

IC 35-47-3

Chapter 3. Disposal of Confiscated Weapons

IC 35-47-3-1

Disposal of confiscated weapons in accordance with chapter

Sec. 1. All firearms confiscated pursuant to statute shall, upon conviction of the person for the offense for which the confiscation was made, be disposed of in accordance with this chapter.

As added by P.L.311-1983, SEC.32.

IC 35-47-3-2

Application of section to firearms not required to be registered in National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record; return of firearms to rightful owners; disposal procedure

Sec. 2. (a) This section applies only to firearms which are not required to be registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record.

(b) Firearms shall be returned to the rightful owner at once following final disposition of the cause if a return has not already occurred under the terms of IC 35-33-5. If the rightful ownership is not known the law enforcement agency holding the firearm shall make a reasonable attempt to ascertain the rightful ownership and cause the return of the firearm. However, nothing in this chapter shall be construed as requiring the return of firearms to rightful owners who have been convicted for the misuse of firearms. In such cases, the court may provide for the return of the firearm in question or order that the firearm be at once delivered:

(1) except as provided in subdivision (2), to the sheriff's department of the county in which the offense occurred; or

(2) to the city or town police force that confiscated the firearm.

(c) The receiving law enforcement agency shall dispose of firearms under subsection (b), at the discretion of the law enforcement agency, not more than one hundred twenty (120) days following receipt by use of any of the following procedures:

(1) Public sale of the firearms to the general public as follows:

(A) Notice of the sale shall be:

(i) posted for ten (10) days in the county courthouse in a place readily accessible to the general public; and

(ii) advertised in the principal newspaper of the county for two (2) days in an advertisement that appears in the newspaper at least five (5) days prior to the sale.

(B) Disposition of the firearm shall be by public auction in a place convenient to the general public, with disposition going to the highest bidder. However, no firearm shall be transferred to any bidder if that bidder is not lawfully eligible to receive and possess firearms according to the laws of the United States and Indiana.

(C) All handguns transferred under this subdivision shall also be transferred according to the transfer procedures set forth in this article.

(D) Money collected pursuant to the sales shall first be used to defray the necessary costs of administering this subdivision with any surplus to be:

(i) deposited into the receiving law enforcement agency's firearms training fund, other appropriate training activities fund, or any other fund that may be used by the receiving law enforcement agency for the purchase and maintenance of firearms, ammunition, vests, and other law enforcement equipment; and

(ii) used by the agency exclusively to train law enforcement officers in the proper use of firearms or other law enforcement duties, and to purchase and maintain firearms, ammunition, vests, and other law enforcement equipment.

A law enforcement agency may not sell a firearm to the general public if the firearm is unsafe to operate because it has been damaged or altered.

(2) Sale of the firearms to a licensed firearms dealer as follows:

(A) Notice of the sale must be:

(i) posted for ten (10) days in the county courthouse in a place readily accessible to the general public; and

(ii) advertised in the principal newspaper of the county for two (2) days in an advertisement that appears in the newspaper at least five (5) days before the sale.

(B) Disposition of the firearm shall be by auction with disposition going to the highest bidder who is a licensed firearms dealer.

(C) Money collected from the sales shall first be used to defray the necessary costs of administering this subdivision and any surplus shall be:

(i) deposited into the receiving law enforcement agency's firearms training fund, other appropriate training activities fund, or any other fund that may be used by the receiving law enforcement agency for the purchase and maintenance of firearms, ammunition, vests, and other law enforcement equipment; and

(ii) used by the agency exclusively to train law enforcement officers in the proper use of firearms or other law enforcement duties, and to purchase and maintain firearms, ammunition, vests, and other law enforcement equipment.

A law enforcement agency may sell a firearm to a licensed firearms dealer for salvage or repair, even if the firearm is unsafe to operate because it has been damaged or altered.

(3) Sale or transfer of the firearms to another law enforcement agency.

(4) Release to the state police department laboratory or other forensic laboratory administered by the state or a political subdivision (as defined in IC 36-1-2-13) for the purposes of research, training, and comparison in conjunction with the

forensic examination of firearms evidence.

(5) Destruction of the firearms. A firearm that is to be destroyed may be sold to a salvage company and destroyed by dismantling the firearm for parts, scrap metal, or recycling, or for resale as parts for other firearms.

(d) Notwithstanding the requirement of this section mandating disposal of firearms not more than one hundred twenty (120) days following receipt, the receiving law enforcement agency may at its discretion hold firearms it may receive until a sufficient number has accumulated to defray the costs of administering this section if a delay does not exceed one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of receipt of the first firearm in the sale lot. In addition, the receiving law enforcement agency may, at its discretion, jointly sell firearms it has received with another law enforcement agency, or permit another law enforcement agency to sell firearms it has received on behalf of the receiving law enforcement agency. In any event, all confiscated firearms shall be disposed of as promptly as possible.

(e) When a firearm is delivered to the state police department laboratory or other forensic laboratory under subsection (c)(4) and the state police department laboratory or other forensic laboratory determines the laboratory has no further need for the firearm in question, the laboratory shall return the firearm to the law enforcement agency for disposal under subsection (c).

As added by P.L.311-1983, SEC.32. Amended by P.L.209-1986, SEC.2; P.L.57-1992, SEC.7; P.L.48-1993, SEC.7; P.L.119-2012, SEC.167; P.L.157-2014, SEC.2.

IC 35-47-3-3

Application of section to firearms required to be registered in National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record; return of firearms to rightful owners; unreturnable firearms; registry of firearms; disposal

Sec. 3. (a) This section applies to firearms that are required to be registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record.

(b) Firearms shall be returned to the rightful owner at once following final disposition of the cause, if such return has not already occurred under the terms of IC 35-33-5, and if such owner remains lawfully entitled to possess such firearms according to applicable United States and Indiana statutes. If rightful ownership is not known, the law enforcement agency holding the firearm shall make a reasonable and diligent effort to ascertain the rightful ownership and cause the return of the firearm being held, providing the owner remains lawfully entitled to possess such firearms.

(c) Firearms that are not returnable under this section shall be at once delivered to:

- (1) the sheriff's department of the county in which the offense occurred, unless subdivision (2) applies; or
- (2) the city or town police force that confiscated the firearm if:
 - (A) a member of the city or town police force confiscated the firearm; and

(B) the city or town has a population of more than two thousand five hundred (2,500) and less than six hundred thousand (600,000);

following final disposition of the cause.

(d) When firearms are sent to a law enforcement agency under subsection (c), the law enforcement agency may upon request release the firearms to the state police department laboratory or other forensic laboratory administered by the state or a political subdivision (as defined in IC 36-1-2-13) for the purposes of research, training, and comparison in conjunction with the forensic examination of firearms evidence.

(e) The receiving law enforcement agency or laboratory shall cause the registry of such firearms in the United States National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record within thirty (30) days following receipt from the court.

(f) The court may order such firearms as are not returnable destroyed, specifying the exact manner of destruction and requiring the receiving law enforcement agency or laboratory to make due return to the ordering court the time, date, method of destruction, and disposition of the remains of the destroyed firearm.

(g) No portion of this section shall be construed as requiring the receiving law enforcement agency or laboratory to retain firearms which are inoperable or unserviceable, or which the receiving law enforcement agency or laboratory may choose to transfer as public property in the ordinary course of lawful commerce and exchange.
As added by P.L.311-1983, SEC.32. Amended by P.L.209-1986, SEC.3; P.L.57-1992, SEC.8; P.L.119-2012, SEC.168.

IC 35-47-3-4

Unlawful delivery of confiscated firearm

Sec. 4. A person who knowingly or intentionally:

(1) delivers a confiscated firearm to a person convicted of a felony:

(A) involving use of a firearm; and

(B) which is the basis of the confiscation;

(2) delivers a confiscated firearm to another with knowledge that there is a rightful owner to whom the firearm must be returned; or

(3) fails to deliver a confiscated firearm to the sheriff's department, a city or town police force, the state police department laboratory or a forensic laboratory under this chapter, the state under IC 14-22-39-6, or for disposition after a determination that the rightful owner of the firearm cannot be ascertained or is no longer entitled to possess the confiscated firearm;

commits a Level 6 felony.

As added by P.L.311-1983, SEC.32. Amended by P.L.209-1986, SEC.4; P.L.57-1992, SEC.9; P.L.1-1995, SEC.77; P.L.158-2013, SEC.588.