

# MANDATORY REPORTING OF LOST & STOLEN FIREARMS

## FAQ

### ***What does this ordinance do?***

The ordinance requires individuals to make a report to law enforcement in the event that they discover their gun has been lost or stolen. Individuals face a potential civil infraction if they fail to report the loss or theft.

### ***What is the purpose of this law?***

This simple requirement will help law enforcement trace guns used in crimes and solve more crimes. It is a straightforward and important step for gun safety.

### ***How can you be confident that people will comply with this ordinance?***

Establishing and communicating a simple and clear expectation goes a long way toward achieving compliance. A RAND Corporation [study](#) showed that gun buyers in Los Angeles who were informed of their ownership responsibilities by a letter had a significant increase on the level of reporting of lost or stolen guns when compared to those who did not receive the letter.

### ***Does this law punish the victim – the responsible individual who was the victim of theft?***

No. A simple reporting requirement is not onerous to victims of theft. In fact, it will help police trace illegal guns, return lost guns to their rightful owners, and — perhaps most importantly — protect lawful gun owners from being falsely implicated in crimes.

### ***How serious is the problem of gun crime in Seattle?***

Illegal guns cause serious harm in our neighborhoods. Crime statistics show guns play a significant role in many crimes against persons in Seattle: 69% of homicides, 17% of robbery incidents and 8% of aggravated assaults since 2012. In addition, the Seattle Police Department has taken 2,657 firearms

into custody since January 2012 through the course of its regular duties.

### ***Has this requirement been implemented elsewhere?***

A number of other states (Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Rhode Island), the District of Columbia and other local jurisdictions around the country have implemented some form of this common sense requirement.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Why do proponents consider mandatory reporting a “common sense” requirement?***

A [January 2011 national poll](#) found that 94% of the respondents favored such a requirement, with similarly high levels of support among gun-owning households. Another [nationwide poll in May 2012](#) likewise found strong, two-thirds support from gun owners for this proposal.

94%

***Americans supporting a reporting requirement***

66%

***Gun owners supporting a reporting requirement***