

OHIO DANGEROUS ORDNANCE LICENSES

Information for GOA Members

Current as of October 21, 2026

Please read first. This guide provides general information about Ohio's dangerous ordnance license under [R.C. 2923.18](#). It is **not legal advice**, and it does not create an attorney-client relationship with anyone. The law in this area is new and unsettled, and no Ohio court has ruled on it.

The dangerous ordnance license application is **sworn and notarized**. Every answer must be true and must describe your own circumstances. The sample forms in this guide show what an application looks like and what one sheriff accepted; they are **not** suggested answers for your application. **Before you complete or submit an application, speak with an Ohio attorney about your situation.**

1. Why this license matters now

Ohio makes it a felony to “knowingly acquire, have, carry, or use dangerous ordnance” ([R.C. 2923.17\(A\)](#)). Ohio's definition of dangerous ordnance includes suppressors and short-barreled rifles and shotguns ([R.C. 2923.11](#)). However, two exceptions come into play here:

- **Federal registration.** The ban does not apply to “[o]wners of dangerous ordnance registered in the national firearms registration and transfer record” ([R.C. 2923.17\(C\)\(5\)](#)). Nearly every private owner of a suppressor, short-barreled rifle, or short-barreled shotgun in Ohio relies on this exception.
- **A state license.** The ban also does not apply to “[t]he holders of a license or temporary permit issued and in effect pursuant to section 2923.18 . . . with respect to dangerous ordnance lawfully acquired, possessed, carried, or used for the purposes and in the manner specified in such license or permit” ([R.C. 2923.17\(C\)\(7\)](#)). This exception does not depend on federal registration.

How federal law is enforced has changed:

- **The court judgment.** On August 5, 2026, in *Silencer Shop Foundation v. ATF*, a federal court in Texas barred enforcement of key National Firearms Act (NFA) registration and approval requirements against the plaintiffs, including GOA, and their members ([final judgment](#)). The Department of Justice has said it will not appeal ([report](#)).
- **ATF's October 9 letter.** Effective October 9, 2026, ATF announced that it “will no longer require individuals to seek ATF approval under the NFA before making or transferring” suppressors, short-barreled rifles, short-barreled shotguns, and “any other weapon[s],” and “will also no longer require such items to be registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record.” ATF says these policies “apply uniformly to anyone otherwise subject to these requirements,” as a matter of enforcement discretion ([ATF open letter](#); [ATF update](#)).

ATF also stated that these changes “do not affect state or local laws that govern NFA weapons.” In Ohio, dangerous ordnance that is not registered does not qualify for the registration exception. That is why GOA members have asked about acquiring suppressors, short-barreled rifles, and short-barreled shotguns under a dangerous ordnance license.

2. Things to understand before deciding whether to apply

- **The license is discretionary.** For private individuals, a license is available “in the discretion of the issuing authority” to “any responsible person” ([R.C. 2923.18\(A\)\(5\)](#)). No statute or rule tells officials

how to exercise that discretion, and many offices have never handled a dangerous ordnance application.

- **The item must be “lawfully acquired.”** The license exception covers only ordnance “lawfully acquired, possessed, carried, or used.” For GOA members, a federal court judgment bars enforcement of the registration requirements against them. For others, ATF has only said it will not enforce those requirements, and ATF says that policy could change. An Ohio prosecutor or court could treat these situations differently, and no Ohio court has decided the question. GOA members who rely on the judgment should keep in mind that its protection is tied to membership.
- **Suppressors are the clearest case.** Of the items a license might cover, a suppressor bought from a dealer stands on the firmest ground. For a suppressor, the only federal barriers were NFA transfer and registration requirements that the court barred for GOA members and that ATF no longer enforces, so a purchase on a Form 4473 is an ordinary dealer sale. Short-barreled rifles and shotguns raise an additional federal question: [18 U.S.C. 922\(b\)\(4\)](#), which restricts dealer sales of those items, was not barred by the court, although ATF says it will not enforce it for now.
- **Making an item is uncertain.** Whether a license covers *making* a suppressor, short-barreled rifle, or short-barreled shotgun is unclear, because R.C. 2923.18 speaks only of acquiring, possessing, carrying, and using. Even though ATF no longer requires federal approval to make these items, an Ohio license may not cover an item you make yourself. This is a question for your attorney.
- **A license does not require a dealer to sell.** Even if a license is granted, no Ohio dealer is required to transfer a suppressor, short-barreled rifle, or short-barreled shotgun on a Form 4473 alone. Each dealer sets its own policy, and a dealer may still require the federal Form 4 process, which ATF continues to accept on a voluntary basis ([ATF FAQs](#)). An item transferred on an approved Form 4 is registered, and the registration exception in [R.C. 2923.17\(C\)\(5\)](#) then applies without a license. Members may want to ask a dealer about its policy before applying for a license or paying for an item.
- **The license works only in Ohio.** A license lets the holder obtain the ordnance anywhere in Ohio and use it anywhere in the state ([R.C. 2923.18\(F\)](#)). It has no effect outside Ohio, and many states require federal registration. ATF has also said that “[f]ederal law does not generally permit subsequent registration of unregistered NFA items” ([ATF FAQ 24](#)). An unregistered suppressor may not be able to leave Ohio lawfully.
- **No hunting.** Ohio permits hunting with a suppressor *only* if the hunter “has registered the suppressor in accordance with the ‘National Firearms Act’” ([R.C. 1533.04](#)).
- **Expiration and renewal.** A license for nonconsumable ordnance, such as a suppressor, short-barreled rifle, or short-barreled shotgun, “need not specify an expiration date,” but the issuing authority “may specify such expiration date, not earlier than one year from the date of issuance” ([R.C. 2923.18\(E\)](#)). The statute has no renewal procedure. If a license expires and is not reissued, the holder could be left with an unregistered item and no Ohio exception.
- **Records.** The issuing authority must send a copy of each license to the State Fire Marshal, who keeps a permanent file ([R.C. 2923.18\(G\)](#)). Applications and licenses may be public records under [R.C. 149.43](#).
- **Sworn statements.** Knowingly making a false statement under oath, or with the purpose of misleading a public official, is falsification under [R.C. 2921.13](#).
- **The permanent fix is legislative.** Senate Bill 214 would remove suppressors from Ohio’s definition of dangerous ordnance. It passed the Senate 31–1 on March 25, 2026, and is pending in the House

([SB 214](#)). If it is not enacted by the end of the current General Assembly on December 31, 2026, it must be reintroduced.

3. Where to apply and what the statute requires

Where to apply. An application goes to the sheriff of the county, or to the safety director or police chief of the municipality, where the applicant lives or has his principal place of business ([R.C. 2923.18\(A\)](#)). Once those conditions are met, “a license or temporary permit shall be issued to qualified applicants.” A suppressor, short-barreled rifle, or short-barreled shotgun is nonconsumable ordnance, so the relevant document is a license, not a temporary permit, and the fee is \$50 (R.C. 2923.18(B), (E)).

What the application must contain. The application must be in writing and under oath, and must state (R.C. 2923.18(B)):

- (1) “The name, age, address, occupation, and business address of the applicant, if the applicant is a natural person . . . ;”
- (2) “A description of the dangerous ordnance for which a permit is requested;”
- (3) “A description of the place or places where and the manner in which the dangerous ordnance is to be kept, carried, and used;”
- (4) “A statement of the purposes for which the dangerous ordnance is to be acquired, possessed, carried, or used;”
- (5) “Such other information, as the issuing authority may require in giving effect to this section.”

Item (5) means an office may ask for more than the first four items and may have its own form.

What the issuing authority must find. “Upon investigation,” the issuing authority may issue a license only if (R.C. 2923.18(C)):

- (1) “The applicant is not otherwise prohibited by law from acquiring, having, carrying or using dangerous ordnance;”
- (2) “The applicant is age twenty-one or over, if the applicant is a natural person;”
- (3) “It appears that the applicant has sufficient competence to safely acquire, possess, carry, or use the dangerous ordnance, and that proper precautions will be taken to protect the security of the dangerous ordnance and ensure the safety of persons and property;”
- (4) “It appears that the dangerous ordnance will be lawfully acquired, possessed, carried, and used by the applicant for a legitimate purpose.”

The statute sets no deadline for a decision.

4. What an application looks like (Exhibit A)

[Exhibit A is The Buckeye State Sheriffs’ Association published template application, “BSSA Form 1” \(printed 2001\)](#). It is the form most often sent by the sheriffs who responded to GOA’s request for an application, Wood County’s form is based on it, and the Jackson County application in Part 5 was made on it. A given office may use this template, its own form, or no form at all.

5. One example that was accepted: Jackson County (Exhibit B)

[Exhibit B is a redacted copy of an application that a GOA employee submitted to the Jackson County Sheriff’s Office on BSSA Form 1](#). The Sheriff approved it on October 21, 2026. The license lists its expiration as “N/A,” and the applicant paid the \$50 license fee.

GOA is sharing the Jackson County application only as an example of entries that one sheriff accepted. Another office may want more specific information, as subsection (B)(5) allows. The table below compares each entry with what the statute asks for and lists questions you may want to discuss with your attorney.

Box on the form	Entry on the Jackson County application	What R.C. 2923.18 asks for	Questions to discuss with your attorney
Place or places to be kept or carried	"All places legal and permitted"	A description of "the place or places where and the manner in which" the ordinance is to be kept, carried, and used (subsection (B)(3)); "proper precautions" for security (subsection (C)(3)).	Will your office want a specific address? Will it want to know how the item will be stored and secured, which the statute calls the "manner" of keeping it?
Place or places ordinance to be used	"All places legal and permitted"	Same as above (subsection (B)(3)).	Where will you actually use it? Keep in mind that hunting with an unregistered suppressor is not lawful in Ohio (R.C. 1533.04).
Description of dangerous ordinance	"NFA Firearms"	"A description of the dangerous ordinance for which a permit is requested" (subsection (B)(2)).	Should the description be a specific item or a class of items (for example, suppressors)? A broad description does not make an item lawful to acquire; machine guns and destructive devices remain fully regulated under federal law.
Where ordinance acquired	"All places where legally sold and/or acquired"	The ordinance must be "lawfully acquired" (subsection (C)(4)).	Should you identify the seller? Should you include proof of GOA membership and information about the federal judgment?
Purpose for use of dangerous ordinance	"All legal reasons"	"A statement of the purposes" (subsection (B)(4)); a "legitimate purpose" (subsection (C)(4)); a "legitimate research, scientific, educational, industrial, or other proper purpose" (subsection (A)(5)).	What are your actual purposes? Will your office accept a general statement, or will it want specific activities described? (See Part 6 on federal forms.)
Competence of person using ordinance	"Competent"	"[S]ufficient competence to safely acquire, possess, carry, or use the dangerous ordinance" (subsection (C)(3)).	What can you provide to show competence, such as an Ohio concealed handgun license or training certificates?
Permit type and expiration	The applicant circled the \$50 license fee, and the license expiration reads "N/A."	A license for nonconsumable ordinance "need not specify an expiration date" (subsection (E)).	Should you ask that your license be issued without an expiration date?

6. How purpose has been stated on federal NFA forms

Members familiar with federal NFA paperwork may recognize the broad wording on the Jackson County application. The federal forms ask a similar question:

- **ATF Form 1 (application to make)** asks the applicant to state why he intends to make the firearm (Item 4i). For years, a common entry has been “any lawful purpose” or “all lawful purposes,” and ATF has generally approved those entries. ATF has never published a list of acceptable reasons.
- **ATF Form 4 (application to transfer)** includes a “transferee necessity statement” (Item 13), but only for machine guns, short-barreled rifles, short-barreled shotguns, and destructive devices bought from a dealer. It does not apply to suppressors ([Form 4](#)).

ATF has occasionally pushed back on purpose statements:

- In 2018, an ATF examiner reportedly denied several Form 1s because “all lawful purposes” was considered insufficient, and the tax was refunded ([report](#)).
- In January 2026, ATF denied a GOA member’s suppressor Form 1 that gave the reason “exercise my God given right,” with the notation “INSUFFICIENT REASON – 4I – STATE REASON, NOT ACTUAL.” After GOA raised the denial publicly, ATF said the suppressor “should not have been disapproved for the reason stated,” while also saying that the box “needs a clear, legal reason” ([report](#)).
- Also in January 2026, ATF reportedly voided an approved Form 1 whose stated reason was “for all lawful purposes including justifiable homicide” ([report](#)).

Federal practice does not bind Ohio officials, and Ohio’s question is different. R.C. 2923.18 asks for “[a] statement of the purposes” and a “legitimate” or “other proper” purpose, not simply a reason. A general entry like “all legal reasons” is similar to the federal “any lawful purpose,” and it was accepted in Jackson County. Some applicants instead describe specific activities, such as target shooting or noise reduction. The federal experience suggests that officials have reacted poorly to vague, rhetorical, or embellished statements. Whatever you write must be true and must describe your own intended use.

7. Practical steps that may be helpful

The following are suggestions, not instructions. Discuss your own plan with your attorney.

- **Contacting the office first** to ask whether it has a form, how it wants the fee paid, and whether it requires notarization in person.
- **Bringing a copy of R.C. 2923.18**, since many offices are unfamiliar with it.
- **Keeping copies** of everything submitted and asking for a date-stamped copy of the application.
- **Asking for a written decision**, with reasons if the application is denied, and asking that the license be issued without an expiration date.

If an office will not accept an application or does not act on it, consult an attorney. GOA would also like to hear about your experience: **Please submit a ticket at <https://contact.gunowners.org/new> under the Information Submission category with the subject "Ohio Dangerous Ordnance License."**

This guide is general information only, not legal advice. Laws, court orders, and agency policies in this area are changing. Consult an Ohio attorney before acting.

EXHIBIT A: BSSA FORM 1

Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association template application (BSSA Form 1, printed 2001). Blank form, shown for illustration only.

APPLICATION TO ACQUIRE, POSSESS, CARRY OR USE DANGEROUS ORDNANCE (O.R.C. 2923.18)						
Name _____			D. O. B. _____			
_____	_____	_____				
Last First Middle						
Address _____						
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Number Street City			County	State	Zip	
Occupation _____			D. B. A. _____			
Description of Dangerous Ordinance _____						

Place or Places to be Kept or Carried _____						

Place or Places Ordinance to be Used _____						

Where Ordinance Acquired _____						
Purpose for Use of Dangerous Ordinance _____						
Competence of Person Using Ordinance _____						
This is a Temporary Permit Expiring _____ 20 ____ . Fee Paid – \$5.00 This is a License Expiring _____ 20 ____ . Fee Paid – \$50.00						
I Certify that I am not a fugitive from justice, am not under indictment or have not been convicted of any felony of violence or for any offense involving the illegal possession, use, sale, administration, distribution, or trafficking in any drug of abuse, nor am I a drug dependent person, chronic alcoholic, in danger of being drug dependent, or under adjudication of mental incompetence.						
Date _____ 20 ____			_____			
			Signature of Applicant			
Sworn to Before Me, A Notary Public, This _____ Day of _____ 20 ____						
SEAL			_____			
			Notary Public			

Approved for Acquiring, Possessing, Carrying, or Using the Listed Dangerous Ordinance.						
_____			_____			
County			Sheriff			
Complete in Triplicate: White Copy to Applicant Yellow Copy to State Fire Marshall Blue Copy to Sheriff's File						
BSSA Form 1 – Printed 2001						

**EXHIBIT B: JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE APPROVED APPLICATION
(REDACTED)**

Application on BSSA Form 1 submitted by a GOA employee and approved by the Jackson County Sheriff on October 21, 2026, with personal information redacted. Shown as an example of entries one sheriff accepted, not as suggested wording.

**APPLICATION TO ACQUIRE, POSSESS, CARRY OR USE DANGEROUS ORDNANCE
(O.R.C. 2923.18)**

Name [REDACTED] D. O. B. [REDACTED]
Last First Middle

Address [REDACTED]
Number Street City County State Zip

Occupation [REDACTED] D. B. A. N/A

Description of Dangerous Ordinance NFA Firearms

Place or Places to be Kept or Carried All places legal and permitted

Place or Places Ordinance to be Used All places legal and permitted

Where Ordinance Acquired All places where legally sold and/or acquired

Purpose for Use of Dangerous Ordinance All legal reasons

Competence of Person Using Ordinance Competent

This is a Temporary Permit Expiring _____ 20 ____ . Fee Paid – \$5.00

This is a License Expiring N/A 20 ____ . Fee Paid – \$50.00

I Certify that I am not a fugitive from justice, am not under indictment or have not been convicted of any felony of violence or for any offense involving the illegal possession, use, sale, administration, distribution, or trafficking in any drug of abuse, nor am I a drug dependent person, chronic alcoholic, in danger of being drug dependent, or under adjudication of mental incompetence.

Date October 21 20 26

Signature of Applicant

Sworn to before me, A Notary Public, This 21 Day of October 20 26



Notary Public, State of Ohio
My Commission Expires
08/03/2028

Notary Public

Approved for Acquiring, Possessing, Carrying, or Using the Listed Dangerous Ordinance.

Joe Koon

County

[Signature]
Sheriff

Complete in Triplicate: White Copy to Applicant
Yellow Copy to State Fire Marshall
Blue Copy to Sheriff's File

BSSA Form 1 – Printed 2001