefield plainly do not belong in our communities. Too often, these types of weapons have been used to commit some of the worst atrocities Canada has ever witnessed. That’s why since 2015, we’ve done more than any previous government on gun control, and why we’re pursuing further action today – to ensure that Canada never again experiences a mass shooting.”

- The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs

“Canadians deserve to live in communities that are safe, secure, and free of gun violence. Weapons of war have no place on our streets, and we are continuing to deliver on our commitments to restrict access to firearms that pose a risk to the safety and security of Quebecers and Canadians right across this country.”

- The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Quebec Lieutenant

Quick Facts

- On May 1, 2020, the Government prohibited 1,500 makes and models of assault-style firearms (ASF) and their variants. Today, that number is over 2,000 as new variants have been identified.
- As of today, an additional 324 unique makes and models of firearms have been prohibited. These newly prohibited firearms share the same technical characteristics as those prohibited in 2020. These firearms have been prohibited due to their technical characteristics – they all have semi-automatic action with sustained rapid-fire capability (tactical/military design, with large magazine capacity).
- The Government is committed to removing ASFs from Canadian communities and reviewing the classification of firearms on the market. The second phase of the ASFCP (for individuals) is currently being developed, working closely with provinces, territories and police of jurisdiction, and planned to be launched in the upcoming months.
- The Government of Canada has committed to the Ukrainian Government to work with firearms businesses and identify how these guns could be donated to support the fight for democracy in Ukraine.

Related Products

- New firearms licensing requirements to increase public safety coming into force
- Government announces $390 million to help stop crime and violence
- New investments to help end gun and gang violence in Canada
- Government of Canada delivers on plan to build safer communities and reduce firearms violence

- Further strengthening our gun control laws

Associated Links

- Gun and Gang Violence
- Firearms
- Infographic: Homicide in Canada, 2022
- Youth Gang Prevention Fund

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