Firearm Safety and Harm Prevention

Legal ownership of firearms comes with important safety responsibilities to prevent accidental firearm injuries and deaths, thefts, and suicide, including among children.

FIREARM SAFETY

Firearm safety is an important part of personal and public health. Most gun owners are responsible and deeply committed to gun safety. Like other potentially harmful household risks, there are steps that can help protect you and your family.

FIREARM STORAGE

Proper storage of firearms is an essential part of health and safety, and Michigan law requires guns to be stored safely, which means unloaded and securely locked with ammunition locked in a separate container.

If you or another person who has access to your firearms begins to think about harming themselves or others, there are steps you can take to keep yourself and others safe.

1. Lock your firearms, and give the key to a family member or friend.
2. Disassemble firearms and give critical parts (like the firing pin or slide) to a family member or friend.
3. Consider storing firearms off-site. Options for remote storage include:
   - In a secure self-storage unit that permits firearms.
   - In a bonded warehouse for gun storage.
   - Some police departments.
   - Some gun shops and shooting ranges.
   - Store the key in a remote location.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ☑ I have spoken to my children about what to do if they find an unsecured gun.
- ☑ I discuss gun storage and safety rules with my children.
- ☑ I have passed a firearm safety course with a certified instructor.
- ☑ I store my guns unloaded and in a locked location like a gun cabinet, safe, or vault.
- ☑ I store ammunition or loaded magazines in a locked location separate from my guns.
- ☑ I have taken reasonable steps to make sure children and other unauthorized users can't find the keys or combination to my safe.

FIREARM FACTS

- 1st — Firearm injury is the leading cause of death in the United States for children and young adults.
- Over half of all firearm owners (including those with children at home) do not practice secure storage.
- 3x — Having access to a firearm can triple someone's risk of dying by suicide.
- Guns kept in homes are more likely to be involved in a fatal or nonfatal accidental shooting, criminal assault, or suicide attempt than to be used to injure or kill in self-defense.
- Increasing the time and distance between someone and a firearm can reduce suicide risk and save lives.
- The risk of unintentional and self- inflicted firearm injury is lower when all household firearms are stored and locked.

RESOURCES

- U of M Family Guide to Firearm Home Safety
- MDHHS Firearm Safety Information
- MDHHS Suicide Prevention (Michigan.gov/SuicidePrevention)
- If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call or text the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988.

MDHHS
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services