

Working with private security guards



A good security guard in your jurisdiction can be an asset to you. When responding to a call where a security guard is present, ask for his assessment. You can often get the additional information you need to handle a situation from an observant security guard who is familiar with the location and/or parties involved. Although it's not your responsibility to train security guards, sharing information and expectations can help you develop a working relationship that can be to your benefit.

Although most private security companies are honest and legally licensed, those who aren't pose a serious threat to public safety. Unlicensed security guards have not had a criminal background check, and may have had little or no training. You should know which companies are working in your local area.

A private security guard must attend eight hours of pre-assignment training and pass a test to show competency. Within three days of hiring, a completed application and a legible set of fingerprints must be sent to the Department of Licensing for processing.

The Department of Licensing performs investigations for unlicensed activities, but depends on local law enforcement agencies to assist with license checks. The agency promotes working partnerships between law enforcement and private security guard companies to provide the best public protection services to the citizens of Washington.

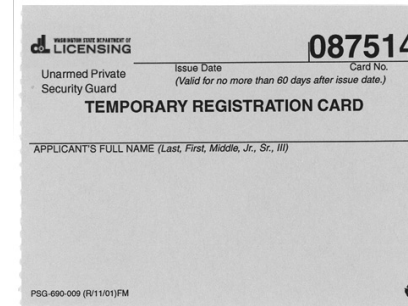
What your agency can do

When responding to a call where a security guard is on duty, make license verification part of your formal report. If the guard is not familiar to you, ask to see his or her license. It is a gross misdemeanor to work as an unlicensed security guard. When writing your report, include the security guard's name and company they work for. If the security guard does not have a license, please forward all information to the Department of Licensing. Guards employed exclusively by the company they are guarding may not be required to have a license, but this exemption does not include contract security company employees.

Suspected violations of the licensing statute regarding unlicensed activity should be reported to the Security Guard Program, P.O. Box 9649, Olympia, WA 98507-9649 or fax (360) 570-7888 or by email security@dol.wa.gov. If you have any questions about licensing requirements or unlicensed activities, please call (360) 664-6611.

Private security guard documents

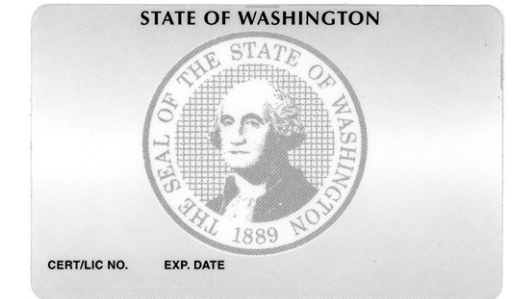
Temporary License



(front)

The bright orange temporary license has a number in the top right hand corner and the company information pre-printed. The back of the card must be filled out by the company to be valid. A security guard may work on a temporary license, as an unarmed guard only, until a permanent license is issued.

Permanent License



(front)

The permanent license is pale green with a blue seal. The back features a Washington State seal design in green. The two areas you should pay particular attention to are the armed or unarmed status and the expiration date.

Private security guards working with weapons

A Concealed Pistol License does not constitute authority to wear a firearm while on duty as a private security guard. In order for a guard to work with any type of firearm, they must have an armed endorsement to their permanent license. At no time may a security guard work armed with a temporary license.

To obtain an armed endorsement, a security guard must attend a firearms training course through the Criminal Justice Training Commission, and must train with his or her duty weapon. Guards may train for multiple weapons, but they must first train before carrying any weapon.

The licensing statutes do not specifically forbid the use of a baton or chemical mace by a licensed security guard.

Private security guard laws

RCW 18.170.070(1)(b) A private security guard shall carry the license card whenever he or she is performing the duties of a private security guard and shall exhibit the card upon request. (c) An armed private security guard shall carry the license card whenever he or she is performing the duties of an armed private security guard and shall exhibit the card upon request.

RCW 18.170.090(1)(in part) A licensed private security company may issue an employee a temporary registration card, but only after the employee has completed pre-assignment training and submitted a full and complete application for license. The temporary registration card is valid for a maximum period of sixty days and does not authorize a person to carry firearms during the performance of his or her duties.

RCW 18.170.110(2) A private security guard company must notify the department and the chief law enforcement officer immediately upon receipt of information affecting his or her continuing eligibility to hold a license. (3) A private security guard company shall notify the local law enforcement agency whenever an employee who is an armed private security guard discharges his or her firearm while on duty other than on a supervised range. The notification shall be made within 10 business days of the date the firearm is discharged.

RCW 18.170.175 No licensee, employee or agent of a licensee, or anyone accompanying a licensee, employee or agent may display a firearm while soliciting a client.

RCW 18.170.160(1) (in part) Any person who performs the functions and duties of a private security guard without being licensed; or any person attempting to use as his or her own the license of another; or any person who falsely impersonates any other licensee; or any person who attempts to use an expired or revoked license is guilty of a gross misdemeanor. (3) The owner or qualifying agent of a private security company is guilty of a gross misdemeanor if he or she employs an unlicensed person to perform the duties of a private security guard without issuing the employee a valid temporary registration card. (4) A person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor if he or she performs the functions and duties of an armed private security guard unless the

person holds a valid armed security guard license. (5) It is a gross misdemeanor for a private security guard company to hire, contract with or otherwise engage the services of an unlicensed armed private security guard, knowing that he or she does not have a valid armed private security guard license. (6) It is a gross misdemeanor for a person to possess or use any vehicle or equipment displaying the word "police" or "law enforcement" or having any sign, shield, marking, accessory or insignia that indicates that the equipment or vehicle belongs to a public law enforcement agency. (7) It is a gross misdemeanor for any person who performs the functions and duties of a private security guard to use any name that includes the word "police" or "law enforcement" or that portrays the individual or business as a public law enforcement agency.

Additional laws

The following laws (in part) are applicable to Security Officers:

RCW 9A.16.020 Use of Force: The use, attempt or offer to use force upon or toward the person of another is not unlawful in the following cases: (2) Whenever necessarily used by a person arresting one who has committed a felony and delivering him or her to a public officer competent to receive him or her into custody; (3) Whenever used by a party about to be injured, or by another lawfully aiding him or her, in preventing or attempting to prevent an offense against his or her person, or a malicious trespass, or other malicious interference with real or personal property lawfully in his or her possession, in case the force is not more than necessary; (4) Whenever reasonably used by a person to detain someone who enters or remains unlawfully in a building or on real property lawfully in the possession of such person, so long as such detention is reasonable in duration and manner to investigate the reason for the detained person's presence on the premises, and so long as the premises in question did not reasonably appear to be intended to be open to members of the public.

RCW 9A.60.045 Criminal impersonation in the second degree : (1) A person is guilty of criminal impersonation in the second degree if the person: (a)(i) Claims to be a law enforcement officer or creates an impression that he or she is a law enforcement officer; and (ii) Under circumstances not amounting to criminal impersonation in the first degree, does an act with intent to convey the

impression that he or she is acting in an official capacity and a reasonable person would believe the person is a law enforcement officer; or (b) Falsely assumes the identity of a veteran or active duty member of the armed forces of the United States with intent to defraud for the purpose of personal gain or to facilitate any unlawful activity.

(2) Criminal impersonation in the second degree is a gross misdemeanor.

WAC 204-21-230 Lighting equipment prohibited (3) Red emergency lights are prohibited on any vehicle other than an authorized emergency vehicle, a law enforcement vehicle, an emergency tow truck as defined in WAC 204-88-030 (1), (2), and (5), school buses, and private carrier buses.

(4) Blue lights prohibited on any vehicle other than law enforcement vehicle other than a law enforcement vehicle as defined in WAC 204-21-010.

(5) Flashing white lights are prohibited on any vehicle other than authorized emergency vehicles, law enforcement vehicles, school buses, and emergency tow trucks as defined in WAC 204-88-030 (1), (2), and (5).

**Public Protection Services
Department of Licensing
PO Box 9649
Olympia, WA 98507-9649
Phone: (360) 664-6611
Fax: (360) 570-7888
Email: security@dol.wa.gov**



*We are committed to providing equal access to our services.
If you need accommodation, please call (360) 664-6611
or TTY (360) 664-0116.*

Law Enforcement Officers Guide to Security Guards

