

THE 5 STEPS TO DECLARING A GUN FREE ZONE

STEP 1: Establish the Vision

Consult with important stakeholders that use the space to establish a Gun Free Zone vision. A vision puts into words what you want to achieve by making your space gun free. Doing this will:

- Create a common vision.
- Involve key stakeholders.
- Secure buy-in from everyone to achieve this vision.

STEP 2: Develop the Policy

When developing your Gun Free Zone policy, answer the following questions:

How will people know that the space is gun free? You could put up signs and include this information on all correspondence.

How will you know if someone has a gun? You could ask people to declare if they have a gun, or install metal detectors.

What will happen if someone tries to enter a Gun Free Zone with a gun? As the owner or manager of a Gun Free Zone you can choose to:

- Provide safes in which a gun owner can store his gun, as long as nobody else can access it².
- Tell a gun owner that he can only enter the premises if he does not have his gun with him.
- Allow a gun owner into the Gun Free Zone on the understanding that he is going against the policy; and to leave his gun at home next time.

² Refer to the Firearms Control Act (2000) for requirements relating to safely storing a firearm.

STEP 3: Prepare for implementation

Once the policy has been adopted, the following needs to be undertaken:

- Bring in key stakeholders: This includes all users of the space as well as stakeholders in the wider community like local police and community policing forum representatives. This serves to:
 - Get buy-in to the vision, which is vital for the successful implementation of a Gun Free Zone.
 - Address concerns.
- Train staff that will be responsible for implementing the policy.
- Develop, distribute and install signs, registers and monitoring equipment (if used) e.g. metal detectors or safes.
- Run awareness campaigns for users of the space.

STEP 4: Implement

The Gun Free Zone policy is now put into practice.

STEP 5: Maintain and Monitor

Maintaining and monitoring a Gun Free Zone means:

- Ongoing awareness.
- Regular reviews to identify problems so these can be addressed.
- Tracking impact, e.g. are fewer people trying to bring guns into your space? Have incidents of violence declined?

Why not Live Free by going Gun Free?

Contact GFSa for resources to help you make your space a Gun Free Zone.

Email info@gfsa.org.za • Fax: 086 545 0094

Postal address PO Box 3048, Killarney, 2193

Website www.gfsa.org.za • Twitter [#GunFreeSA](https://twitter.com/GunFreeSA)



**THIS IS A
GUN FREE ZONE**



Take action against gun violence by declaring your space a Gun Free Zone. Your home, the place you work or study in, where you worship, play sport or meet friends are all spaces that can become gun free.

LIMIT WHO, LIMIT WHERE

A Gun Free Zone is a space in which no guns are welcome or allowed. It limits who can carry a gun where.

There are different types of Gun Free Zones; some Gun Free Zones are enforced through the use of metal detectors and providing safe storage, while others are enforced through community buy-in and trust, as shown in the diagram below:

CONTINUUM OF ENFORCEMENT

Enforced by declaration

People entering a Gun Free Zone are asked to declare if they have a gun or searched before they are allowed to enter. If anyone has a gun they are not allowed to enter the premises with their gun or the gun is stored in a safe that is provided. Examples are banks, government departments and soccer stadiums.

Enforced by trust

Signs tell people entering a Gun Free Zone that the space is gun free. People entering this type of Gun Free Zone are not asked to declare if they are carrying a gun and are not searched for a gun. While guns are not taken away from people, they know that guns are not welcome. Examples are places of worship.

WHY MAKE YOUR SPACE A GUN FREE ZONE?

Gun Free Zones reduce the risk of gun death and injury. Guns are small, light and easy to use; simply pulling a trigger can kill or badly injure someone. When there are no guns in a space, it becomes safer and more secure for everyone in it.



WHAT THE LAW SAYS ABOUT GUN FREE ZONES

Every day people make use of their right to restrict those entering a space they own or manage; they do it with smoking, liquor and food. The same can be done with guns.

The law of right of admission allows you to exclude anyone carrying a gun into a Gun Free Zone that you own or manage.

It is a civil offence to contravene the Gun Free Zone status of a premise – anybody found contravening a Gun Free Zone can be prosecuted under laws that prohibit trespassing.

I want to make my space a Gun Free Zone must I provide a safe for gun owners?

No, there is no legal obligation to provide a safe for gun owners to store their guns. See below for ideas on what to include in your Gun Free Zone policy, which spells out what to do if a gun owner wants to enter a Gun Free Zone.

Gun Free Zones: Islands of safety in a sea of guns.

What must I do to create a Gun Free Zone?

Since 1994, Gun Free South Africa has worked with organisations and communities to help them make their spaces safe by not allowing guns. Over the years we have developed a 5-step model to make spaces Gun Free Zones.

Gun Free South Africa's experience, backed by research¹, shows that the success of declaring a space a Gun Free Zone depends on the buy-in and commitment of that space's stakeholders to building a safe environment. It is not enough to just put up Gun Free Zone signs.

¹ Research into international good practice and norms undertaken by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.