



# Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2015 - Statistical Tables

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In 2015, nearly 17 million applications were subject to background checks, and about 226,000 (1.4%) were denied, including about 107,000 denied by the FBI and about 119,000 denied by state and local agencies. Nearly 197 million applications for firearm transfers or permits have been subject to background checks since the effective date of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (Brady Act) on February 28, 1994, through December 31, 2015.<sup>1</sup> During this period, more than 3 million applications (1.5%) were denied.

Data in this report were obtained from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program. Through FIST, BJS obtains background check information on applications and denials from state and local checking agencies and combines it with the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) transaction data to produce an estimated number of background checks for firearm transfers or permits since the effective date of the Brady Act.<sup>2</sup> BJS also collects information from state and local agencies on reasons why firearm applications were denied. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives' (ATF) Denial Enforcement and NICS Intelligence (DENI) Branch provides to BJS information on FBI denials that were screened and referred to ATF field offices for investigation and possible prosecution.

These statistical tables describe background check activities that occurred in 2015. Data include the number of firearm transaction applications processed by the FBI and by state and local agencies; the number of applications denied and reasons for denials; estimates of applications by jurisdiction and by each type of approval system; and FBI denials referred to the ATF DENI Branch.

<sup>1</sup>Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993, P.L. 103-159.

<sup>2</sup>FBI NICS transaction data are the number of applications and denials processed by the NICS system.

## Summary findings

- Since the effective date of the Brady Act on February 28, 1994, through December 31, 2015, nearly 197 million applications for firearm transfers or permits were subject to background checks and more than 3 million applications (1.5%) were denied (table 1).
- Nearly 17 million applications for firearm transfers were received in 2015, up from an estimated 15 million in 2014.
- About 1.4% of the nearly 17 million applications for firearm transfers or permits in 2015 were denied: about 107,000 by the FBI and about 119,000 by state and local agencies (table 2).
- Among state agency reporters, denial rates in 2015 were 3.0% for purchase permits, 1.5% for instant checks, 1.1% for other approval checks, and 1.1% for exempt carry permits (table 3).
- Local agencies denied 4.2% of applications for purchase permit checks and 1.1% of applications for exempt carry permits (table 4).
- A felony conviction (43%) was the most common reason for the FBI to deny an application in 2015, followed by a fugitive from justice status (19%) (table 5).
- Among the 26 state agency reporters that reported at least some reasons for denial, a felony conviction (29%) was the most common reason to deny an application in 2015, followed by a state law prohibition (20%).
- Among the more than 400 local agencies that reported reasons for denial, a state law prohibition (25%) was the most common reason to deny an application in 2015.

- Among all agencies that reported reasons for denial in 2015, denial of an application due to a felony conviction, indictment, charge, or arrest accounted for approximately 44% of denials (**table 6**).
- ATF field offices investigated 10,348 NICS denials referred by the FBI in 2015 (**table 7**).
- Among denials, a felony conviction was the most common reason for referral to a ATF field office in 2015 (37%).

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## Background

The Brady Act mandates that a criminal history background check be performed on any person attempting to purchase a firearm from a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL). The permanent provisions of the Brady Act went into effect on November 30, 1998, and established the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which the FBI or a state Point of Contact (POC) accesses prior to approval or denial of a firearm transfer. The NICS is a system comprised of data on persons who are prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm under federal or state law.

The Gun Control Act (18 U.S.C. § 922) prohibits transfer of a firearm to a person who—

- is under indictment for, or has been convicted of, a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than 1 year
- is a fugitive from justice
- is an unlawful user of, or addicted to, a controlled substance
- has been adjudicated as a mental defective or committed to a mental institution
- is an illegal alien or has been admitted to the United States under a nonimmigrant visa
- was dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces
- has renounced U.S. citizenship
- is subject to a court order restraining him or her from harassing, stalking, or threatening an intimate partner or child
- has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence
- is under age 18 for long guns or under age 21 for handguns.

An FFL contacts either the FBI or state POC to determine whether a prospective purchaser is prohibited from receiving a firearm. During 2015, the FBI conducted all NICS checks for 30 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. POC agencies, which may be statewide or local, conducted all NICS checks for 13 other states. In the remaining seven states, POC agencies conducted NICS checks on handgun transfer applicants, and the FBI conducted checks on long gun transfer applicants. Several states required an additional background check that does not access the NICS. State laws may require a check on a permit applicant or a person who seeks to receive a firearm transfer from an unlicensed seller. For more information on the NICS, see the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Service (CJIS) website at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/nics>.

BJS began the FIST program in 1995 to provide national estimates of the total number of firearm applications received and denied pursuant to the Brady Act and similar state laws.

The FIST program collects counts of firearm transfer and permit checks conducted by state and local agencies and combines this information with the FBI's NICS transaction data. In addition, the FIST program collects information on reasons for denials and law enforcement actions taken by the FBI and ATF against denied persons.

## Overview of the national firearm check system

About 1,300 federal, state, and local agencies conduct background checks on persons who apply to purchase a firearm or for a permit that may be used to make a purchase. In accordance with the Brady Act, applicants must either undergo a NICS background check that has been requested by a dealer or present a state permit that has been qualified by ATF as an alternative to the point-of-transfer check.

ATF-qualified permits are those that—

- allow an applicant to possess, acquire, or carry a firearm
- were issued not more than 5 years earlier by the state where the transfer is to take place, after an authorized government official verified that possession of a firearm by the applicant would not violate the law.

All permits issued since the permanent provisions of the Brady Act were implemented require a NICS check. Many NICS-alternative permits allow for multiple purchases while valid. State laws often require that a permit be revoked if the holder is convicted of an offense or otherwise becomes ineligible after receiving the permit. The only NICS-alternative permit change during 2015 occurred in Louisiana, where carry permits were qualified by ATF as a NICS alternative after amendments to state laws.

Prior to transferring a firearm under the permanent Brady provisions, an FFL is required to obtain a completed Firearm Transaction Record (ATF form 4473) from the applicant. An FFL initiates a NICS check by contacting either the FBI or the state POC by telephone or an electronic check (NICS E-check). The FBI or state POC queries available federal, state, local, and tribal systems and notifies the FFL that the transfer may proceed, may not proceed, or must be delayed pending further review of the applicant's record.

When an FFL initiates a NICS background check, a name and descriptor search is conducted to identify if the applicant has a prohibiting record in any of three national records systems operated by the FBI's CJIS Division. The Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) databases are also queried, if applicable. The following databases are searched during the background check process:

- The FBI's Interstate Identification Index (III) maintains individual fingerprint-supported criminal history records.

As of December 31, 2015, the NICS accessed and searched 71,510,790 III records during a background check.<sup>3</sup>

- The FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC) contains data on persons who are the subjects of protection orders or active criminal warrants, immigration violators, known or suspected terrorists, sex offenders, and others who have prohibiting records. As of December 31, 2015, the NICS searched 5,935,689 NCIC records during a background check.
- The FBI's NICS Index, a database created specifically for the NICS, collects and maintains information contributed by federal, state, local, and tribal agencies pertaining to persons prohibited from receiving or possessing a firearm pursuant to federal and state law. Typically, the records maintained in the NICS Index are not available via the III or the NCIC. As of December 31, 2015, the NICS contained 14,159,611 records.
- The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) databases contain information on non-U.S. citizens who attempt to receive firearms in the United States. In 2015, the NICS Section and POC states sent 151,010 such queries to ICE. From February 2002 to December 31, 2015, ICE conducted more than 749,781 queries for the NICS.

An applicant who is denied a firearm transfer or permit may appeal to the FBI or a POC. Some jurisdictions allow a further appeal to a court. A denied person who submitted a false application or has an outstanding warrant may be subject to arrest and prosecution under federal or state laws.

### State and local NICS participation

Each state government determines the extent of its involvement in the NICS process. Three levels of state involvement currently exist:

- A full POC requests a NICS check on all firearm transfers originating in the state.
- A partial POC requests a NICS check on all handgun transfers. FFLs in the state are required to contact the FBI for NICS checks for long gun transfers.
- The state does not maintain a POC. FFLs are required to contact the FBI for NICS checks on all firearm transfers originating in the state.

### Other uses of the NICS

In addition to NICS background checks required by the Brady Act, the NICS is limited to providing information to criminal justice agencies in connection with the issuance

<sup>3</sup>For more information on the NICS background check process, see the 2015 *National Instant Criminal Background Check System Operations Report*, available at <https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/nics/reports/2015-operations-report>.

of a firearm- or explosives-related permit or license, or responding to an inquiry from ATF in connection with a civil or criminal law enforcement activity relating to federal firearm laws (28 CFR § 25.6). Firearm-related permits include ATF-qualified alternative permits and other permits issued by state or local agencies. In addition to checks on new and renewed applications, rechecks may also be conducted on current permit holders. Since January 20, 2015, the NICS may be accessed by a law enforcement agency for a Disposition of Firearms (DOF) background check. Law enforcement personnel may conduct a DOF check prior to returning a firearm to an individual whose firearm was removed because a protection order had been issued (after the order expires).

### FBI NICS transaction data

The FBI tracks the number of applications and denials processed by the NICS system and reports on NICS transaction data in the FBI's annual *NICS Operations Report*.<sup>4</sup> This report, which is more technical than FIST reports, provides details about the status and functioning of the system. The FBI reports on firearm applications processed by the POC states and denials issued by the NICS Section. The *NICS Operations Report* does not include reasons for denials issued at the state and local levels, a critical data element that FIST collects.

In 2015, the FBI reported more than 14 million state POC transactions, compared to the approximately 7 million reported by FIST. The difference may be attributed to several factors, notably within the category of state firearm permits. The FIST counts include applications for two types of state firearm permits:

- permits required for a transfer (purchase permits)
- concealed carry permits that may be used to exempt the holder from a background check at the time of transfer (exempt carry permits).

At yearend 2015, 22 states had an exempt carry permit and 28 others had concealed carry permits that were not exempt and not included in FIST. Some of those 28 states used NICS for checks on applicants, which are included in the reported FBI data. The largest difference in the state firearm permit category was permit rechecks. At least two state agencies (Kentucky and Utah) ran periodic rechecks on current permit holders.<sup>5</sup> The rechecks were included in the FBI transaction counts but not in FIST counts because they were not connected to a firearm transfer. FIST reporting agencies were able to separately report new and renewed permit applications connected to transfers.

<sup>4</sup>The 2015 *National Instant Criminal Background Check Systems Operations Report* is available at <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/2015-nics-ops-report.pdf/view>.

<sup>5</sup>Beginning in 2016, the NICS counts of permits include a category for permit rechecks, though some state agencies may not be reporting their recheck counts in this category.

**TABLE 1**  
**Estimated number of firearm applications received and denied since the effective date of the Brady Act, 1994–2015**

	Applications	Denials	Percent denied
<b>Total</b>	196,855,000	3,043,000	1.5%
<b>Brady interim period<sup>a</sup></b>			
1994–1998	12,740,000	312,000	2.4%
<b>Permanent Brady<sup>b</sup></b>	184,115,000	2,731,000	1.5%
1998 <sup>c</sup>	893,000	20,000	2.2
1999	8,621,000	204,000	2.4
2000	7,753,000	153,000	2.0
2001	8,068,000	150,000	1.9
2002	7,926,000	136,000	1.7
2003	7,883,000	126,000	1.6
2004	8,133,000	126,000	1.6
2005	8,324,000	132,000	1.6
2006	8,772,000	135,000	1.6
2007	8,836,000	136,000	1.6
2008	10,131,000	147,000	1.5
2009	11,071,000	150,000	1.4
2010	10,643,000	153,000	1.5
2011 <sup>d</sup>	12,135,000	160,000	1.3
2012	15,718,000	192,000	1.2
2013 <sup>d</sup>	17,602,000	193,000	1.1
2014	14,993,000	193,000	1.3
2015	16,610,000	226,000	1.4

Note: Counts are rounded to the nearest 1,000. Detail may not sum to total due to rounding. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*.

<sup>a</sup>From March 1, 1994, to November 29, 1998, background checks on applicants were conducted by state and local agencies, mainly on handgun transfers. See *Presale Handgun Checks, the Brady Interim Period, 1994–98* (NCJ 175034, BJS web, June 1999).

<sup>b</sup>NICS began operations in 1998. Checks on handgun and long gun transfers are conducted by the FBI and state and local agencies.

<sup>c</sup>November 30 to December 31, 1998, counts are from the NICS operations report for the period and may include multiple transactions for the same application.

<sup>d</sup>Totals for 2011 and 2013 were estimated. For more information on estimation methods, see *Methodology*.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 1996–2015; and FBI, National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Transaction Statistics, 1998–2015.

**TABLE 2****Firearm applications received and denied, by type of agency and type of check, 2015**

Type of checks conducted	2015			1999–2015 <sup>a,b</sup>		
	Applications	Denials	Percent denied	Applications	Denials	Percent denied
<b>National total (FIST and FBI)</b>	16,610,459	225,924	1.4%	184,114,848	2,730,894	1.5%
FBI total	8,973,538	106,556	1.2	102,427,066	1,273,232	1.2
State and local total (FIST)	7,636,921	119,368	1.6	81,687,782	1,457,662	1.8
<b>State agency reporters</b>	6,660,898	98,494	1.5%	69,384,790	1,222,688	1.8%
Instant checks <sup>c</sup>	4,463,147	66,206	1.5	46,254,999	871,036	1.9
Purchase permits <sup>d</sup>	422,639	12,604	3.0	6,658,916	163,904	2.5
Exempt carry permits <sup>e</sup>	840,984	9,520	1.1	6,679,085	89,428	1.3
Other approvals <sup>f</sup>	934,128	10,164	1.1	9,791,791	98,321	1.0
<b>Local agencies<sup>g</sup></b>	976,023	20,874	2.1%	12,302,992	234,973	1.9%
Purchase permits <sup>d</sup>	354,635	14,962	4.2	6,520,357	164,018	2.5
Exempt carry permits <sup>e</sup>	450,881	5,052	1.1	4,243,613	59,234	1.4
Other approvals <sup>f</sup>	170,507	860	0.5	1,539,023	11,722	0.8

Notes: See appendix table 1 for standard errors by local agencies.

<sup>a</sup>Includes December 1998.

<sup>b</sup>Includes estimates for local agencies and some state agency reporters in 2011 and 2013 when no surveys were conducted. For more information on estimation methods, see *Methodology*.

<sup>c</sup>Require a seller to transmit a buyer's information to a checking agency by telephone or computer. The agency is required to respond immediately or as soon as possible.

<sup>d</sup>Require a buyer to obtain, after a background check, a government-issued document (such as a permit, license, or identification card) that must be presented to a seller before the buyer can receive a firearm.

<sup>e</sup>State concealed-weapons permits, issued after a background check, that exempt the holder from a new check at the time of purchase under a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives ruling or state law.

<sup>f</sup>Require a seller to transmit a buyer's application to a checking agency, with transfers delayed until a waiting period expires or the agency completes a check.

<sup>g</sup>Totals were estimated. For more information, see *Methodology*.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program, 1999–2015; and FBI, National Instant Criminal Background Check System Transaction Statistics, 2015.

**TABLE 3****Firearm applications received and denied by state agency reporters, by type of check, 2015**

Type of check and jurisdiction	Applications	Denials	Percent denied
<b>Instant check</b>	4,463,147	66,206	1.5%
Colorado	350,553	7,714	2.2
Connecticut	119,785	161	0.1
Florida	885,086	12,632	1.4
Illinois	418,375	1,994	0.5
Nevada	102,304	2,162	2.1
New Hampshire	50,000	450	0.9
New Jersey	93,225	556	0.6
Oregon	262,838	1,913	0.7
Pennsylvania	989,298	12,064	1.2
Tennessee	510,233	19,880	3.9
Utah	102,641	2,469	2.4
Virginia	444,627	3,048	0.7
Wisconsin	134,182	1,163	0.9
<b>Other approval</b>	934,128	10,164	1.1%
California	880,603	9,669	1.1
Maryland	37,572	390	1.0
Rhode Island <sup>a</sup>	15,953	105	0.7
<b>Purchase permit</b>	422,639	12,604	3.0%
Connecticut	46,304	73	0.2
District of Columbia	1,654	9	0.5
Hawaii <sup>a</sup>	19,752	212	1.1
Illinois	163,172	8,730	5.4
Maryland	19,699	310	1.6
Massachusetts <sup>a</sup>	52,593	1,283	2.4
Michigan <sup>a</sup>	46,977	1,118	2.4
New Jersey <sup>a</sup>	72,488	869	1.2
<b>Exempt carry</b>	840,984	9,520	1.1%
Alaska	1,250	5	0.4
Arizona	44,819	325	0.7
Arkansas	43,446	1,716	3.9
Kansas	18,750	98	0.5
Kentucky	39,521	707	1.8
Louisiana	16,169	200	1.2
Michigan <sup>a,c</sup>	121,682	2,449	2.0
Minnesota <sup>a,b</sup>	47,872	426	0.9
Mississippi	7,000	200	2.9
Nebraska	11,951	135	1.1
North Dakota	7,200	350	4.9
South Carolina	63,932	871	1.4
Texas	284,169	1,081	0.4
Utah	126,524	911	0.7
Wyoming	6,699	46	0.7

Note: Applications include transfers and permits. Types of firearms included in a jurisdiction's checks or permits are described in *Jurisdiction notes*. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*.

<sup>a</sup>Totals for local agencies were compiled by a state agency.

<sup>b</sup>Permits are only exempt under state law. Other carry permits listed have a federal exemption.

<sup>c</sup>Reported 2015 fiscal year data, which were used to produce the 2015 calendar year estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**TABLE 4****Firearm applications received and denied by local agencies, by type of permit and size of population served, 2015**

Type of permit and size	Applications	Denials	Percent denied
<b>Purchase permits</b>	354,635	14,962	4.2%
Population served			
9,999 or fewer	29,380	432	1.5
10,000–99,999	147,878	6,374	4.3
100,000–199,999	72,876	3,106	4.3
200,000 or more	104,501	5,051	4.8
<b>Exempt carry permits</b>	450,881	5,052	1.1%
Population served			
9,999 or fewer	17,411	147	0.8
10,000–99,999	195,202	2,641	1.4
100,000–199,999	92,992	1,023	1.1
200,000 or more	145,275	1,242	0.9

Note: Detail may not sum to total due to rounding. Counts are from agencies that provided data. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*. See appendix table 2 for standard errors.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**TABLE 5****Percent of reasons for denial of firearm transfer and permit applications, by checking agencies, 2015**

Reason for denial	All agencies	FBI <sup>a</sup>	State	Local
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Under indictment/information	3.7	5.3	1.6	3.1
Felony conviction	35.8	42.8	28.6	16.4
Felony arrest with no disposition	4.8	~	11.9	3.2
Fugitive from justice/warrant	13.4	18.7	7.0	3.9
Misdemeanor domestic violence	7.5	7.3	6.8	14.4
Protection/restraining order	3.7	2.8	5.1	4.0
Drug user/addict	7.7	9.6	5.2	5.0
Mental health commitment/ adjudication	5.9	4.4	8.0	6.0
Illegal/unlawful alien	2.0	2.0	2.2	0.6
State law prohibition	13.0	6.8	20.1	25.0
Local law prohibition	0.2	/	0.0	2.8
Other prohibitions <sup>b</sup>	2.3	0.2	3.5	15.7

Note: Includes transfer and permit denials. Reasons for denial were based on 18 U.S.C. § 922 and state laws. Totals were based on the 26 state agency reporters and 415 local agencies that reported counts on reasons for denial. Detail may not sum to total due to rounding. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*. See appendix table 4 for counts.

~Not applicable. This is a not a federal disqualifier, but a disqualifier that is used in certain states.

/Not reported. This does not apply to the FBI or state agency reporters.

<sup>a</sup>In 2008, the FBI began a new classification system and reclassified all denials from 1999 to 2008. Therefore, totals are not comparable to those in editions of this report prior to 2008.

<sup>b</sup>Includes juveniles, persons dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces, persons who have renounced U.S. citizenship, and other unspecified persons.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015; and FBI, National Instant Criminal Background Check Operations Report, 2015.

**TABLE 6****Percent change in the number of applications, denials, and reasons for denial, 1999–2015**

	1999	2015	Percent change 1999–2015
Applications	8,621,000	16,610,000	92.7%
Denials <sup>a</sup>	204,000	226,000	10.8%
Felony denials	148,000	100,000	-32.4
All other reasons	56,000	126,000	125.0
Percent felony <sup>b</sup>	72.5%	44.4%	-38.8%
Felony denials per 1,000 applications	17.2	6.0	-64.9%

Note: Applications include transfers and permits. Counts are rounded to the nearest 1,000. Annual counts may not sum to totals in other tables. Estimates were based on data reported by the FBI and state agency reporters that reported reasons for denial via the FIST program. Counts of some local agencies are included in the calculation for the distribution of felony denials. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*.

<sup>a</sup>In 2008, the FBI began a new classification system and reclassified all denials from 1999 to 2008. Therefore, totals are not comparable to those in editions of this report prior to 2008.

<sup>b</sup>The felony percentage is calculated from reported reasons for denial and is multiplied by the total number of denials to estimate the total number of felony denials.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program, 1999 and 2015; and FBI, National Instant Criminal Background Check System Federal Denials, 1999 and 2015.

**TABLE 7****Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives investigation of National Instant Criminal Background Check System denials by the FBI, 2015**

	Total	Percent
FBI denials referred to ATF Denial Enforcement and National Instant Criminal Background Check	111,338	100%
DENI Branch referrals to ATF field divisions <sup>a</sup>		
Total referred to field	10,348	9.3%
Delayed denials <sup>b</sup>	3,009	2.7
Standard denials <sup>c</sup>	7,339	6.6
Not referred to field	96,912	87.0
Not referred and overturned	3,952	3.5
Canceled <sup>d</sup>	45	--
Awaiting response <sup>e</sup>	81	0.1
Reasons for referrals to ATF field divisions		
Convicted felon	3,859	37.3%
Domestic violence misdemeanor	1,865	18.0
Subject to protective order	1,806	17.5
Unlawful user of controlled substance	815	7.9
Fugitive from justice	782	7.6
Under indictment/information <sup>f</sup>	526	5.1
Adjudicated mentally defective	518	5.0
Illegal/unlawful alien	76	0.7
State prohibition	69	0.7
Career armed criminal	17	0.2
Insufficient evidence of prohibition provided	8	0.1
Dishonorable discharge	6	0.1
Renounced U.S. citizenship	1	--

Note: Detail may not sum to total due to rounding.

--Less than 0.05%.

<sup>a</sup>A denial is referred if it is likely to merit prosecution under ATF and U.S. Attorney criteria.

<sup>b</sup>A firearm may be obtained during an open transaction, when the FBI has not completed a check in 3 business days and the dealer is allowed to transfer the firearm. If the FBI completes the check and finds that the buyer is prohibited, a delayed denial referral is made to ATF.

<sup>c</sup>Involves a person who is not allowed to receive a firearm because the FBI found a prohibitory record within 3 business days.

<sup>d</sup>Represents NICS checks that should not have been conducted and were canceled by the FBI.

<sup>e</sup>DENI Branch specialist has contacted a court or law enforcement agency for additional information and is waiting for the results.

<sup>f</sup>An information is a formal accusation of a crime. It differs from an indictment because it is made by a prosecuting attorney rather than a grand jury.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), Denial Enforcement and National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Intelligence (DENI) Branch, Firearm Denial Statistics, 2015.

## Methodology

Data used for this report were collected and prepared by the Regional Justice Information Service (REJIS) through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) under the Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program. The FIST program collects information on background check activities for firearm transfers or permits from federal, state, and local agencies. The 2015 FIST survey was designed to provide national- and state-level estimates of background check activity.

REJIS administered the 2015 FIST data collection through a survey to the District of Columbia and the 32 state agency reporters that serve an entire state population, a statewide census of local checking agencies in eight states, and a sample of local checking agencies in three states. REJIS combined the data obtained from state and local agencies with FBI National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) federal transaction data to create an estimate of the total number of applications received and denied for the year pursuant to the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (Brady Act).

### FIST frame generation

State statutes determine which agencies conduct background checks for a firearm permit or transfer. For the FIST program, it is important to distinguish between local agencies that are authorized by statute to conduct background checks and those that actually conduct them. For example, local agencies in certain states may be legally authorized to conduct background checks for firearm transfers or permits, but they are not required to do so. REJIS identified a few instances within the 2015 frame when a local agency (usually a municipal police department) that was legally authorized by state statute to conduct background checks had never conducted checks and was unlikely to ever do so. Instead, transfer or permit applicants who might use such a local agency are directed to another local authority (usually the county sheriff) with jurisdiction to conduct a transfer check or issue a permit.

For the purpose of FIST, BJS determined that eligible agencies in the frame should be those that are authorized and are known to conduct background checks and those that maintain information on the critical FIST data elements, which include applications, denials, and—when reported—the reasons for denial.<sup>6</sup> Agencies that had only delegated background check functions were considered

<sup>6</sup>For the FIST program, collecting application and denial data from agencies that conduct background checks or track permit or transfer applications is considered to be the most accurate and sometimes only means available to assess background check activity.

out of scope because they did not actually conduct critical firearm background check activities or track information on such activities. Additionally, other agencies that were out of scope include agencies that had closed since the FIST frame, smaller agencies that employed only part-time employees, and agencies whose employees, worked fewer than 35 hours a week combined.

To generate the 2015 FIST sampling frame, REJIS, under the direction of BJS, used multiple data sources combined with a large known pool of past FIST responders. First, REJIS included local agencies from the 2014 FIST frame that were known to have responded to the FIST survey at least once in the previous 3 years and had a verified status of conducting background checks or processing applications for firearm transfers or permits. To verify the frame, REJIS also used BJS's 2014 Census of State and Local Law Enforcement, the FBI's 2011 Originating Agency Identifier file of law enforcement agencies, and published agency lists from professional officer associations.

BJS and REJIS used data from three general sources to generate the 2015 national FIST estimates:

- **FBI**— includes the 30 states and the District of Columbia that rely exclusively on the FBI to conduct background checks on handgun and long gun transfer applicants. In seven other states, the FBI's NICS conducts checks for long gun transfers only (see appendix table 8). REJIS obtained counts of background check activities directly from the FBI for these states.
- **State agency reporters**—include the 32 state agencies and the District of Columbia police that conduct background checks required by state law or compile data for their entire jurisdiction (such as states where local agencies conduct background checks but report their activity to a state-level entity).<sup>7</sup> REJIS administered the FIST survey or used state-issued reports to collect complete statewide counts of applications for firearm transfers or permits and denials from these state-level entities.
- **Local reporting agencies**—include the 1,266 local checking agencies in 11 states that issue permits, track applications and denials, or conduct background checks for various types of firearm permit or transfer systems, and do not report counts to a state-level entity.<sup>8</sup> REJIS administered the FIST survey to a sample of local agencies in three states and to all local agencies in eight states.

<sup>7</sup>Two separate agency units in New Jersey reported to FIST. These units were counted as a single reporter so that a total for background check activity for the entire state could be reported.

<sup>8</sup>The FIST program also obtains data from other types of local agencies that conduct these activities, such as probate courts in Georgia and county clerks or other type of administrative offices in New York. In such cases, the agency surveyed may not conduct a background check but rather issue a permit, track a permit that was issued, or track a transfer check.

## FIST sample

The majority of FIST data were comprised of counts obtained from the FBI and collected from state agency reporters. A small proportion (less than 10%) of the FIST national estimate was derived from the local agency estimates. BJS obtained 2015 FIST data from 11 states where local agencies were authorized to conduct firearm background check activities or process applications.

BJS used a count from local agencies in eight states (Idaho, Iowa, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, and West Virginia). This produced more reliable results than sampling due to the small number of checking agencies that operate within the state and within stratum, and the uniqueness and diversity of the FIST agency respondents.

BJS sampled local agencies in three states (Georgia, Minnesota, and Washington) due to the large number of potential reporters. REJIS created a stratified sample based on population that roughly equates to—

- Stratum 1: rural—population of fewer than 10,000
- Stratum 2: small cities—population between 10,000 and 99,999
- Stratum 3: small metropolitan areas—population between 100,000 and 199,999
- Stratum 4: large metropolitan areas—population of 200,000 or more.

These population categories were selected to be consistent with definitions of various census place levels. Additionally, they allow the collection to maintain some consistency with portions of the methodology used for previous FIST collections. BJS and REJIS took several steps to determine if correlates could be found between population size and the number of applications, including several variables (such as the number of sworn officers) from BJS's 2008 Census of Local Law Enforcement Agencies. BJS determined that using the four standard census place population categories correlated better with the number of applications than other variables. Sampling was done for agencies in strata 1 and 2, while the agencies in strata 3 and 4 were kept in the sample with certainty.

BJS created a reserve sample to account for potential nonresponse. In total, a 30% reserve sample was drawn for each of the three sampled states and was split into two separate samples, each yielding a 15% sample. Because all agencies in strata 3 and 4 were surveyed, the reserve sample only affected strata 1 and 2. The first reserve sample was used if the response rate within a sampled state fell below 85% for the initial data collection period. The second reserve sample was used if the response rate was less than 75% after the first reserve sample was deployed. REJIS used both reserve samples for all three of the sampled states in 2015.

The final designated sample included 564 enumerated (self-representing or SR) local agencies and 366 sampled (non-self-representing or NSR) local agencies. After adjusting for agencies that were ineligible to participate in the survey, the final sample consisted of 963 state and local agencies. The overall response rate was 81%. All (100%) state agency reporters and 80% of local agencies responded to the survey (table 8).

BJS and REJIS updated the 2015 FIST survey with clearer instructions by using terminology tailored to individual state agencies to describe the applicable transfers or permits and minimize respondent burden. REJIS used multiple survey modes (e.g., online form, paper survey, and fax) and a rigorous nonresponse follow-up contact strategy to increase survey response.

## Estimation

REJIS summed state agency counts, state estimates (for states with local checking agencies), and the FBI's federal NICS transaction data to estimate the total number of firearm transfer and permit applications received and denied nationally. REJIS applied design weights and nonresponse adjustment factors for enumerated and sampled local agencies to generate estimates of the number of applications and denials at the state level.

## Weighting

The 2015 FIST data collection provides for two basic weighting structures for local respondent agencies: a weight applied to SR agencies and a weight applied to NSR agencies.

## SR agencies (enumerated)

Agencies in strata 3 and 4 (large agencies) were selected with certainty and were given a design weight of 1 ( $w_1 = 1$ ). A nonresponse adjustment ( $w_2$ ) was applied to responding agencies to compensate for the agencies that did not respond.

**TABLE 8**

**Number of checking agencies in the 2015 Firearm Inquiry Statistics survey**

Checking agencies	Total	Sample	Responses	Response rate
Total	1,299	963	777	81%
Statewide	33	33	33	100%
Local	1,266	930	744	80%
Population served				
9,999 or fewer	552	353	287	81
10,000–99,999	602	465	374	80
100,000–199,999	61	61	50	82
200,000 or more	51	51	33	65

Note: Agencies that were ineligible to participate in the Firearm Inquiry Statistics survey were deemed out of scope and removed from all counts of checking agencies.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

### ***NSR agencies (sampled)***

The process for calculating weights for NSR agencies was similar to that for SR agencies, except these agencies (the small agencies in strata 1 and 2 of the sampled states) received a design weight of greater than 1 ( $w_1 > 1$ ) according to the population-based stratum and the state in which they reside. This weight reflects the inverse of the probability of selection for the state and stratum size (cell) in which the agency resides. Weights were adjusted for any agencies that were out of scope in the sampled states.

### ***Nonresponse adjustment***

The nonresponse adjustment accounts for agencies that were ineligible (out of scope) and for nonrespondents. It consists of a ratio adjustment of the sum of the weighted eligible agencies (per state and population size stratum) to the sum of weighted respondent agencies (also per state and population size stratum). A nonresponse adjustment was applied to each cell (stratum within state) if there was any nonresponse. This created a specific adjustment for each cell that applied to all states, whether enumerated or sampled.

### ***Partial-year reporting adjustment***

A weight consisting of a small ratio adjustment to account for missing months of data was applied to adjust for any agency that reported only partial-year data. This adjustment to account for missing months was necessary for 11 local agencies. The use of this weight occurred prior to the calculation of the final weight.

### ***Final weights***

The final weights ( $F_w$ ) applied to each FIST case are the product of a design weight ( $w_1$ ) and a nonresponse adjustment weight ( $w_2$ ), for ( $F_w = w_1 \times w_2$ ).

### ***Item nonresponse imputation for local agencies***

For the 2015 FIST collection, REJIS determined there was a negligible number of cases where information on applications for firearm transfers or permits was missing. There were more cases of missing data for denials, but this was a small number compared to other missing data (e.g., reasons for denial). To count partial responses, agencies were required to report either the number of applications received or the number of denials issued. If neither was present, the agency was considered a nonrespondent. Eleven agencies (1.5%) provided denials but not applications, while fifteen agencies (2%) provided the number of applications but not denials. In the instances of missing data on applications or denials, REJIS used a conditional mean imputation to estimate the number of applications and denials.

In population stratum 1, REJIS replaced missing values with the mean number of applications of other agencies in the same state that were in the same population category. In population stratum 2, REJIS employed a basic multiple imputation strategy for agencies with complete data that took into account the number of denials, the actual population size served, and the number of applications. The result was a within-state and stratum group-based sum of imputed values proportionate to the population allocation of imputed applications or denials per agency.

### ***Standard errors***

REJIS computed standard errors for the estimates of total applications, total denials, and the ratio of denials to total applications across states and size of region for local agencies for purchase permits, transfer checks, and exempt carry permits. The standard error computations take into account various aspects of the FIST design, including stratification of data collection by a combination of state and population served categories and finite population sampling (without replacement) across the states and population categories of interest.

REJIS approximated the FIST design by using a SPSS Complex Samples module that generated final strata reflective of the various combinations of state and population categories in the sample design. Data from SR agencies were treated as certainty samples with an initial selection probability of 1. For these states and population category combinations, complete responses would have a negligible contribution to the overall standard errors for a given estimate. To account for this and the fact that finite population correction (FPC) factors for the samples generated by the FIST design were small, FPCs were directly incorporated into the standard error computations. Finally, estimates for local agencies included one additional subdomain of agency type: local or state (centralized reporting).

All computations were generated using the FIST final sampling weight, which incorporated adjustments for missing values, nonresponse, and an overall population eligibility or coverage adjustment. In some cases, standard error computations were not possible, as only one agency reported information from a given type of application in areas where more than one agency was queried (via sample or census). In these cases, no standard error computations were calculated.

### ***Reasons for denial***

BJIS has collected information about reasons for denial since the FIST program's inception in 1996. The FIST survey includes 12 categories that reflect the most common reasons for denial and closely match the categories of federal prohibitors. NICS POC agencies conduct background checks

to enforce federal prohibitors and state law prohibitors that may vary from the federal categories (see appendix table 6 for a list of federal and state prohibitors). Agencies that responded to the FIST survey were asked to record their denials in the most appropriate categories. When REJIS obtained data from an agency's website or internal report that did not match with an existing FIST denial category, REJIS determined which denial category best matched the reported reason and verified the classification with the responding agency.

In 2015, the FBI, 26 (79%) state agency reporters, and 415 (56%) local agencies reported at least some reasons for denials. An additional 161 local agencies had zero denials but said they would be able to report a reason for a denial if one had occurred.

There were two main challenges to reporting reasons for denial. First, while BJS has observed an increase in responses to survey questions on reasons for denial, a relatively high degree of item nonresponse and incomplete responses persisted. For example, some state and local agencies provided more than one reason for some denials, while others provided reasons for only some denials, and some did not provide reasons for any denials.

Second, the method by which agencies record or track reasons for a denial varies among state and local agencies. The FBI reports one reason for each denial, based on the first prohibitor found during a background check, but BJS and REJIS have observed variations in how reasons for denial are reported by state and local agencies. Of those that report any reasons for a denial, approximately three-quarters of local agencies reported all reasons found during a background check, while about a quarter reported only one reason for denial. Conversely, about a third of state agency respondents reported all reasons for denial, while about two-thirds reported only one reason for each denial. Some state and local agencies reported only the most serious offense found during a background check, while others reported the first reason found, or did not indicate how they determined which reason to report.

Due to the high item nonresponse and variation in the way reasons for denial were reported, REJIS calculated a simple estimation for the number of reasons for denial by local agencies. Estimates used the agency base weight rather than the final weight that was applied to all other local agency estimates (see *Final weights* section). This was done to better align responses from sampled agencies with those from states in which a census of agencies was conducted. The FBI and state agency's counts of reasons for denial were reported, and no estimates were generated.

## Definitions

**Application for firearm transfer** is information submitted by a person to a state or local checking agency to purchase a firearm or obtain a permit that can be used for a purchase. Information may be submitted directly to a checking agency or forwarded by a prospective seller.

**Denial** occurs when an applicant is prohibited from receiving a firearm or a permit that can be used to receive a firearm because a disqualifying factor was found during a background check.

**Exempt carry permit** is a state carry permit (issued after a background check) that exempts the holder from a check at the time of purchase under an ATF regulation or state law.

**Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL)** is also known as a federally licensed firearms dealer. A dealer must be licensed by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to be classified as an FFL and must be enrolled with the FBI's NICS to request a NICS check.

**Firearm** is any weapon that is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.

**Handgun** is a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired using a single hand, such as a pistol or revolver.

**Instant check** (instant approval) systems require a seller to transmit a purchaser's application to a checking agency by telephone or computer, after which the agency is required to respond as quickly as possible.

**Long gun** is a firearm with a barrel extended to about 30 inches to improve accuracy and range, commonly with a shoulder butt, and designed to be fired with two hands, such as a rifle or shotgun.

**National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS)** is a national system that checks available records to determine if prospective transferees are disqualified from receiving firearms.

**Other approval systems** require a seller to transmit a purchaser's application to a checking agency by telephone or other means. The agency is not required to respond immediately but must respond before the end of the statutory time limit.

**Purchase permit systems** require a prospective firearm purchaser to obtain, after a background check, a government-issued document (called a permit, license, or identification card) that must be presented to a seller to receive a firearm.

**Transactions** are inquiries to the federal NICS system and may include more than one inquiry per application.

## Jurisdiction notes

The following notes provide additional information about changes in jurisdictions that occurred and about the types of firearms included in a jurisdiction's instant checks, purchase permits, exempt carry permits, or other approval checks in 2015. Jurisdiction statutes should be consulted for complete details on a jurisdiction's firearm laws.

**Alaska**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Arizona**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Arkansas**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**California**—A state agency conducted other approval checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Colorado**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Connecticut**—The state authorized two types of purchase permits, and every handgun transferee was required to obtain one of the permits. A purchase permit was also required for a long gun. In addition, a state agency conducted instant checks at the point of transfer on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**District of Columbia**—The chief of police conducted checks on applicants for a registration certificate (categorized by the FIST program as a purchase permit), which was required to obtain a handgun or a long gun. In addition, the FBI conducted NICS checks requested by dealers who transferred a firearm after receiving a buyer's registration certificate.

**Florida**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Georgia**—Local agencies issued exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Hawaii**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun or a long gun. Local agencies conducted checks on purchase permit applicants.

**Idaho**—Local agencies issued exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Illinois**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun or a long gun. In addition, a state agency conducted instant checks at the point of transfer on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Iowa**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun. An exempt carry permit may have been substituted for the purchase permit. Both types of permits may have been used to acquire a long gun. Local agencies conducted checks on applicants for purchase and exempt carry permits.

**Kansas**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Kentucky**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Louisiana**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers on or after March 9, 2015, when the permit was qualified by ATF as an alternative to the NICS transfer check.

**Maryland**—A purchase permit issued by a state agency was required to obtain a handgun. In addition, the state agency conducted other approval checks on applicants for transfers of handguns and assault weapons, which were designated by state law as regulated firearms.

**Massachusetts**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun or a long gun. Three types of purchase permits were included in the FIST survey data. Local agencies conducted checks on permit applicants.

**Michigan**—A purchase permit was required for a handgun transfer between two individuals who were not licensed dealers. An exempt carry permit may have been substituted for the purchase permit and may have also been used to acquire a long gun. Local agencies conducted checks on purchase permit and exempt carry permit applicants.

**Minnesota**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun or an assault weapon. An exempt carry permit may have been substituted for the purchase permit. Local agencies conducted checks on purchase and exempt carry permit applicants.

**Mississippi**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Montana**—Local agencies issued exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Nebraska**—Local agencies conducted checks on applicants for a purchase permit, which was required to obtain a handgun. An exempt carry permit issued by a state agency may have been substituted for the purchase permit. Both types of permits may have been used to acquire a long gun.

**Nevada**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers. Local agencies issued exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**New Hampshire**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun transfers.

**New Jersey**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun or a long gun. Local agencies and the state police conducted checks on purchase permit applicants. In addition, the state police conducted instant checks at the point of transfer on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**New York**—The state's purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun and certain types of long guns. Local agencies conducted checks on purchase permit applicants.

**North Carolina**—A purchase permit was required to obtain a handgun. An exempt carry permit may have been substituted for the purchase permit. Both types of permits may have been used to acquire a long gun. Local agencies conducted checks on applicants for purchase and exempt carry permits.

**North Dakota**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Oregon**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Pennsylvania**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Rhode Island**—Local agencies conducted other approval checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**South Carolina**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Tennessee**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Texas**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Utah**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers, and conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits.

**Virginia**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun and long gun transfers.

**Washington**—Local agencies conducted other approval checks on applicants for handgun transfers.

**West Virginia**—Local agencies issued exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

**Wisconsin**—A state agency conducted instant checks on applicants for handgun transfers.

**Wyoming**—A state agency conducted background checks on applicants for exempt carry permits that may have been used for handgun or long gun transfers.

## Related publications

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2013–14* (NCJ 249849, June 2016)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2012* (NCJ 247815, December 2014)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2010* (NCJ 238226, February 2013)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2009* (NCJ 231679, October 2010)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2008* (NCJ 227471, August 2009)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2007* (NCJ 223197, July 2008)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers - Statistical Tables, 2006* (NCJ 221786, March 2008)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2005* (NCJ 214256, November 2006)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2004* (NCJ 210117, October 2005)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2003: Trends for the Permanent Brady Period, 1999–2003* (NCJ 204428, September 2004)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2002* (NCJ 200116, September 2003)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2001* (NCJ 195235, September 2002)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 2000* (NCJ 187985, July 2001)

*Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 1999* (NCJ 180882, June 2000)

Data on this subject for the Brady Interim period prior to the permanent provisions are available in *Presale Handgun Checks, the Brady Interim Period, 1994–98* (NCJ 175034, June 1999)

*Enforcement of the Brady Act, 2010: Federal and State Investigations and Prosecutions of Firearm Applicants Denied by a NICS Check in 2011*

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/239272.pdf>

*Enforcement of the Brady Act, 2009: Federal and State Investigations and Prosecutions of Firearm Applicants Denied by a NICS Check in 2009*

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/234173.pdf>

*Enforcement of the Brady Act, 2008: Federal and State Investigations and Prosecutions of Firearm Applicants Denied by a NICS Check in 2008*

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/231052.pdf>

*Enforcement of the Brady Act, 2007: Federal and State Investigations and Prosecutions of Firearm Applicants Denied by a NICS Check in 2007*

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/227604.pdf>

*Enforcement of the Brady Act, 2006*

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/222474.pdf>

*Federal Firearms Cases, FY 2008*

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/229420.pdf>

*Federal Firearms Cases, FY 2007*

<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/224890.pdf>

*Summary of State Firearm Transfer Laws, December 31, 2013*

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/248657.pdf>

The following BJS surveys provide an overview of the firearm check procedures in each of the states and the states' interaction with NICS:

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, 2005* (NCJ 214645, November 2006)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, Midyear 2004* (NCJ 209288, August 2005)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, Midyear 2003* (NCJ 203701, August 2004)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, Midyear 2002* (NCJ 198830, April 2003)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, Midyear 2001* (NCJ 192065, April 2002)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, Midyear 2000* (NCJ 186766, April 2001)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, Midyear 1999* (NCJ 179022, March 2000)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, 1997* (NCJ 173942, December 1998)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales, 1996* (NCJ 160705, September 1997)

*Survey of State Procedures Related to Firearm Sales* (NCJ 160763, May 1996)

The following BJS survey examines the quality and accessibility of certain criminal and noncriminal records when states conduct a firearm presale background check:

*Survey of State Records Included in Presale Background Checks: Mental Health Records, Domestic Violence Misdemeanor Records, and Restraining Orders, 2003* (NCJ 206042, August 2004)

*Trends for Background Checks for Firearm Transfers, 1999–2008* <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bjs/grants/231187.pdf>

**APPENDIX TABLE 1****Estimated standard errors for table 2: Firearm applications received and denied by local agencies, by type of check, 2015**

Type of checks conducted	Applications	Denials	Percent denied
Total	24,467	991	0.09%
Purchase permits	13,524	890	0.22
Exempt carry permits	10,769	254	0.06
Other approvals	15,216	76	0.01

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 2****Standard errors for table 4: Firearm applications received and denied by local agencies, by type of permit and size of population served, 2015**

Type of permit and community size	Applications	Denials	Percent denied
<b>Purchase permits</b>	13,524	890	0.22%
Population served			
9,999 or fewer	973	29	0.07
10,000–99,999	5,033	414	0.23
100,000–199,999	3,599	152	0.31
200,000 or more	11,986	773	0.63
<b>Exempt carry permits</b>	10,769	254	0.06%
Population served			
9,999 or fewer	527	9	0.06
10,000–99,999	4,643	232	0.12
100,000–199,999	2,203	52	0.05
200,000 or more	9,449	91	0.06

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 3****Firearm applications received and denied, by jurisdiction, 2015**

Jurisdiction	Applications		Denials		Percent denied	
	Number	Standard error	Number	Standard error	Number	Standard error
<b>Alaska</b>						
Exempt carry	1,250	~	5	~	0.4%	~
<b>Arizona</b>						
Exempt carry	44,819	~	325	~	0.7%	~
<b>Arkansas</b>						
Exempt carry	43,446	~	1,716	~	3.9%	~
<b>California</b>						
Other approval	880,603	~	9,669	~	1.1%	~
<b>Colorado</b>						
Instant check	350,553	~	7,714	~	2.2%	~
<b>Connecticut</b>						
Instant check	166,089	~	234	~	0.1%	~
Purchase permit	119,785	~	161	~	0.1	~
	46,304	~	73	~	0.2	~
<b>District of Columbia</b>						
Purchase permit	1,654	~	9	~	0.5%	~
<b>Florida</b>						
Instant check	885,086	~	12,632	~	1.4%	~
<b>Georgia</b>						
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	192,674	9,227	2,785	239	1.4%	0.13%
<b>Hawaii</b>						
Purchase permit	19,752	~	212	~	1.1%	~
<b>Idaho</b>						
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	25,575	923	125	8	0.5%	0.03%
<b>Illinois</b>						
Instant check	581,547	~	10,724	~	1.8%	~
Purchase permit	418,375	~	1,994	~	0.5	~
	163,172	~	8,730	~	5.4	~
<b>Iowa</b>						
Purchase permit <sup>a</sup>	61,532	846	869	20	1.4%	0.02%
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	16,530	260	453	12	2.7	0.04
	45,002	615	416	10	0.9	0.02
<b>Kansas</b>						
Exempt carry	18,750	~	98	~	0.5%	~
<b>Kentucky</b>						
Exempt carry	39,521	~	707	~	1.8%	~
<b>Louisiana</b>						
Exempt carry	16,169	~	200	~	1.2%	~
<b>Maryland</b>						
Other approval	57,271	~	700	~	1.2%	~
Purchase permit	37,572	~	390	~	1.0	~
	19,699	~	310	~	1.6	~
<b>Massachusetts</b>						
Purchase permit	52,593	~	1,283	~	2.4%	~
<b>Michigan</b>						
Purchase permit	168,659	~	3,567	~	2.1%	~
Exempt carry <sup>d</sup>	46,977	~	1,118	~	2.4	~
	121,682	~	2,449	~	2.0	~
<b>Minnesota<sup>b</sup></b>						
Purchase permit <sup>a</sup>	108,549	~	2,294	~	2.1%	~
Exempt carry <sup>c</sup>	60,677	2,083	1,868	148	3.1	0.20%
	47,872	~	426	~	0.9	~
<b>Mississippi</b>						
Exempt carry	7,000	~	200	~	2.9%	~
<b>Montana</b>						
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	15,791	1,430	130	9	0.8%	0.05%
<b>Nebraska<sup>b</sup></b>						
Purchase permit <sup>a</sup>	52,608	~	1,089	~	2.1%	~
Exempt carry	40,657	2,429	954	107	2.3	0.13%
	11,951	~	135	~	1.1	~
<b>Nevada<sup>b</sup></b>						
Instant check	129,054	~	2,332	~	1.8%	~
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	102,304	~	2,162	~	2.1	~
	26,750	1,919	170	3	0.6	0.04%

*Continued on next page*

**APPENDIX TABLE 3 (continued)****Firearm applications received and denied, by jurisdiction, 2015**

Jurisdiction	Applications		Denials		Percent denied	
	Number	Standard error	Number	Standard error	Number	Standard error
<b>New Hampshire</b>						
Instant check	50,000	~	450	~	0.9%	~
<b>New Jersey</b>	165,713		1,425		0.9%	
Instant check	93,225	~	556	~	0.6	~
Purchase permit	72,488	~	869	~	1.2	~
<b>New York</b>						
Purchase permit <sup>a</sup>	48,208	9,187	1,048	57	2.2%	0.39%
<b>North Carolina</b>	295,166	13,355	11,815	938	4.0%	0.21%
Purchase permit <sup>a</sup>	188,563	9,391	10,639	869	5.6	0.33
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	106,603	4,713	1,176	83	1.1	0.05
<b>North Dakota</b>						
Exempt carry	7,200	~	350	~	4.9%	~
<b>Oregon</b>						
Instant check	262,838	~	1,913	~	0.7%	~
<b>Pennsylvania</b>						
Instant check	989,298	~	12,064	~	1.2%	~
<b>Rhode Island</b>						
Other approval	15,953	~	105	~	0.7%	~
<b>South Carolina</b>						
Exempt carry	63,932	~	871	~	1.4%	~
<b>Tennessee</b>						
Instant check	510,233	~	19,880	~	3.9%	~
<b>Texas</b>						
Exempt carry	284,169	~	1,081	~	0.4%	~
<b>Utah</b>	229,165		3,380		1.5%	
Instant check	102,641	~	2,469	~	2.4	~
Exempt carry	126,524	~	911	~	0.7	~
<b>Virginia</b>						
Instant check	444,627	~	3,048	~	0.7%	~
<b>Washington</b>						
Other approval <sup>a</sup>	170,507	15,216	860	76	0.5%	0.01%
<b>West Virginia</b>						
Exempt carry <sup>a</sup>	38,486	1,293	251	14	0.7%	0.04%
<b>Wisconsin</b>						
Instant check	134,182	~	1,163	~	0.9%	~
<b>Wyoming</b>						
Exempt carry	6,699	~	46	~	0.7%	~

Note: For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*. Type of firearms included in a jurisdiction's checks or permits are described in *Jurisdiction notes*.

~Not applicable. Complete counts were obtained and no sampling error is present.

<sup>a</sup>Totals were estimated.

<sup>b</sup>Standard errors not applicable to total because a portion of the estimate came from a state reporter.

<sup>c</sup>Permits are only exempt under state law. Other carry permits listed have a federal exemption.

<sup>d</sup>Reported 2015 fiscal year data, which were used to produce the 2015 calendar year estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 4****Number of reasons for denial of firearm transfer and permit applications, by checking agencies, 2015**

Reason for denial	All agencies	FBI <sup>a</sup>	State	Local
Total	190,784	106,556	73,427	10,801
Under indictment/information	7,164	5,656	1,164	344
Felony conviction	68,303	45,553	20,982	1,768
Felony arrest with no disposition	9,115	~	8,774	341
Fugitive from justice/warrant	25,557	19,964	5,170	423
Misdemeanor domestic violence	14,315	7,804	4,957	1,554
Protection/restraining order	7,146	3,008	3,712	426
Drug user/addict	14,612	10,261	3,814	537
Mental health commitment/adjudication	11,221	4,691	5,887	643
Illegal/unlawful alien	3,819	2,146	1,603	70
State law prohibition	24,754	7,272	14,776	2,706
Local law prohibition	302	/	/	302
Other prohibitions <sup>b</sup>	4,477	201	2,588	1,688

Note: Applications include transfers and permits. Reasons for denial were based on 18 U.S.C. § 922 and state laws. Totals were based on agencies that reported counts on reasons for denial. Based weighted for local agencies only. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*.

~Not applicable. This is not a federal disqualifier; it is a disqualifier that is used in certain states.

/Not reported. This does not apply to the FBI or state agency reporters.

<sup>a</sup>In 2008, the FBI instituted a new classification system and reclassified all denials from 1999 to 2008. Totals are not comparable to those in editions of this report prior to 2008.

<sup>b</sup>Includes juveniles, persons dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces, persons who have renounced U.S. citizenship, and other unspecified persons.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015; and FBI, National Instant Criminal Background Check System Section Federal Denials, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 5****Prohibited person records in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System Index, 2015**

Type of record	January 1, 2015			December 31, 2015			Percent change
	Total	Submissions		Total	Submissions		
		Federal <sup>a</sup>	State <sup>b</sup>		Federal <sup>a</sup>	State <sup>b</sup>	
Total	12,881,223	7,721,667	5,159,556	14,159,611	8,157,337	6,002,274	9.9%
Felony conviction	1,889,892	1,021,660	868,232	2,207,548	1,074,609	1,132,939	16.8
Under indictment/information	32,975	32,439	536	45,541	33,997	11,544	38.1
Fugitive from justice	469,578	6,676	462,902	494,285	7,647	486,638	5.3
Drug user/addict	24,281	12,527	11,754	23,211	9,026	14,185	-4.4
Mental health commitment/adjudication	3,774,301	235,998	3,538,303	4,250,388	263,502	3,986,886	12.6
Illegal/unlawful alien	6,346,095	6,346,012	83	6,692,852	6,692,444	408	5.5
Dishonorable discharge	10,524	10,486	38	10,821	10,769	52	2.8
Renounced U.S. citizenship	27,240	27,220	20	32,666	32,656	10	19.9
Protection/restraining order	47,296	273	47,023	61,393	354	61,039	29.8
Misdemeanor domestic violence	112,799	23,030	89,769	126,235	25,779	100,456	11.9
Federally denied persons <sup>c</sup>	30,285	0	30,285	0	0	0	-100.0
State law prohibition	115,957	5,346	110,611	214,671	6,554	208,117	85.1

Note: The NICS Index is used exclusively for NICS checks and contains records of persons who are prohibited by federal or state law from receiving or possessing a firearm. For more information on reporting agencies and sample design, see *Methodology*.

<sup>a</sup>Includes submissions from federal agencies and the U.S. District Courts.

<sup>b</sup>State totals include U.S. territories.

<sup>c</sup>Records in this category were moved to more specific categories in 2015.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on data from the FBI, National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Index, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 6****Reasons for denial of firearm transfer and permit applications, December 31, 2015**

Jurisdiction	Felony <sup>a</sup>	Misdemeanor <sup>b</sup>	Fugitive from justice/warrant <sup>c</sup>	Mental health commitment/adjudication <sup>d</sup>	Court order <sup>e</sup>	Drug user/addict <sup>f</sup>	Alcohol abuse <sup>f</sup>	Minor age	Juvenile offense	Unlawful/illegal alien <sup>g</sup>
Federal	X	X	X	X	X	X	~	X	~	X
State/District	51	33	16	35	35	32	20	50	27	17
Alabama	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	~	~
Alaska	X	~	~	~	X	X	X	X	X	~
Arizona	X	X	~	X	~	~	~	X	X	X
Arkansas	X	~	~	X	X	~	~	X	~	~
California	X	X	~	X	X	X	~	X	X	~
Colorado	X	~	~	~	~	~	~	X	X	~
Connecticut	X	X	~	X	X	~	~	X	X	X
Delaware	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	~
District of Columbia	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	~	~
Florida	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	X	~
Georgia	X	X	~	~	~	~	~	X	X	~
Hawaii	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Idaho	X	~	~	~	~	~	~	X	~	~
Illinois	X	X	~	X	X	X	~	X	X	X
Indiana	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	X	~
Iowa	X	X	~	~	X	~	~	X	X	~
Kansas	X	~	~	X	~	X	X	X	X	~
Kentucky	X	~	~	~	~	~	~	X	X	~
Louisiana	X	X	~	~	X	~	~	X	~	~
Maine	X	~	X	X	X	~	~	X	X	~
Maryland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	~
Massachusetts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Michigan	X	X	~	X	X	~	~	X	~	X
Minnesota	X	X	X	X	X	X	~	X	X	X
Mississippi	X	~	~	~	~	X	X	X	~	~
Missouri	X	~	X	X	~	X	X	X	~	~
Montana	X	X	~	~	X	~	~	X	~	~
Nebraska	X	X	X	~	X	~	~	X	~	~
Nevada	X	X	X	X	X	X	~	X	~	X
New Hampshire	X	~	~	~	X	X	-	X	~	~
New Jersey	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	X	~
New Mexico	X	~	~	~	~	~	~	X	~	~
New York	X	X	X	X	X	X	~	X	~	X
North Carolina	X	X	X	X	X	X	~	X	~	X
North Dakota	X	X	~	X	~	~	~	X	~	~
Ohio	X	~	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	~
Oklahoma	X	~	~	X	~	X	X	X	X	~
Oregon	X	X	X	X	X	~	~	X	X	~
Pennsylvania	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rhode Island	X	~	X	X	X	X	~	X	~	X
South Carolina	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	X	~	X
South Dakota	X	X	~	~	~	X	~	X	~	~
Tennessee	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	~	~
Texas	X	X	~	~	X	X	X	X	~	~
Utah	X	~	~	X	~	X	~	X	X	X
Vermont	X	X	~	~	~	~	~	X	~	~
Virginia	X	X	~	X	X	X	~	X	X	X

*Continued on next page*

**APPENDIX TABLE 6 (continued)**

**Reasons for denial of firearm transfer and permit applications, December 31, 2015**

Jurisdiction	Felony <sup>a</sup>	Misdemeanor <sup>b</sup>	Fugitive from justice/warrant <sup>c</sup>	Mental health commitment/adjudication <sup>d</sup>	Court order <sup>e</sup>	Drug user/addict <sup>f</sup>	Alcohol abuse <sup>f</sup>	Minor age	Juvenile offense	Unlawful/illegal alien <sup>g</sup>
Washington	X	X	~	X	X	X	~	X	X	X
West Virginia	X	X	~	X	X	X	X	X	~	X
Wisconsin	X	~	~	X	X	~	~	X	X	~
Wyoming	X	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~

Note: Federal prohibitors in 18 U.S.C. § 922 are the minimum nationwide standard. Table does not show state laws that incorporate federal prohibitions. A jurisdiction may have other prohibitions not listed in the table. Type of firearms, offenses, and dispositions covered by statutes vary by jurisdiction. See *Jurisdiction notes*.

X Indicates a basis under the jurisdiction's laws for prohibition of firearm transfers or possession or for denial of a permit required for a firearm transfer. Concealed carry permit restrictions are not included.

~Not applicable.

<sup>a</sup>An offense with a penalty of imprisonment for 1 year or more or designated a felony by law.

<sup>b</sup>An offense with a penalty of incarceration for less than 1 year or designated a misdemeanor by law. Includes domestic violence and other offenses.

<sup>c</sup>Includes persons who have fled a state to avoid prosecution or giving testimony and persons subject to an active warrant.

<sup>d</sup>Includes adjudications of mental illness or incapacity and involuntary or voluntary commitments for inpatient or outpatient mental health treatment.

<sup>e</sup>An order to prevent domestic violence, witness intimidation, stalking, or other criminal acts.

<sup>f</sup>A substance-related conviction, addiction to a substance, or intoxication during a firearm transfer.

<sup>g</sup>An illegal alien or a non-U.S. citizen not entitled to an exception that allows firearm possession.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 7****Agencies conducting firearm background checks, December 31, 2015**

Jurisdiction	Purchase check or permit	Exempt carry permit <sup>a</sup>
United States	FBI	---
Alabama	---	---
Alaska	---	Department of Public Safety
Arizona	---	Department of Public Safety
Arkansas	---	State police
California	Department of Justice Firearms Division	---
Colorado	Bureau of Investigation InstaCheck Unit	---
Connecticut	State Police Special Licensing & Firearms	---
Delaware	---	---
District of Columbia	Metropolitan Police Department	---
Florida	Department of Law Enforcement	---
Georgia	---	County probate courts
Hawaii	Police departments	---
Idaho	---	County sheriffs
Illinois	State Police Firearm Owners Identification and Firearm Transfer Inquiry Program units	---
Indiana	---	---
Iowa	County sheriffs	Department of Public Safety/county sheriffs
Kansas	---	Attorney general
Kentucky	---	State police
Louisiana	---	State police
Maine	---	---
Maryland	State Police Licensing Division	---
Massachusetts	Police departments	---
Michigan <sup>b</sup>	Sheriffs and police departments	State police <sup>b</sup>
Minnesota	Sheriffs and police departments	County sheriffs
Mississippi	---	Department of Public Safety
Missouri	---	---
Montana	---	County sheriffs
Nebraska	Sheriffs and police departments	State patrol
Nevada	Department of Public Safety	County sheriffs
New Hampshire	Department of Safety	---
New Jersey	State police/local police departments	---
New Mexico	---	---
New York <sup>c</sup>	Sheriffs and police departments	---
North Carolina	County sheriffs	County sheriffs
North Dakota	---	Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Ohio	---	---
Oklahoma	---	---
Oregon	State Police Firearms Unit	---
Pennsylvania	State Police Firearms Division	---
Rhode Island	Police departments	---
South Carolina	---	Law Enforcement Division
South Dakota	---	---
Tennessee	Bureau of Investigation Tennessee Instant Check System Unit	---
Texas	---	Department of Public Safety
Utah	Bureau of Criminal Identification	Bureau of Criminal Identification
Vermont	---	---
Virginia	State Police Firearms Transaction Program	---
Washington	Sheriffs and police departments	---
West Virginia	---	County sheriffs
Wisconsin	Department of Justice Firearms Unit	---
Wyoming	---	Attorney general

---FBI conducts purchase checks or jurisdiction has no exempt permits.

<sup>a</sup>Agencies listed issue carry permits that may be used to waive a purchase check.

<sup>b</sup>County licensing boards that issued permits were disbanded as of December 1, 2015.

<sup>c</sup>License required for purchase may also allow carrying.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 8****National Instant Criminal Background Check System checking agencies, FBI, or state Point of Contact for firearm transfers, 2015**

State	FBI conducts checks for all firearms <sup>a</sup>	POC conducts checks for all firearms	POC checks handguns, FBI checks long guns	State	FBI conducts checks for all firearms <sup>a</sup>	POC conducts checks for all firearms	POC checks handguns, FBI checks long guns
Total	30	13	7	Montana	X	~	~
Alabama	X	~	~	Nebraska <sup>b</sup>	~	~	X
Alaska	X	~	~	Nevada	~	X	~
Arizona	X	~	~	New Hampshire	~	~	X
Arkansas	X	~	~	New Jersey	~	X	~
California	~	X	~	New Mexico	X	~	~
Colorado	~	X	~	New York	X	~	~
Connecticut	~	X	~	North Carolina <sup>b</sup>	~	~	X
Delaware	X	~	~	North Dakota	X	~	~
Florida	~	X	~	Ohio	X	~	~
Georgia	X	~	~	Oklahoma	X	~	~
Hawaii <sup>b</sup>	~	X	~	Oregon	~	X	~
Idaho	X	~	~	Pennsylvania	~	X	~
Illinois	~	X	~	Rhode Island	X	~	~
Indiana	X	~	~	South Carolina	X	~	~
Iowa <sup>b</sup>	~	~	X	South Dakota	X	~	~
Kansas	X	~	~	Tennessee	~	X	~
Kentucky	X	~	~	Texas	X	~	~
Louisiana	X	~	~	Utah	~	X	~
Maine	X	~	~	Vermont	X	~	~
Maryland	~	~	X	Virginia	~	X	~
Massachusetts	X	~	~	Washington <sup>b</sup>	~	~	X
Michigan	X	~	~	West Virginia	X	~	~
Minnesota	X	~	~	Wisconsin	~	~	X
Mississippi	X	~	~	Wyoming	X	~	~
Missouri	X	~	~				

Note: Includes checks on purchases or on permits required for purchase.

X Indicates agency conducting background checks.

~Not applicable.

<sup>a</sup>The FBI also conducts all National Instant Criminal Background Check System checks for American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

<sup>b</sup>States with multiple Points of Contact (POC).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.

**APPENDIX TABLE 9****Forums for appeals of firearm transfer and permit denials, 2015**

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Denying agency</u>	<u>Other agency</u>	<u>Court system</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Denying agency</u>	<u>Other agency</u>	<u>Court system</u>
<b>Federal</b>				<b>Minnesota</b>			
Instant check	X	~	X	Purchase permit	~	~	X
<b>Alaska</b>				Exempt carry	X	~	X
Exempt carry	X	~	~	<b>Mississippi</b>			
<b>Arizona</b>				Exempt carry	X	~	X
Exempt carry	X	~	X	<b>Montana</b>			
<b>Arkansas</b>				Exempt carry	~	~	X
Exempt carry	X	~	X	<b>Nebraska</b>			
<b>California</b>				Purchase permit	~	~	X
Other approval	X	~	~	Exempt carry	X	~	X
<b>Colorado</b>				<b>Nevada</b>			
Instant check	X	~	~	Instant check	X	~	...
<b>Connecticut</b>				Exempt carry	~	~	X
Instant check	X	~	~	<b>New Hampshire</b>			
Purchase permit	~	X	~	Instant check	X	~	X
<b>District of Columbia</b>				<b>New Jersey</b>			
Purchase permit	X	~	X	Instant check	X	~	...
<b>Florida</b>				Purchase permit	~	~	X
Instant check	X	~	~	<b>North Carolina</b>			
<b>Georgia</b>				Purchase permit	~	~	X
Exempt carry	~	~	X	Exempt carry	~	~	X
<b>Idaho</b>				<b>North Dakota</b>			
Exempt carry	~	~	X	Exempt carry	X	~	X
<b>Illinois</b>				<b>Oregon</b>			
Instant check	X	~	X	Instant check	X	~	~
Purchase permit	X	~	X	<b>Pennsylvania</b>			
<b>Iowa</b>				Instant check	X	X	X
Purchase permit	~	~	X	<b>South Carolina</b>			
Exempt carry	~	~	X	Exempt carry	X	~	~
<b>Kansas</b>				<b>Tennessee</b>			
Exempt carry	X	X	X	Instant check	X	~	~
<b>Kentucky</b>				<b>Texas</b>			
Exempt carry	X	~	X	Exempt carry	~	~	X
<b>Louisiana</b>				<b>Utah</b>			
Exempt carry				Instant check	X	~	~
<b>Maryland</b>				Exempt carry	~	X	~
Other approval	X	~	X	<b>Virginia</b>			
Purchase permit	X	~	X	Instant check	X	~	X
<b>Massachusetts</b>				<b>Washington</b>			
Purchase permit	~	~	X	Other approval	~	~	X
<b>Michigan</b>				<b>Wisconsin</b>			
Purchase permit	~	~	X	Instant check	X	~	X
Exempt carry	~	~	X	<b>Wyoming</b>			
				Exempt carry	X	~	X

X Indicates statute or regulation provides a specific procedure to appeal a denial of a firearm transfer or permit. In addition, some denying agencies may reconsider a decision even if not required to do so by law.

...Not available.

~Not applicable.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Firearm Inquiry Statistics program, 2015.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable and valid statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Jeri M. Mulrow is acting director.

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