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HOUSE BILL NO. 540

Offered January 14, 2026

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A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 15.2-915, 18.2-283.2, 18.2-287.01, 18.2-287.4, 18.2-308, 24.2-604, 24.2-671, and 24.2-802.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to carrying firearms in restricted locations; exception.

Patron—Hamilton

Referred to Committee on Public Safety

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 15.2-915, 18.2-283.2, 18.2-287.01, 18.2-287.4, 18.2-308, 24.2-604, 24.2-671, and 24.2-802.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 15.2-915. Control of firearms; applicability to authorities and local governmental agencies.

A. No locality shall adopt or enforce any ordinance, resolution, or motion, as permitted by § 15.2-1425, and no agent of such locality shall take any administrative action, governing the purchase, possession, transfer, ownership, carrying, storage, or transporting of firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof other than those expressly authorized by statute. For purposes of this section, a statute that does not refer to firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof shall not be construed to provide express authorization.

Nothing in this section shall prohibit a locality from adopting workplace rules relating to terms and conditions of employment of the workforce. However, no locality shall adopt any workplace rule, other than for the purposes of a community services board or behavioral health authority as defined in § 37.2-100, that prevents an employee of that locality from storing at that locality's workplace a lawfully possessed firearm and ammunition in a locked private motor vehicle. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a law-enforcement officer, as defined in § 9.1-101, from acting within the scope of his duties.

The provisions of this section applicable to a locality shall also apply to any authority or to a local governmental entity, including a department or agency, but not including any local or regional jail, juvenile detention facility, or state-governed entity, department, or agency.

B. Any local ordinance, resolution, or motion adopted prior to July 1, 2004, governing the purchase, possession, transfer, ownership, carrying, or transporting of firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof, other than those expressly authorized by statute, is invalid.

C. In addition to any other relief provided, the court may award reasonable attorney fees, expenses, and court costs to any person, group, or entity that prevails in an action challenging (i) an ordinance, resolution, or motion as being in conflict with this section or (ii) an administrative action taken in bad faith as being in conflict with this section.

D. For purposes of this section, "workplace" means "workplace of the locality."

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a locality may adopt an ordinance that prohibits the possession, carrying, or transportation of any firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof (i) in any building, or part thereof, owned or used by such locality, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the locality, for governmental purposes; (ii) in any public park owned or operated by the locality, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the locality; (iii) in any recreation or community center facility operated by the locality, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the locality; or (iv) in any public street, road, alley, or sidewalk or public right-of-way or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public and is being used by or is adjacent to a permitted event or an event that would otherwise require a permit. In buildings that are not owned by a locality, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the locality, such ordinance shall apply only to the part of the building that is being used for a governmental purpose and when such building, or part thereof, is being used for a governmental purpose.

Any such ordinance may include security measures that are designed to reasonably prevent the unauthorized access of such buildings, parks, recreation or community center facilities, or public streets, roads, alleys, or sidewalks or public rights-of-way or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public and is being used by or is adjacent to a permitted event or an event that would otherwise require a permit by a person with any firearms, ammunition, or components or combination thereof, such as the use of metal detectors and increased use of security personnel.

The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to (a) any woman who (1) is a current victim of family abuse, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (2) has an active protective order against a family or household member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228; or (b) the activities of (1) a Senior Reserve

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59 Officers' Training Corps program operated at a public or private institution of higher education in accordance  
60 with the provisions of 10 U.S.C. § 2101 et seq. or (ii) (2) any intercollegiate athletics program operated by a  
61 public or private institution of higher education and governed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association  
62 or any club sports team recognized by a public or private institution of higher education where the sport  
63 engaged in by such program or team involves the use of a firearm. Such activities shall follow strict  
64 guidelines developed by such institutions for these activities and shall be conducted under the supervision of  
65 staff officials of such institutions.

66 F. Notice of any ordinance adopted pursuant to subsection E shall be posted (i) at all entrances of any  
67 building, or part thereof, owned or used by the locality, or by any authority or local governmental entity  
68 created or controlled by the locality, for governmental purposes; (ii) at all entrances of any public park owned  
69 or operated by the locality, or by any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the  
70 locality; (iii) at all entrances of any recreation or community center facilities operated by the locality, or by  
71 any authority or local governmental entity created or controlled by the locality; and (iv) at all entrances or  
72 other appropriate places of ingress and egress to any public street, road, alley, or sidewalk or public right-of-  
73 way or any other place of whatever nature that is open to the public and is being used by or is adjacent to a  
74 permitted event or an event that would otherwise require a permit.

75 **§ 18.2-283.2. Carrying a firearm or explosive material within Capitol Square and the surrounding**  
76 **area, into a building owned or leased by the Commonwealth, etc.; penalty.**

77 A. For the purposes of this section, "Capitol Square and the surrounding area" means the grounds, land,  
78 real property, and improvements in the City of Richmond bounded by Bank, Governor, Broad, and Ninth  
79 Streets, and the sidewalks of Bank Street extending from 50 feet west of the Pocahontas Building entrance to  
80 50 feet east of the entrance of the Capitol of Virginia.

81 B. It is unlawful for any person to carry any firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2 or explosive material as  
82 defined in § 18.2-308.2 within (i) the Capitol of Virginia; (ii) Capitol Square and the surrounding area; (iii)  
83 any building owned or leased by the Commonwealth or any agency thereof; or (iv) any office where  
84 employees of the Commonwealth or any agency thereof are regularly present for the purpose of performing  
85 their official duties.

86 C. A violation of this section is punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any firearm or explosive material  
87 carried in violation of this section shall be subject to seizure by a law-enforcement officer and forfeited to the  
88 Commonwealth and disposed of as provided in § 19.2-386.28.

89 D. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the following while acting in the conduct of such  
90 person's official duties: (i) any law-enforcement officer as defined in § 9.1-101; (ii) any authorized security  
91 personnel; (iii) any active military personnel; (iv) any fire marshal appointed pursuant to § 27-30 when such  
92 fire marshal has police powers provided by § 27-34.2:1; or (v) any member of a cadet corps who is  
93 recognized by a public institution of higher education while such member is participating in an official  
94 ceremonial event for the Commonwealth.

95 E. The provisions of clause (ii) of subsection B shall not apply to (i) any State Police officer who is  
96 off-duty or (ii) any retired State Police officer who has participated in annual firearms training and has  
97 qualified to the standards required of active law-enforcement officers in the Commonwealth, in accordance  
98 with subsection C of § 18.2-308.016.

99 The provisions of clauses (iii) and (iv) of subsection B shall not apply to (a) any State Police officer who  
100 is off-duty; (b) any retired State Police officer who has participated in annual firearms training and has  
101 qualified to the standards required of active law-enforcement officers in the Commonwealth, in accordance  
102 with subsection C of § 18.2-308.016; (c) any retired law-enforcement officer who has participated in annual  
103 firearms training, has qualified pursuant to subsection C of § 18.2-308.016, and is visiting a gun range owned  
104 or leased by the Commonwealth; (d) any of the following employees authorized to carry a firearm while  
105 acting in the conduct of such employee's official duties: (1) a bail bondsman as defined in § 9.1-185, (2) an  
106 employee of the Department of Corrections or a state juvenile correctional facility, (3) an employee of the  
107 Department of Conservation and Recreation, or (4) an employee of the Department of Wildlife Resources; (e)  
108 any individual carrying a weapon into a courthouse who is exempt under § 18.2-283.1; (f) any property  
109 owned or operated by a public institution of higher education; (g) any state park; or (h) any magistrate acting  
110 in the conduct of the magistrate's official duties.

111 F. *The provisions of this section shall not apply to any woman who (i) is a current victim of family abuse,*  
112 *as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (ii) has an active protective order against a family or household*  
113 *member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228.*

114 G. Notice of the provisions of this section shall be posted conspicuously along the boundary of Capitol  
115 Square and the surrounding area and at the public entrance of each location listed in subsection B, and no  
116 person shall be convicted of an offense under subsection B if such notice is not posted at such public  
117 entrance, unless such person had actual notice of the prohibitions in subsection B.

118 **§ 18.2-287.01. Carrying weapon in air carrier airport terminal.**

119 A. It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or transport into any air carrier airport terminal in the  
120 Commonwealth any (i) gun or other weapon designed or intended to propel a missile or projectile of any

121 kind, (ii) frame, receiver, muffler, silencer, missile, projectile or ammunition designed for use with a  
 122 dangerous weapon, and (iii) any other dangerous weapon, including explosives, stun weapons as defined in  
 123 § 18.2-308.1, and those weapons specified in subsection A of § 18.2-308. Any such weapon shall be subject  
 124 to seizure by a law-enforcement officer. A violation of this section is punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.  
 125 Any weapon possessed or transported in violation of this section shall be forfeited to the Commonwealth and  
 126 disposed of as provided in § 19.2-386.28.

127 *B.* The provisions of this section shall not apply to any police officer, sheriff, law-enforcement agent or  
 128 official, conservation police officer, conservator of the peace employed by the air carrier airport, or retired  
 129 law-enforcement officer qualified pursuant to subsection C of § 18.2-308.016, nor shall the provisions of this  
 130 section apply to any passenger of an airline who, to the extent otherwise permitted by law, transports a lawful  
 131 firearm, weapon, or ammunition into or out of an air carrier airport terminal for the sole purposes,  
 132 respectively, of (i) presenting such firearm, weapon, or ammunition to U.S. Customs agents in advance of an  
 133 international flight, in order to comply with federal law, (ii) checking such firearm, weapon, or ammunition  
 134 with his luggage, or (iii) retrieving such firearm, weapon, or ammunition from the baggage claim area.

135 *C.* *The provisions of this section shall not apply to any woman who (i) is a current victim of family abuse,*  
 136 *as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (ii) has an active protective order against a family or household*  
 137 *member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228.*

138 *D.* Any other statute, rule, regulation, or ordinance specifically addressing the possession or transportation  
 139 of weapons in any airport in the Commonwealth shall be invalid, and this section shall control.

140 **§ 18.2-287.4. Carrying loaded firearms in public areas prohibited; penalty.**

141 It shall be unlawful for any person to carry a loaded ~~(a)~~ (i) semi-automatic center-fire rifle or pistol that  
 142 expels single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material and is equipped at  
 143 the time of the offense with a magazine that will hold more than 20 rounds of ammunition or designed by the  
 144 manufacturer to accommodate a silencer or equipped with a folding stock or ~~(b)~~ (ii) shotgun with a magazine  
 145 that will hold more than seven rounds of the longest ammunition for which it is chambered on or about his  
 146 person on any public street, road, alley, sidewalk, public right-of-way, or in any public park or any other  
 147 place of whatever nature that is open to the public in the Cities of Alexandria, Chesapeake, Fairfax, Falls  
 148 Church, Newport News, Norfolk, Richmond, or Virginia Beach or in the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax,  
 149 Henrico, Loudoun, or Prince William.

150 The provisions of this section shall not apply to (a) law-enforcement officers, licensed security guards, or  
 151 military personnel in the performance of their lawful duties; ~~or~~; (b) any person having a valid concealed  
 152 handgun permit ~~or~~ ~~to~~; (c) any person actually engaged in lawful hunting or lawful recreational shooting  
 153 activities at an established shooting range or shooting contest; or (d) any woman who (1) is a current victim  
 154 of family abuse, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (2) has an active protective order against a family  
 155 or household member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228. Any person violating the provisions of this  
 156 section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

157 The exemptions set forth in §§ 18.2-308 and 18.2-308.016 shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the provisions  
 158 of this section.

159 **§ 18.2-308. Carrying concealed weapons; exceptions; penalty.**

160 *A.* If any person carries about his person, hidden from common observation, (i) any pistol, revolver, or  
 161 other weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind by action of an explosion of any  
 162 combustible material; (ii) any dirk, bowie knife, stiletto knife, ballistic knife, machete, razor, sling bow,  
 163 spring stick, metal knucks, or blackjack; (iii) any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts  
 164 connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun  
 165 chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain; (iv) any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two  
 166 points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing  
 167 star or oriental dart; or (v) any weapon of like kind as those enumerated in this subsection, he is guilty of a  
 168 Class 1 misdemeanor. A second violation of this section or a conviction under this section subsequent to any  
 169 conviction under any substantially similar ordinance of any county, city, or town shall be punishable as a  
 170 Class 6 felony, and a third or subsequent such violation shall be punishable as a Class 5 felony. For the  
 171 purpose of this section, a weapon shall be deemed to be hidden from common observation when it is  
 172 observable but is of such deceptive appearance as to disguise the weapon's true nature. It shall be an  
 173 affirmative defense to a violation of clause (i) regarding a handgun, that a person had been issued, at the time  
 174 of the offense, a valid concealed handgun permit.

175 *B.* This section shall not apply to any person while in his own place of abode or the curtilage thereof.

176 *C.* Except as provided in subsection A of § 18.2-308.012, this section shall not apply to:

- 177 1. Any person while in his own place of business;
- 178 2. Any law-enforcement officer, or retired law-enforcement officer pursuant to § 18.2-308.016, wherever  
 179 such law-enforcement officer may travel in the Commonwealth;
- 180 3. Any person who is at, or going to or from, an established shooting range, provided that the weapons are  
 181 unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported;
- 182 4. Any regularly enrolled member of a weapons collecting organization who is at, or going to or from, a

183 bona fide weapons exhibition, provided that the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being  
184 transported;

185 5. Any person carrying such weapons between his place of abode and a place of purchase or repair,  
186 provided the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported;

187 6. Any person actually engaged in lawful hunting, as authorized by the Board of Wildlife Resources,  
188 under inclement weather conditions necessitating temporary protection of his firearm from those conditions,  
189 provided that possession of a handgun while engaged in lawful hunting shall not be construed as hunting with  
190 a handgun if the person hunting is carrying a valid concealed handgun permit;

191 7. Any attorney for the Commonwealth or assistant attorney for the Commonwealth, wherever such  
192 attorney may travel in the Commonwealth;

193 8. Any person who may lawfully possess a firearm and is carrying a handgun while in a personal, private  
194 motor vehicle or vessel and such handgun is secured in a container or compartment in the vehicle or vessel;

195 9. Any enrolled participant of a firearms training course who is at, or going to or from, a training location,  
196 provided that the weapons are unloaded and securely wrapped while being transported; ~~and~~

197 10. *Any woman who (i) is a current victim of family abuse, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (ii)*  
198 *has an active protective order against a family or household member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228;*  
199 *and*

200 11. Any judge or justice of the Commonwealth, wherever such judge or justice may travel in the  
201 Commonwealth.

202 D. This section shall also not apply to any of the following individuals while in the discharge of their  
203 official duties, or while in transit to or from such duties:

204 1. Carriers of the United States mail;

205 2. Officers or guards of any state correctional institution;

206 3. Conservators of the peace, except that a judge or justice of the Commonwealth, an attorney for the  
207 Commonwealth, or an assistant attorney for the Commonwealth may carry a concealed handgun pursuant to  
208 subdivisions C 7 and 10. However, the following conservators of the peace shall not be permitted to carry a  
209 concealed handgun without obtaining a permit as provided in this article: (i) notaries public; (ii) registrars;  
210 (iii) drivers, operators, or other persons in charge of any motor vehicle carrier of passengers for hire; or (iv)  
211 commissioners in chancery; and

212 4. Noncustodial employees of the Department of Corrections designated to carry weapons by the Director  
213 of the Department of Corrections pursuant to § 53.1-29.

214 **§ 24.2-604. Polling places; prohibited activities; prohibited area; penalties.**

215 A. During the times the polls are open and ballots are being counted, or within one hour of opening or  
216 after closing, it is unlawful for any person (i) to loiter or congregate within 40 feet of any entrance of any  
217 polling place; (ii) within such distance to give, tender, or exhibit any ballot, ticket, or other campaign or  
218 referendum material to any person or to solicit or in any manner attempt to influence any person in casting his  
219 vote; (iii) to hinder or delay a qualified voter in entering or leaving a polling place; or (iv) to knowingly  
220 possess any firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2 within 40 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a  
221 polling place.

222 B. Prior to opening the polls, the officers of election shall post, in the area within 40 feet of any entrance  
223 to the polling place, sufficient notices that state "Prohibited Area" in two-inch type. The notices shall also  
224 state the provisions of this section in not less than 24-point type. The officers of election shall post the notices  
225 within the prohibited area to be visible to voters and the public.

226 C. It is unlawful for any authorized representative permitted in the polling place pursuant to § 24.2-604.4,  
227 any voter, or any other person in the room to (i) hinder or delay a qualified voter; (ii) give, tender, or exhibit  
228 any ballot, ticket, or other campaign or referendum material to any person; (iii) solicit or in any manner  
229 attempt to influence any person in casting his vote; (iv) hinder or delay any officer of election; (v) be in a  
230 position to see the marked ballot of any other voter; or (vi) otherwise impede the orderly conduct of the  
231 election.

232 D. The provisions of subsections A and C shall not be construed to prohibit a person who approaches or  
233 enters the polling place for the purpose of voting from wearing a shirt, hat, or other apparel on which a  
234 candidate's name or a political slogan appears or from having a sticker or button attached to his apparel on  
235 which a candidate's name or a political slogan appears. This exemption shall not apply to candidates,  
236 representatives of candidates, or any other person who approaches or enters the polling place for any purpose  
237 other than voting.

238 E. This section shall not be construed to prohibit a candidate from entering any polling place on the day of  
239 the election to vote, or to visit a polling place for no longer than 10 minutes per polling place per election  
240 day, provided that he complies with the restrictions stated in subsections A, C, and D.

241 F. The provisions of clause (iv) of subsection A shall not apply to (i) any law-enforcement officer or any  
242 retired law-enforcement officer qualified pursuant to subsection C of § 18.2-308.016; (ii) any person  
243 occupying his own private property that falls within 40 feet of a polling place; ~~or~~ (iii) *any woman who (a) is a*  
244 *current victim of family abuse, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (b) has an active protective order*

245 *against a family or household member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228; or (iv) an armed security*  
 246 *officer, licensed pursuant to Article 4 (§ 9.1-138 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1, whose employment or*  
 247 *performance of his duties occurs within 40 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a polling place.*

248 G. The officers of election may require any person who is found by a majority of the officers present to be  
 249 in violation of this section to remain outside of the prohibited area. Any person violating subsection A or C is  
 250 guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

251 **§ 24.2-671. Electoral board to meet and ascertain results; conclusiveness of results.**

252 A. Each electoral board shall meet at the clerk's or general registrar's office of the county or city for which  
 253 they are appointed at or before 5:00 p.m. on the day after any election. The board may adjourn to another  
 254 room of sufficient size in a public building to ascertain the results, and may adjourn as needed, not to exceed  
 255 10 calendar days from the date of the election unless an extension has been granted to accommodate a  
 256 risk-limiting audit conducted pursuant to § 24.2-671.2. Written directions to the location of any room other  
 257 than the clerk's or general registrar's office where the board will meet shall be posted at the doors of the  
 258 clerk's and general registrar's offices prior to the beginning of the meeting.

259 If the electoral board has exercised the option provided by § 24.2-668 for delivery of the election  
 260 materials to the office of the general registrar on the night of the election, the electoral board shall meet at the  
 261 office of the general registrar at or before 5:00 p.m. on the day after any election.

262 B. The board shall open the returns delivered by the officers and ascertain from the returns the total votes  
 263 in the county or city, or town in a town election, for each candidate and for and against each question and  
 264 complete the abstract of votes cast at such election, as provided for in § 24.2-675. For any office in which no  
 265 person was elected by write-in votes, and for which the total number of write-in votes for that office is less  
 266 than (i) 10 percent of the total number of votes cast for that office and (ii) the total number of votes cast for  
 267 the candidate receiving the most votes, the electoral board shall ascertain the total votes for each write-in  
 268 candidate for the office within one week following the election. For offices for which the electoral board  
 269 issues the certificate of election, the result so ascertained, signed and attested, shall be conclusive and shall  
 270 not thereafter be subject to challenge except as specifically provided in Chapter 8 (§ 24.2-800 et seq.).

271 Once the result is so ascertained, the secretary of the electoral board shall deliver one copy of each  
 272 statement of results to the general registrar to be available for inspection when his office is open for business.  
 273 The secretary shall then return all pollbooks, any printed inspection and return sheets, and one copy of each  
 274 statement of results to the clerk.

275 C. A report of any changes made by the local electoral board to the unofficial results ascertained by the  
 276 officers of election or any subsequent change to the official abstract of votes made by the local electoral  
 277 board shall be forwarded to the State Board of Elections and the explanation of such change shall be posted  
 278 on the State Board website.

279 D. Each political party and each independent candidate on the ballot, or each primary candidate, shall be  
 280 entitled to have representatives present when the local electoral board meets to ascertain the results of the  
 281 election. Each such party and candidate shall be entitled to have at least as many representatives present as  
 282 there are teams of officials working to ascertain the results, and the room in which the local electoral board  
 283 meets shall be of sufficient size and configuration to allow the representatives reasonable access and  
 284 proximity to view the ballots as the teams of officials work to ascertain the results. The representatives and  
 285 observers lawfully present shall be prohibited from interfering with the officials in any way. It is unlawful for  
 286 any person to knowingly possess any firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2 within 40 feet of any building, or  
 287 part thereof, used as a meeting place for the local electoral board while the electoral board meets to ascertain  
 288 the results of an election, unless such person is ~~(a)~~ (i) any law-enforcement officer or any retired  
 289 law-enforcement officer qualified pursuant to subsection C of § 18.2-308.016; ~~(b)~~ (ii) occupying his own  
 290 private property that falls within 40 feet of a polling place; ~~or~~ ~~(c)~~ (iii) any woman who (a) is a current victim  
 291 of family abuse, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (b) has an active protective order against a family  
 292 or household member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228; or (iv) an armed security officer, licensed  
 293 pursuant to Article 4 (§ 9.1-138 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1, whose employment or performance of his  
 294 duties occurs within 40 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a meeting place for the local electoral  
 295 board while the electoral board meets to ascertain the results of an election.

296 **§ 24.2-802.1. Preliminary hearing; court to fix procedure for recount, appoint officers, and**  
 297 **supervise the recount.**

298 A. Within seven calendar days of the filing of the petition for a recount of any election other than an  
 299 election for presidential electors, or within five calendar days of the filing of a petition for a recount of an  
 300 election for presidential electors, the chief judge of the circuit court shall call a preliminary hearing at which  
 301 (i) motions may be disposed of and (ii) the rules of procedure may be fixed, both subject to review by the full  
 302 court. The petitioner and his counsel and each other party and their counsel under supervision of the electoral  
 303 board and its agents shall have access to pollbooks and other materials used in the election for examination  
 304 purposes, provided that individual ballots cast in the election shall not be examined at the preliminary  
 305 hearing. The chief judge during the preliminary hearing shall review all security measures taken for all ballots  
 306 and voting systems and direct, as he deems necessary, all appropriate measures to ensure proper security to

307 conduct the recount.

308 The chief judge, subject to review by the full court, may set the place for the recount and may order the  
309 delivery of election materials to a central location and the transportation of voting systems to a central  
310 location in each county or city under appropriate safeguards. These safeguards shall include prohibiting any  
311 person from knowingly possessing any firearm as defined in § 18.2-308.2:2 within 40 feet of any building or  
312 part thereof used as the place for the recount, unless such person is (a) any law-enforcement officer or any  
313 retired law-enforcement officer qualified pursuant to subsection C of § 18.2-308.016; (b) occupying his own  
314 private property that falls within 40 feet of a polling place; ~~or~~ (c) *any woman who (1) is a current victim of*  
315 *family abuse, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228, and (2) has an active protective order against a family or*  
316 *household member, as that term is defined in § 16.1-228; or (d) an armed security officer, licensed pursuant*  
317 *to Article 4 (§ 9.1-138 et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1, whose employment or performance of his duties*  
318 *occurs within 40 feet of any building, or part thereof, used as a place for the recount.*

319 B. After the full court is appointed under § 24.2-801 or 24.2-801.1, it shall call a hearing at which all  
320 motions shall be disposed of and the rules of procedure shall be fixed finally, and it shall issue a written order  
321 setting out such rules of procedure. The court shall call for the advice and cooperation of the Department, the  
322 State Board, or any local electoral board, as appropriate, and such boards or agency shall have the duty and  
323 authority to assist the court. The court shall fix any additional procedures, that are not provided for in this  
324 chapter, that shall provide for the accurate counting of votes in the election. The recount procedures to be  
325 followed throughout the election district shall be as uniform as practicable, taking into account the types of  
326 ballots and voting systems in use in the election district.

327 C. The court shall permit each candidate, or petitioner and governing body or chief executive officer, to  
328 select an equal number of the officers of election to be recount officials and to count printed ballots. The  
329 number shall be fixed by the court and be sufficient to conduct the recount within a reasonable period. The  
330 court may permit each party to the recount to submit a list of alternate officials in the number the court  
331 directs. There shall be at least one team from each locality using ballot scanner machines to insert the ballots  
332 into one or more scanners. Each team shall be composed of one representative of each party.

333 The court may provide that if, at the time of the recount, any recount official fails to appear, the remaining  
334 recount officials present shall appoint substitute recount officials who shall possess the same qualifications as  
335 the recount officials for whom they substitute. The court may select pairs of recount coordinators to serve for  
336 each county or city in the election district who shall be members of the county or city electoral board and  
337 represent different political parties. The court shall have authority to summon such officials and coordinators.  
338 On the request of any party to the recount, the court shall allow that party to appoint one representative  
339 observer for each team of recount officials. The representative observers shall have an unobstructed view of  
340 the work of the recount officials. The expenses of its representatives shall be borne by each party.

341 D. The court (i) shall supervise the recount and (ii) may require delivery of any or all pollbooks used and  
342 any or all ballots cast at the election, or may assume supervision thereof through the recount coordinators and  
343 officials.