



Spartan Firearms Training Group, LLC

Tip of the Day: June 30, 2025

🔥 Maryland's Justified Use of Force 🔥

If you ever face danger, knowing when and how the law protects your right to defend yourself is key. Here's what Maryland law says about justified self-defense:

- ✅ **Not the Initial Aggressor:** You can't claim self-defense if you started the fight or provoked the attack.
- ✅ **Imminent Threat:** You must honestly and reasonably believe you're about to face grave bodily harm--right now! The threat can't be in the past or possible in the future.
- ✅ **Reasonable Belief:** Courts, like in *State v. Faulkner* (483 A. 2d 759, 1984), look at whether your belief that you faced grave bodily harm was both honest and reasonable under the circumstances.
- ✅ **Proportional Force:** Your response must be proportional to the threat. Deadly force is only okay if deadly force or serious injury is coming your way.
- ✅ **Duty to Retreat Outside Your Home:** Unlike inside your home, Maryland law expects you to retreat if safe to do so before using deadly force in public.
- ✅ You must satisfy all these conditions. Even if all of these conditions are met, you could still face legal consequences. Prosecutors will seek ways to disprove any of the above criteria. All it takes is one of the above conditions not to be true to face legal consequences.
- ✅ **Bottom-Line:** The only time you draw your handgun is when you have no other option and you must press the trigger to save your life or the life of a loved one.

(See Harris & Cohen, 2024. "The Maryland Use of Force Handbook," available at Amazon.com.)

Remember, self-defense is about protecting yourself lawfully — know the rules, train your mind and skills, and always act responsibly and legally.