

## Firearm Use by Young Persons

### Purpose of this Information Sheet

- Explains when and how young persons (aged 12 to under 18 years) may lawfully possess and use firearms in Western Australia under the *Firearms Act 2024* and *Firearms Regulations 2024*.
- Outlines the main circumstances for lawful use, including supervised use under an Individual Licence, at licensed clubs or ranges, at paintball business premises, and under a Primary Producer Licence.
- Summarises key requirements and limits (minimum ages, parental consent where required, and immediate supervision), and clarifies that disqualified or prohibited persons must never possess or use firearms.

### Definitions

**Young person** means a person who is at least 12 years of age to under 18 years of age.

**Immediate supervision** means the supervisor (licence holder or authorised person supervising the young person) must be present, able to see and hear the activity, and able to intervene quickly if needed.

### Under 18s and Firearm Use

Western Australian law prohibits anyone under 18 years of age from obtaining a firearm licence. This is in line with clause 33(a) of the National Firearms Agreement 2017 which requires that a licence applicant be aged 18 years or over.

There are some circumstances which allow young persons to possess and use firearms in Western Australia, and they are outlined in this information sheet.

No part in the *Firearms Act 2024* and *Firearms Regulations 2024*, or the National Firearms Agreement 2017, authorises a young person to possess a firearm independently. All firearms in possession or use by a young person must occur under lawful immediate supervision and in accordance with the conditions of the relevant licence.

Disqualified persons and prohibited persons are not permitted to possess or use firearms.

### Age Requirements

- For a licence or permit: 18 years of age.
- For an authorised person approval: 15 years of age.\*
- For supervised possession and use of a firearm: 12 years to under 18 years of age.

\*This approval allows a young person to undertake an apprenticeship which requires the possession and use of firearms. This is not a general authorisation and requires individual approval by the Commissioner of Police.

## Individual Licence Supervision

A young person, who is not a disqualified person or prohibited person, may use an Individual Licence Holder's firearm.

The Individual Licence Holder must have held the licence for at least five (5) continuous years to supervise a young person. The shooting activity and firearm must be permitted by the licence type and must occur under the licence holder's immediate supervision.

## Club Licence / Range Licence Supervision

A young person, who is not a disqualified person or prohibited person, may use a club firearm or range firearm at a licensed firearm range for competition shooting, target shooting, or firearms training.

Use of a firearm must be under the immediate supervision of an authorised person for the relevant Club Licence or Range Licence, and with parental consent.

### Parental consent requirements

A Club Licensee or Range Licensee, or an authorised person for either licence, must not allow a young person:

- Aged 12 years to under 16 years to use a firearm unless:
  - a parent provides written consent; and
  - the parent remains at the licensed firearm range while the young person is using the firearm.
- Aged 16 years to under 18 years to use a firearm unless:
  - a parent provides written consent.

## Paintball Business Licence Supervision

A young person, who is not a disqualified person or prohibited person, may participate in a paintball game at a licensed paintball business premises.

Use of a firearm must be under the immediate supervision of an authorised person for the relevant Paintball Business Licence, and with parental consent.

### Parental consent requirements

A Paintball Business Licensee, or an authorised person for the licence, must not allow a young person:

- Aged 12 years to under 16 years to use a firearm unless:
  - a parent provides written consent; and
  - the parent remains at the licensed paintball business premises while the young person is using the firearm.
- Aged 16 years to under 18 years to use a firearm unless:
  - a parent provides written consent.

For all young persons, the parent must also make a declaration to the Paintball Business Licensee that the young person is not a disqualified person or prohibited person.

## Primary Producer Licence Supervision

A Primary Producer Licence allows the licensee's child to use firearms under that licence, provided the licensee has given permission and the child is under the immediate supervision of the licensee or an authorised person listed on the licence.

**Child** means a young person who is a child of the Primary Producer Licensee, or the licensee's spouse or de facto partner.

Firearms can only be used for primary production purposes on the landholding covered by the licence, and for those purposes on any other landholding of the licensee.

This arrangement only applies to category A, B and E firearms. A young person is not permitted to use category C or H firearms under a Primary Producer Licence.

Where a Primary Producer Licence is held by an individual (and not a corporation), the licensee is also taken to hold an Individual Licence for hunting. Accordingly, the licensee may supervise a young person using category A or B firearms for hunting purposes, as long as the young person is under the licensee's immediate supervision.

## References to Legislation

Legislation	Relevant Provision
<i>Firearms Act 2024</i>	Sections 7, 23, 31, 61, 62, 74, 80, 158
<i>Firearms Regulations 2024</i>	Regulations 140, 140A, 156, 156A, 241