

On June 16th, 2007, I emailed the following to IHOP restaurants Corporate Headquarters, through the form on their website at <http://www.ihop.com>.

"I have been using this location since it opened. I am a firearms instructor. I am always armed. Today, I visited this location [armed] with a NM DPS Officer. I was asked to either disarm or leave because it was IHOP policy that no customer would be armed. My friend identified himself and asked if he came in armed would he be asked to leave. The answer was yes.

The lady that asked me to leave said that she had the same problem in TN. "I don't want firearms in here because it bothers some customers". That is an exact quote. That sounds like a manager with an agenda, not a company policy.

NM is an open carry state. It is perfectly legal for anyone that can legally purchase a firearm, to carry that firearm openly, and if licensed to do so, concealed.

We can not enter any legally posted establishment, nor can we legally stay armed where we are asked not to be. This location -nor any location I have ever been to - has ever been posted denying entrance to legally protected citizens, and as a former Police Officer, never in my life have I heard of a business denying entrance to a Police Officer.

Since I was asked to either disarm or leave, I chose to leave.

I have never had a problem in any IHOP. If this is IHOP policy, I'd like to know that. If it is, I will insure every person I can so advise is notified. If it's not, I'd like to know what you intend to do about this manager.

I am the founder of www.handgunlaw.us. I will make certain your company policy is widely publicized, regardless of the reply. I will make it known on Tuesday June 19th, that your policy prohibits legally armed citizens in your locations if I haven't heard from you by then."

On June 19th at 4pm, I received a call from Mr. Michael Auerswald. He is the district manager for this area.

"That manager overstepped her authority. IHOP policy follows State law. It is absolutely not IHOP policy to prohibit our customers from carrying firearms. I am shocked that I have to deal with something like this. I am personally traveling to Clovis, NM to handle this situation and will be there on Thursday. That manager will either follow IHOP policy or find another job. We [I take that to mean IHOP] took that location over in November to fix some problems. This most certainly was not one of those problems."

He was most upset over this issue and asked me to join him for coffee when he gets here Thursday. I told him it would be my pleasure and gave him my cell number.

On June 21st at 4:30, we met at the IHOP. We had a great meeting. He has sent a

message to all IHOP managers regarding this incident -and he's treating it like an incident -along with the email message at the beginning of this page.

Bottom line is simple -he says if anyone ever asks a customer to leave simply because they are carrying a firearm, they will be looking for work shortly after he hears about it. He was most apologetic.

His other District Manager is married to a Lubbock Police Officer. When they spoke about this -he and she both went ballistic [his words] - then had to laugh at her asking a DPS Officer to leave, trying to figure out what planet she was from.

Very good outcome. The IHOP problem in New Mexico is solved. I'm pleased with the way it worked out.

I offered to host him as a student in my next class for free, along with the lady that asked me to leave. He said he isn't a firearms guy but learning about them, and the law would be a good thing for him and he's going to try to make it at the end of this month.

Steve Aikens, Clovis,
New Mexico.

Added July 5th, 2007.

"That manager will either follow IHOP policy or find another job."

That manager is now looking for another job.

SA.