**KNIFE LEGISLATION AND HANDLING AT AIRPORTS**

**IN**

**USA**

# Weapons Act

Other than the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regulations (as described in greater detail in Section 2 below), the only federal law regulating knives in the U.S., the Federal Switchblade Act, prohibits the commercial sale/transport of switchblades (spring-loaded knives that open at the push of a button) across state lines.  The Federal Switchblade act has no application to selling, carrying, or possessing knives within state lines.  In any event, as far as I know, switchblades, are not produced by Victorinox.

Each of the 50 states has its own knife laws and regulations. Thus, for Questions #1.1-1.9, the answers will vary from state to state (and sometimes even local law, see below).

Attempting to partly address the complexity resulting from the patchwork of state and local prohibitions, a bipartisan bill, the Interstate Transport Act of 2025, was introduced in the U.S. Senate on January 24, 2025. The act would protect knife owners traveling between states from conflicting state knife laws, where the knife they possess is legal in both the state of origin and destination and is properly stored. The bill is schedule for a vote in the full Senate and if passed, it will proceed to the House of Representatives for consideration.

**State Law**

As an example, Arizona is widely recognized as having the most permissive knife laws in the U.S. In 2010, Arizona broadly legalized the open and concealed carry of any knife or blade, regardless of size, function, or lethality.

Other states have prohibitions against certain blade lengths. For example:

* Colorado: the concealed carry of any blade over 3.5 inches is illegal;
* Florida: the concealed carry of any blade over 4 inches is illegal; and
* Connecticut: the open or concealed carry of any blade over 4 inches is illegal.

Meanwhile, many other states, like Pennsylvania, Illinois, and California, have completely banned possession of certain knife types (i.e., daggers, automatic knives, switchblades, gravity knives).

In addition, while many states prohibit knives from being carried in schools, the definition of “school” varies between states. ln some states, this means any educational institution, from kindergarten or elementary level through the university level. Other states also include prohibitions in places like polling locations, courthouses, and government buildings.

The aforementioned laws are examples of how knife regulations vary from state to state. To come up with more specific answers to questions 1.1-1.9 would take specific research into each state and its statutes and court decisions.

**Local Law**

Some states (like Arizona, Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and Wisconsin) have passed preemption laws that preempt local laws, so that no local government within the state may pass more restrictive knife laws than the State’s knife regulations.

For all other states, it is necessary to research both state laws and local laws to determine exactly what is legal.

For example, while New York State does not restrict knife blade lengths, a New York City ordinance has a knife length restriction against blades that are 4 or more inches.

# Airports

As for question #2.1-2.9 regarding airports, the Transpiration Security Administration has authority over the transportation of knives. For now, this is a preliminary answer that we will formalize with respect to the question numbers and will provide more detail, as needed.

With the exception of plastic or round bladed butter knives, the TSA prohibits all knives (including pocket knives) from being transported in a passenger’s carry-on luggage. Knives may be transported in checked bags and should be securely wrapped.

Besides knives and pocket knives, the full list of the TSA’s “sharp objects” list is: box cutters, cigar cutters, corkscrews (with blade), darts, disposable razors, scissors, ice picks, kirpans, knitting needles, lock picks, meat cleavers, nail clippers, pencil sharpeners, razor-blades, sabers, scissors, safety pins, saws, sewing needles, swords, throwing stars, tweezers.

While all objects on the aforementioned list are considered sharp objects, the rules for each vary. For example, disposable razors and scissors (including multi-tools that contain scissors) less than 4 inches in length from the pivot point are allowed in carry-on luggage.

As a governmental agency, the TSA can (and often does) issue, rescind and revise regulations.  In 2013, the TSA had announced its decision to allow small pocket knives in carry-on luggage, but then rescinded this decision due to backlash from other stakeholders. It does not appear that the TSA has reconsidered allowing small pocket knives in any of its recent press releases or any notices of proposed rulemaking.

Ibach, Switzerland, 12 March 2025

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