

23 Kansas – The Sunflower State

Area: 81,815 sq.mi. (Rank: 13th) Population: 2,715,884 (Rank: 32nd)
Violent Crime Rate (per 100,000 residents): 374.5 (Rank: 27th Safest)
State Motto: *Ad Astra Per Aspera (To the Stars Through Difficulties)*

23.1 Knife Carry Law Summary

Note: Blade length limits, if any, in parentheses.

Knife Type	Open Carry	Concealed Carry	Notes
Folding Knives	Yes	Yes (<= 4")	
Fixed Bladed Knives	Yes	No	See note ⁴⁴
Dirks, Daggers, & Stiletos	Yes	No	
Automatic Knives	No	No	
Balisongs	No	No	See note ⁴⁴

23.2 Discussion

Visitors to Kansas, with its vast expanses of rolling plains, will find state law regarding knife carry to be somewhat restrictive as to concealed carry. Ordinary folding pocket knives with blades four inches or less may be carried concealed. Automatic knives, such as switchblades, gravity knives, and ballistic knives, are strictly prohibited.

State law prohibits concealed carry of dirks, daggers, and stiletos. In addition, state law also prohibits possession or carry of any kind with “intent to use ... unlawfully against another.”⁴⁴ As is the case with many such vaguely worded carry statutes, law enforcement will have broad discretion in interpreting “intent.” You may very well prevail in the end, but you’ll have an arrest record to show for it. The cautious traveler would do well to avoid dirks, daggers, stiletos, or any knife with an overly aggressive or weapon-like “tactical” appearance.

Note that knives such as balisongs, while not specifically prohibited, may fall under the switchblade prohibition, as balisongs do in some states.

While no specific state-wide statutory prohibitions on off-limits areas for knife carry exist, cities and towns may pass their own ordinances, as the state does not preempt its cities and towns from regulating knife carry.

23.3 Selected Statutes

KAN. STAT. §§ (2005)

21-4201. Criminal use of weapons. (a) Criminal use of weapons is knowingly:

(1) Selling, manufacturing, purchasing, possessing or carrying any bludgeon, sandclub, metal knuckles or throwing star, or any knife, commonly referred to as a switch-blade, which has a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring or other device in the handle of the knife, or any knife having a blade that opens or falls or is ejected into position by the force of gravity or by an outward, downward or centrifugal thrust or movement;

⁴⁴ See, KAN. STAT. § 21-4201 (2005).

(2) carrying concealed on one's person, or possessing with intent to use the same unlawfully against another, a dagger, dirk, billy, blackjack, slungshot, dangerous knife, straight-edged razor, stiletto or any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument of like character, except that an ordinary pocket knife with no blade more than four inches in length shall not be construed to be a dangerous knife, or a dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument;

...

(i) Violation of subsections (a)(1) through (a)(5) is a class A nonperson misdemeanor. Violation of subsection (a)(6), (a)(7) or (a)(8) is a severity level 9, nonperson felony.

23.4 Selected Caselaw

State v. Dumars, 108 P.3d 448 (Kan. Ct. App. 2005) (upholding conviction for possession of switchblade knife).

23.5 Preemption Law

No knife law preemption.

23.6 Places Off-Limits While Carrying

No state law limitation. Towns and cities, however, may pass their own local ordinances regulating or restricting carry.

23.7 School/College Carry

No state law limitation. Towns and cities, however, may pass their own local ordinances prohibiting carry on school grounds.

23.8 Selected City Ordinances

Atchison – Carry in public park of dangerous or deadly weapons prohibited. See, ATCHISON, KAN., CODE OF ORDINANCES § 22-5 (2005).

Manhattan – Concealed carry of bowie knives, switchblades, dirks and other deadly weapons prohibited. See, MANHATTAN, KAN., CODE OF ORDINANCES § 22-66 (2006).

Sedgwick County – Carry, concealed or otherwise, of dirks, straight-edge razors, stilettos, switchblades, gravity knives, ballistic knives, or other dangerous knives in clubs or establishments licensed to serve alcohol prohibited. Ordinary pocket knives with blades of four inches or less are excluded from the definition of “dangerous knife” for purposes of these ordinances. See, SEDGWICK COUNTY, KAN., CODE OF ORDINANCES §§ 4-36, 4-81 (2005).

23.9 State Resources

Kansas Highway Patrol
General Headquarters
Topeka, KS 66603-3847
Phone: (785) 296-6800
Fax: (785) 296-3049
Website: <http://www.ink.org/public/khp/>

Attorney General of Kansas
301 S.W. 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1597
Phone: (785) 296-2215
Fax: (785) 296-6296
Website: <http://www.ink.org/public/ksag/>

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Laws and regulations concerning weapons, and specifically such items as knives, are constantly changing. What's legal today may not be legal tomorrow. In addition, court decisions (case law) can, and often do, change the law and/or affect the meaning and interpretation of statutory law. Also, a great number of cities, towns, county governments and governmental agencies have enacted their own rules, regulations, and ordinances concerning weapons within their respective jurisdictions. The author and publisher make no representation that the information in this document includes all such laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, or other legal requirements, restrictions or prohibitions.

You are responsible for complying with all of the laws and other legal requirements of any jurisdiction that you are in, or traveling to or through, and are strongly urged to consult with a competent, qualified attorney and/or local authorities in advance to determine the current status and applicability of such laws or other legal requirements to specific situations or circumstances you may face.