

APPLY UNDERAGE

When one is under the age of 21, one can apply for a firearm licence.

However, the process is a little lengthy. On the other hand, it has the advantages that one gets through the compulsory training one has to do to own firearms legally at a relatively young age and remains to your benefit (one does not have to repeat the training later again).

Training you MUST complete before you may apply to be declared Competent (Competency) to own firearms

One has to be declared competent to own firearms first, before one can apply for a firearm licence.

You will have to complete the **proficiency training** - at the least the Unit Standard on Knowledge of the Act, and the Unit Standard in the use of the specific type of firearm one would like to apply for (handgun, rifle, shotgun or semi-auto rifle). At NHSA, we have always advised that persons under age do all five the compulsory Unit Standards so that one is completely through that process of learning even before one is of legal age to own firearms (you are going to spend time - use it well to your advantage).

You will then have to **join an accredited hunting and/or sport shooting association (like NHSA), and attain dedicated status** (either as hunter or as sport shooter [referred to as dedicated sport-person in the Firearms Control Act, 2000]). At NHSA, we have always advised that persons under age do both the dedicated hunter and dedicated sport-person courses, so that one is completely through that process of learning even before one is of legal age to own firearms (you are going to spend time - use it well to your advantage).

When you have completed these two sets of training regimes, you may apply with SAPS to be declared competent to own firearms (for those Unit Standards you completed; i.e. handguns, rifles, shotguns and semi-auto rifles).

Applying for a firearm licence under the age of 21

Once you have received your Competency certificate, you can apply for a licence to own a firearm.

At NHSA our experience has shown that it is better to apply for a sport shooting licence under Section 16 (because you are a dedicated sport-person with your association), than to apply for a hunting firearm under Section 16, if you are under the legal age to own firearms.

With that said, we do not mean to say the one cannot receive a licence for a hunting rifle if you are under the legal age, but it's much easier to show participation in competitive target shooting than in the need for a hunting rifle if one does not live on a farm and partake in game management like culling or varmint control.