

HERITAGE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Weapons and Firearms Policy
Adopted 11/15/2018

Purpose

This policy governs the possession and use of firearms, ammunition, and other weapons at Heritage Christian University. It is applicable to all staff, faculty, students, and visitors.

Policy Statement

No firearms, ammunition, or weapons are allowed in buildings or other facilities of Heritage Christian University at any time. A gun permit does not authorize a staff member, faculty member, student, or visitor to bring firearms into University buildings or into other facilities. HCU prohibits the possession and use of firearms, ammunition and other weapons on University property. This policy applies to all employees (faculty and staff), contractors, students, and visitors. Exception is made for police officers, civil law enforcement officers, for any private security in the employ of the University, and for any persons officially authorized by the Director of Campus Security.

The University complies with and shall encourage and support the enforcement of all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations relative to this policy and necessary for its enforcement.

Responsibilities for Enforcement

As with any Heritage Christian University policy, the directors or administrative heads of each department are responsible for enforcing this policy as it relates to employees, including faculty. The Dean of Students is responsible for enforcing the policy as it relates to students. The HCU Office of Campus Security is responsible for enforcing the policy as it relates to contractors and visitors to the campus.

It is recognized that under certain circumstances enforcement of this policy may result in a volatile or dangerous situation or encounter. Therefore, the procedures listed below are included as a guide for handling enforcement of this policy.

Questions concerning enforcement of the policy in volatile or dangerous situations or encounters should be directed to the Office of Campus Security. Any questions concerning the administrative procedures for enforcing this policy should be directed to one's supervisor, as appropriate.

Procedures for Enforcement

1. This policy will be published in staff, faculty, and student handbooks of the University. Until such time those handbooks sufficiently incorporate the provisions of this policy, any stipulations in those handbooks which are contrary to the provisions of this policy are superseded by the wording of this policy.
2. Signs indicating that firearms are not allowed in HCU buildings may be placed in campus locations as deemed appropriate. However, signage is not required for this policy to be binding.
3. Persons who enter HCU buildings, or other facilities in possession of firearms, ammunition, or dangerous weapons should be made aware of this policy and must leave the premises immediately. They may return without the firearm, ammunition, or weapon.
4. Visitors to the campus who violate this policy and who refuse to leave the premises with their firearms, ammunition, or weapons are to be escorted from the premises by Florence Police. Staff members, faculty members, or students who violate this policy are to be disciplined and are required to turn over the firearms, ammunition, or weapons to the Director of Campus Security. If they refuse to do so, they are to be escorted from the premises by the Florence Police.

Corrective Action for Employees

A violation of this policy by employees, including faculty, will result in corrective action up to and including termination.

As indicated above, enforcement of this policy may result in a volatile or dangerous situation or encounter in which case the Florence Police should be summoned. Once the immediate situation has been handled, violations of this policy by students should be reported to Student Affairs and to the Director of Campus Security.

It should be reported in the same manner in which other instances of nonacademic misconduct are reported and handled.

Procedures for Firearms on Campus

Firearms Prohibited on Campus: Heritage Christian University prohibits firearms on campus.

The following information will guide you on dealing with firearm situations that may arise. Keeping in mind that every situation cannot be addressed, this is an outline/guide for the areas that can be used to cover as many situations as possible. Regardless of the situation your safety and that of students, staff and faculty should always be at the forefront of your approach and

actions. If you are concerned about a particular interaction call 911 and seek police assistance and/or notify the Director of Campus Security immediately.

Caution and common sense should be used when confronting someone who is suspected to be in violation of this policy. In the State of Alabama, individuals may legally carry a concealed weapon. It should not be assumed that everyone who is suspected of carrying a concealed weapon has the intent to do harm. It should also not be assumed that an individual suspected of carrying a concealed weapon has no intent of doing harm. Common sense and caution should dictate behavior when interacting with someone who is suspected or known to be in violation of this policy.

- I. **Non-students on property not their own:** The individual in question will be advised that the University is a firearms free campus. The individual will be asked to leave the premises immediately. If the individual refuses to comply with the request to leave the premises, call the Florence Police Department and notify the Director of Campus Security. Request that the Florence Police department remove the individual and inform them that they are baned from campus, and any attempt to return will be trespassing. This means that they cannot return to Heritage Christian University until the Director of Campus Security has removed the ban. Any attempt to return will result in arrest.
- II. **Students:** Students at HCU have always been prohibited from having any type of weapon on campus. This provision remains in effect. No student is allowed to have a firearm, concealed or otherwise, anywhere on campus or properties operated by the University. Students are not allowed to have a firearm in their vehicles on campus. If you come in contact with a student who has a weapon in his/her possessions, advise the student that the University is a firearms free campus.
 - a. Give the student an opportunity to leave the premises and inform them that they are not to return with the firearm or weapon.
 - b. If they cannot leave to secure the firearm off campus, the student can be given an opportunity to sign a release that the Director of Campus Security will safe keep the firearm until they have an opportunity to leave campus with the weapon.
 - c. If they will not cooperate with your directions, call the Florence Police Department and notify the Director of Campus Security. Request that the Florence Police Department remove the individual, inform them that they are banned from campus and that any attempt to return will be trespassing. This means that they cannot return to Heritage Christian University until the Director of Campus Security has removed the ban. Any attempt to return will result in arrest.
- III. **Employees of the University:** The firearms free campus includes all employees/contractors alike. At this time, Heritage Christian University does not restrict or prohibit the transportation or storage of a lawfully possessed firearm or ammunition in an employee's privately-owned motor vehicle while parked or operated in a public or private parking area of the University if the employee satisfies all of the following:

- a. The employee either:
 - i. Has a valid concealed weapon permit; or
 - ii. If the weapon is any firearm legal for use for hunting in Alabama other than a pistol:
 - 1. The employee possesses a valid Alabama hunting license;
 - 2. The weapon is unloaded at all times on the property;
 - 3. It is during a season in which hunting is permitted by Alabama law or regulation;
- b. The motor vehicle is operated or parked in a location where it is otherwise permitted to be.
- c. The firearm is either of the following:
 - i. In a motor vehicle attended by the employee, kept from ordinary observation within the person's motor vehicle.
 - ii. In a motor vehicle unattended by the employee, kept from ordinary observation and locked within a compartment, container, or in the interior of the person's privately owned motor vehicle or in a compartment or container securely affixed to the motor vehicle.
 - iii. If the University believes that an employee presents a risk of harm to himself/herself or to others, the University may inquire as to whether the employee possesses a firearm in his or her private motor vehicle. If the employee does possess a firearm in his or her private motor vehicle on the property of the University, the University may make any inquiry necessary to establish that the employee is in compliance with all subsections above.

University buildings/events:

No firearms will be allowed in any building or at events. The same procedure of warning and trespass for carrying/possession on campus will apply to incidents in buildings and any events.

All incidents require written submissions to the Office of Campus Security. All incidents involving students will be referred to the Dean of Students, and all employee incidents will be sent to the his or her direct supervisor and to the Vice President who is responsible for that department for further action.

Every incident must be reported to the Office of Campus Security. Any disciplinary action or known or suspected violation should be reported to the Director of Campus Security. All questions or concerns should also be made known to the Director of Campus Security.

*Special thanks to
Dr. Kevin Gillilan
University of North Alabama Chief of Police*

Otherwise Authorized Persons

To be authorized as listed above you must meet the following Requirements.

1. Be the President of Heritage Christian University or a Vice President of HCU and:
 - a. Have the legal right to carry a concealed weapon in the state of Alabama.
 - b. Have successfully completed at least 4 hours in training from the Director of Campus Security.
 - c. Have qualified using the NRA handgun *instructor standards* for qualification.
 - d. Requalify on an annual basis.
 - e. Has submitted to a background check.

2. Or be a staff or faculty member who:
 - a. Has written approval from the Director of Campus Security.
 - b. Has a legal right to carry a concealed weapon in the state of Alabama.
 - c. Has successfully completed “Handgun 1” class from the Florence Police Department or other approved class at his or her own expense.
 - d. Has successfully completed “Handgun 2” class from the Florence Police Department or other approved class at his or her own expense.
 - e. Has successfully completed a minimum of 4 hours of training from the Director of Campus Security at his or her own expense.
 - f. Has qualified using the NRA handgun instructor standards for qualification at his or her own expense.
 - g. Is approved unanimously by the Administrative Council.
 - h. Requalifies on an annual basis at his or her own expense.
 - i. Has submitted to a background check.

3. Or in the event of an eminent violent threat, individuals may be granted temporary permission to carry a weapon by the highest-ranking security officer on campus until the threat is abated.
 - a. The chain of command for Heritage Christian Universities’ Campus Security Department will be as follows;
 - i. Travis Harmon, Director of Campus Security
 - ii. Dr. Kirk Brothers, President
 - iii. Pat Moon, Vice President of Administration
 - iv. Dr. Michael Jackson, Vice President of Academics
 - v. Robert Youngblood, Vice President of University Advancement