

FREE 2026 EDITION · SOTC

The 2026 Security Guard Career Checklist

Your simple step-by-step plan to get hired as a
California security guard — and grow into an armed guard.



Made for real people. Plain English.

Two checklists. One clear path. Save time. Avoid mistakes.

SOTC — Security Officer Training Center

Spring Valley & San Diego, CA · BSIS-Approved · sotcnow.com · (619) 303-3104

Hi — We Made This For You.

Every day, people call us and ask the same questions. How do I get a guard card? What does it cost? Do I need a gun? Will my old record stop me?

We do not blame anyone. The state rules can sound scary. The forms are confusing. Many people forget one small step and lose weeks of time. Some give up.

So we made this book. It is short. It is simple. It uses small words. If you can read a menu, you can read this book.

Inside you will find two clear checklists. One for getting your guard card. One for moving up to armed guard pay. Check off each box. Save weeks. Skip the headache.

What this book will do for you:

- Show you each step in the right order.
- Tell you what to bring, what to pay, and when.
- Help you skip the small mistakes that cost weeks.
- Get you ready to start work fast.

— *Mike & the SOTC team*

Your local BSIS-approved trainers in Spring Valley & San Diego.

How To Use This Book

You do not have to read it all at once. Go at your own speed. Each step is one small task. Do one, check the box, and move on.

Three Parts

PART 1

Your Guard Card

The 8 steps to get hired as a California security guard.

PART 2

Armed Guard Upgrade

Add a firearms permit. Move up to higher-paying armed posts.

PART 3

Why Choose SOTC

How we make every step faster, cheaper, and easier for you.

Symbol Key

- An empty box. Check it when you finish that step.
- ★ A money tip. Saves you time or cash.
- ! A warning. Easy mistake — read it twice.
- A link to a page on our website for more help.

PART 1

Your California Guard Card Checklist

Go from zero to hired in about 1–2 weeks of class time.

Quick Facts

18+

Minimum age to start

8 hr

Pre-app class needed

\$125+

What SOTC charges

1–2 wk

Class time at SOTC

2–4 wk

BSIS card mailed to you

90 days

You can work while waiting

What's Coming Next

- An "Are You Ready?" check — make sure you qualify.
- An 8-step "Get Your Card" checklist with every form.
- A clear cost chart so there are no surprises.
- A timeline showing how fast you can be working.
- First-day-on-the-job tips so you keep that paycheck.

Make Sure You Can Apply

Before you spend a dime, check all these boxes. If one is no, call us. There may be a fix. (619) 303-3104.

- I am 18 years or older.
- I have a valid photo ID (driver license, state ID, or passport).
- I can read and follow simple English in class.
- I do not have a violent felony on my record.
- I have a Social Security number or work permit.
- I have an email address I can check.
- I have \$125 to \$300 ready for class and state fees.
- I can give two days for training (one weekend works for many).

Worried About Your Record?

Old non-violent stuff often clears with proof of rehab. Do not guess.
Call us first: (619) 303-3104. We help people fix this every week.
We have helped many people pass the background check.

Bonus Tip

- ★ Bring two friends to class with you. We give group discounts.
- ★ More friends = more savings = faster you all get hired.

Your 8 Steps To A Guard Card

Do them in order. Each step gets you one move closer to your first paycheck.

- 1 Step 1 — Pick Your Class Date**
Look at our class schedule online. Pick a date that fits your week. Sign up early — popular dates fill up fast.
 Done — check the box.
- 2 Step 2 — Take The 8-Hour Class**
This is the Powers to Arrest + Use of Force class. Required by the state of California (BSIS). Done in one or two sessions at SOTC.
 Done — check the box.
- 3 Step 3 — Get Your Class Certificate**
At the end of class we give you a paper certificate. Keep it safe. Take a phone picture as a backup. You will need it.
 Done — check the box.
- 4 Step 4 — Get A Live Scan (Fingerprints)**
We can do your Live Scan right at our office on the same day. This sends your fingerprints to the DOJ and FBI for a background check.
 Done — check the box.

The Final 4 Steps

5 Step 5 — Make A BreEZe Account

Go to breeze.ca.gov. This is the state's online portal. Make a free account. You will use it to apply for your card.

Done — check the box.

6 Step 6 — Send In Your Application

Inside BreEZe, fill out the security guard registration form. Pay the \$60 state fee with a card. Upload your class certificate.

Done — check the box.

7 Step 7 — Save Your Receipt + Cert

Print or screenshot the BreEZe confirmation. Keep your class certificate handy. These two papers let you work for up to 90 days while you wait for the card.

Done — check the box.

8 Step 8 — Apply For Jobs Right Away

Do not wait for the plastic card to arrive. Most San Diego employers hire you the day they see your cert + BreEZe receipt. Tell them you are SOTC-trained.

Done — check the box.

BIG TIME-SAVER

- ★ SOTC can do steps 2, 3, 4, and help with 5–6 in the SAME DAY.
- ★ Many of our students walk out hire-ready by Sunday afternoon.

What It Costs To Start

No surprises. Here is what every part costs in 2026.

What You Pay For	Where It Goes	Cost
SOTC 8-hour Guard Card Class	Pays for training	From \$125
BSIS Guard Card Application	State fee on BreEZe	\$60
Live Scan (fingerprints)	DOJ + FBI background check	~\$49 + site
Optional: CPR / First Aid	Extra cert that gets you hired faster	From \$75
Optional: Bundle (best value)	SOTC Guard Card Package #1	From \$800

Quick Math

Bare bones to be legal: about \$234. Most people are working by week 3. Bundle saves time and money long-term — and stacks two raises later.

Timeline — How Fast You Can Be Working (Days)



Your First Security Job

You got the card. Great. Now here is how to keep the job, get good reviews, and set yourself up for a raise.

Show Up Like A Pro — Checklist

- Black or dark navy uniform, clean and pressed.
- Shined black boots. No sneakers. No sandals.
- Phone charged. A pen. A small notepad.
- Arrive 15 minutes early. Every shift.
- Stay off your phone. Look around. Stand tall.
- Be polite to everyone. Even the rude ones.
- Write down anything strange in your notepad.
- Never sleep on post. Even on slow nights.

How To Get Your First Raise In 90 Days

1. Be perfect on time and uniform for 30 days straight.
2. Add one extra cert — CPR, First Aid, or our Power-to-Arrest refresh.
3. Ask your boss for the firearms permit path (next chapter).
4. Armed guards in San Diego make \$5 to \$15 per hour more.

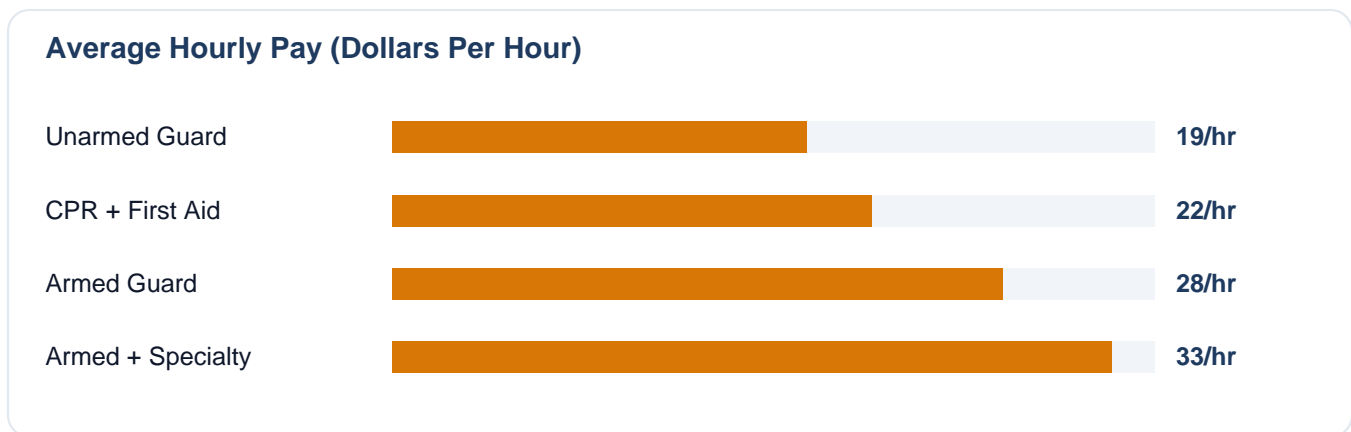
PART 2

Level Up: Armed Guard Upgrade

More skill. More posts. More money. Same SOTC.

Once you have your guard card, the fastest way to a raise is the BSIS Exposed Firearms Permit. With it, you can take armed posts. Armed work pays better and there is less competition.

Pay: Unarmed vs Armed (San Diego)



Plain Truth

- ★ Going armed often pays for the whole course in 2–3 weeks of work.
- ★ Many employers reimburse the cost after you start. Just ask.

Check Each Box First

Armed has a higher bar than unarmed. The state takes this seriously. So do we. Read each line carefully.

- I am 21 years or older.
- I have my California guard card (or I will get it first).
- I have a clean background — no felonies, no domestic violence.
- I am a US citizen or a legal permanent resident.
- I can pass the BSIS mental health screening (a short paid assessment).
- I can pay about \$200–\$400 in total fees and ammo.
- I am ready to go to a real shooting range with an instructor.
- I can come back every 6 months for the range re-qualification.

Watch Out For These Mistakes

- ! Letting your guard card expire — you must have it active for armed.
- ! Skipping the BSIS assessment — required since 2024.
- ! Forgetting the 6-month range requalification.
- ! Carrying without your physical permit on you — that's a big fine.

Get Your Firearms Permit

Six clear steps. SOTC handles 1, 2, 3, and 5 for you in one weekend.

- 1 Step 1 — Sign Up For The Firearms Course**
SOTC's BSIS Exposed Firearms Permit course covers law, safety, and live-fire on the range. About 14 hours total.
 Done.
- 2 Step 2 — Pass The Classroom Part**
Short test on California gun law, safe storage, and use of force. If you read this book, you will be fine.
 Done.
- 3 Step 3 — Pass The Range Qualification**
You shoot targets at set distances. You must hit the standard. Mike will walk you through every drill until you are confident.
 Done.
- 4 Step 4 — Take The BSIS Assessment**
A short, paid mental fitness check from the state. About \$69. We give you the link and steps. Most people pass on the first try.
 Done.
- 5 Step 5 — Apply For The BSIS Firearms Permit**
Inside BreEZe, link the new permit to your guard card. Pay the state fee. Upload your SOTC course certificate.
 Done.
- 6 Step 6 — Add The Calibers You'll Carry**
List each handgun caliber you will carry on duty (9mm, .40, .45). You can add more later by re-qualifying with that caliber.
 Done.

What Armed Costs

Item	Detail	Cost
SOTC Firearms Permit Course	Law + safety + live fire	From \$225
BSIS Firearms Permit Fee	State fee	\$80
BSIS Assessment	Mental fitness check	\$69
Ammunition (range)	About 100 rounds	\$50–\$80
6-Month Re-Qual at SOTC	Required to stay armed	From \$75

Rules That Keep You Working

- Carry your guard card AND your firearms permit at all times on duty.
- Carry your handgun in a duty holster. Open carry — exposed — only on post.
- Re-qualify at the range every 6 months. Put it on your calendar today.
- Renew the firearms permit every 2 years.
- Tell your employer right away if anything changes on your record.

Bonus — Add CCW Later

- ★ An armed-guard skillset makes the off-duty CCW path easier.
- ★ SOTC teaches both: BSIS firearms permit AND California CCW (PC 26165).
- ★ Many of our students leave with skills for work AND personal carry.

PART 3

Why SOTC Will Be There Every Step.

Not a chain. Not an app. A real team in your city.

You read this far because you are serious. Good. We are too. Here is the truth about why students keep choosing SOTC.

✓ **Real Instructors**

Mike has law-enforcement experience. You ask, he answers — in plain English.

✓ **BSIS-Approved**

Every course meets California state rules. Your cert is real, not a sticker.

✓ **Same-Day Live Scan**

Don't drive across town. Get fingerprinted in our office on class day.

✓ **Bundle & Save**

Stack guard card, firearms, CPR — one weekend, one price, big savings.

✓ **San Diego Local**

Spring Valley HQ. We know the employers. We know who's hiring this week.

✓ **Job Connections**

We share open posts with our students first. Many get hired in days.

✓ **Small Classes**

Not a giant auditorium. Real attention. Real questions get real answers.

✓ **Lifetime Support**

Call us a year later. We still answer. That's the SOTC family promise.

DON'T WAIT

Every Week You Wait Costs You Money.

Here is the math. The average San Diego guard makes about \$760 a week. Wait a month to sign up? That is over \$3,000 you will never get back.

Meanwhile, AI is wiping out office jobs, retail jobs, and warehouse jobs. Security is one of the few careers a robot CANNOT do. People need people. Real guards. Right now.

WHY THIS YEAR IS DIFFERENT

- San Diego employers are short 1,500+ guards going into late 2026.
- New school + workplace rules (SB 553) keep demand growing.
- Wages went up. Armed posts are paying \$28–\$33/hr in our area.
- Class seats fill up. The longer you wait, the later you start.

READER-ONLY BONUS

- ★ Mention this 2026 Checklist Book when you call or enroll.
- ★ Get priority class scheduling — first pick of the next open seat.
- ★ Save your spot now: (619) 303-3104 or sotcnow.com/courses/
- ★ Limited — we only hand-process so many bonus seats per month.

Three Things To Do Today

- Call (619) 303-3104 and say "I read the 2026 Checklist."
- Pick your class date at sotcnow.com/class-schedule/
- Share this PDF with one friend. Train together. Save together.

READY TO START?

Your Next Paycheck Is One Call Away.

We saved you a seat. Don't let someone else take it.

CALL OR TEXT

(619) 303-3104

Or enroll online — takes 2 minutes:

sotcnow.com

Security Officer Training Center (SOTC)

123 Worthington St #201 · Spring Valley, CA 91977

info@sotcnow.com · Mon–Fri 9–6 · Sat 8–4

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