

To Bear Arms? Now, It's Illegal in Brazil.

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Whether issued by the Federal Police or state police, all licenses to bear firearms in Brazil expired yesterday. To obtain a license or renew the current one, one must comply with the rules of the Disarmament Statute. One of these rules is that the applicant must be at least 25 years old.

The head of the National Arms System, Fernando Segóvia, recalled that the legislation stipulates two basic conditions for citizens to obtain gun licenses in Brazil: to be engaged in a dangerous occupation or to be threatened with bodily harm. "These individuals will have to substantiate this, by presenting documents or proofs to the Federal Police, in order to obtain gun licenses," he explained.

Anyone who wants to have a gun license and bear arms must go to the Federal Police and present various documents, including electoral, military, state, and federal court criminal priors sheets.

A psychological test and marksmanship test are also required. Only the Federal Police is authorized to issue gun registrations and licenses. State licenses are no longer accepted.

Around two thousand gun licenses issued by the Federal Police will lose their validity today. There is no general record of licenses issued by state police throughout Brazil.

Until the end of the year, people interested in surrendering their arms through the Disarmament Campaign can do so without any kind of penalty.

"Even if their gun licenses have expired, they can go to the Federal Police, obtain an authorization to transport the arms, and, with this document, go home and get their guns and take them to the Federal Police," Segóvia said.

The penalty for anyone caught carrying a firearm illegally is a 2-4 year prison sentence and a fine. It is a crime for which bond cannot be posted.

The only exception is for someone whose arm is registered, but this doesn't exempt the person from being judged for the crime of bearing a weapon illegally.

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