ATF
Federal Firearms Licensee
Quick Reference and Best Practices Guide
The Importance of Compliance with Federal Firearms Laws & Regulations

Every day, ATF’s Industry Operations Investigators (IOIs) assist FFLs and help them understand and follow the rules for conducting a firearms business. Whether it is with the proper procedures for recordkeeping or the laws for transferring a firearm, IOIs ensure that FFLs comply with the laws and regulations.

IOIs inspect your business to ensure compliance with the Federal law and regulations. It is vital that you comply with all laws and regulations, both to maintain your license and protect your community from violent crime. We encourage you to contact ATF if you have any questions about your responsibilities as an FFL.

To learn more about the laws and regulations, safety and security recommendations, and training opportunities, we encourage you to read the following publications found at www.atf.gov:

*Federal Firearms Regulations Reference Guide*, ATF Publication 5300.4

*Safety and Security Information for Federal Firearms Licensees*, ATF Publication 3317.2

Don’t Lie for the Other Guy Publications

Having conducted thousands of inspections over the years, ATF has compiled a list of the more common issues encountered by licensees.

Ten Violations Having an Impact on Public Safety

1. **Failure to Obtain a Form 4473—Firearms Transaction Record When Required.**

2. **Failure to Obtain a Complete and Correct Form 4473.**

3. **Failure to Conduct a Background Check When Required.**

4. **Sale or Transfer of a Firearm to Prohibited Person.**

5. **Improper Sale to a Non-Resident.**

6. **Failure to Obtain Appropriate Identification Documents.**

7. **Failure to Record Complete and Accurate Acquisition and Disposition Information.**

8. **Failure to Report the Sale of Multiple Handguns.**

9. **Failure to Report Lost or Stolen Firearms.**

10. **Providing False Information.**
**Your License**

For the purposes of this publication, a Federal firearms licensee is referred to as ‘you,’ ‘a licensee,’ and an ‘FFL.’ You should examine your license carefully to make sure all of the information is correct. If you find an error, return the license to the Chief, Federal Firearms Licensing Center (FFLC), for correction.

You must keep your license posted and readily available for inspection by any ATF officer. Use a certified copy of your license (make a copy of the unsigned original and sign it) to make firearms purchases. Mailed, faxed, or scanned copies of certified copies are acceptable.

**Expiration and Renewal of Your License**

Your Federal firearms license is in effect until the expiration date on the license, unless terminated sooner. It covers business operations only at the location on the license or at a qualifying gun show or event in the State where you are licensed.

ATF will send a renewal application to you about 60 days before the expiration date on your license. If you have not received your renewal application 30 days before the license expiration date, please contact the FFLC toll-free at 1-866-662-2750. You should also call if you no longer wish to be licensed.

To renew, you must complete and send the application, with the required fee attached, to the address specified on the form before the license expiration date. If you file your renewal before the license expiration date, you may continue to operate until you receive your new license. If the new license does not arrive by your expiration date, ATF will issue a Letter of Continuing Authority to Operate (LOA) to establish proof of your licensed status to other FFLs.

**Changing Your Mailing Address or the Address of Your Premises**

*If you intend to change the location of your business premises:* Notify the Chief, FFLC, at least 30 days before moving your business to a new address by filing ATF Form 5300.38-Application for an Amended Federal Firearms License. Your original license must be submitted for changes to reflect the new address.

You may not operate as an FFL at a new address until you have received the amended license from ATF.

*If your mailing address changes:* Because all ATF correspondence is mailed to the mailing address on your license, any changes require you to notify the Chief, FFLC, as soon as possible by sending a letter advising of the new mailing address to:

244 Needy Road  
Martinsburg, WV 25405.

**If You Intend to Change Your Business Structure**

Because a license is not transferable, a successor buying, leasing, or otherwise acquiring the firearms operations of an FFL must obtain a new license. For example, if a sole proprietor forms a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC), the LLC must obtain a new license. The LLC cannot operate using the sole proprietor’s license.

If there is a change of control of a FFL by stock purchase or otherwise, the licensee must notify ATF in writing within 30 days of the change. Upon renewal, the corporation must file a new Application for Firearms License (ATF F 5310.12, ATF Form 7) and provide information on all new responsible persons.

FFLs may report new responsible persons by filing a letter with the Chief, FFLC. The letter must provide all of the identifying information for the new responsible person(s) as required on ATF Form 7. The letter must be accompanied by a current picture of the responsible person and fingerprints submitted on an FBI Fingerprint Card (FD-258).

**ATF Forms 4473**

You must obtain a completed Firearms Transaction Record (Form 4473) for each and every sale or other transfer of a firearm to a non-licensee. It is your responsibility to ensure that each Form 4473 is completed correctly in accordance with the instructions on the form. The correct completion of these forms enhances traceability of firearms.

Correctly completing ATF Forms 4473 is one of the most important things you can do to ensure that ATF can trace crime guns.

This form must be completed when you:

1. sell or trade a firearm;
2. return a consignment firearm;
3. return a pawned firearm;
4. loan or rent a firearm for use off of your licensed premises; or
5. otherwise transfer a firearm to a non-licensed person.

**Note:** You must transfer the firearm to the person who completed the Form 4473 and NOT to a spouse, relative, or other representative of that person.

**Exceptions to the ATF Form 4473 Requirement:**
You are not required to obtain a Form 4473 for the following sales and other transfers:

1. Transfer of a firearm to another FFL (including collectors when transferring a Curio & Relic firearm);
2. The return of a repaired firearm to the person from whom it was received;
3. The sale of a firearm to a law enforcement agency or to a law enforcement officer for official duties if the transaction meets the requirements of 27 CFR § 478.134, discussed on pages 7 and 8; or
4. Transfer of a replacement firearm of the same kind and type to the person from whom a firearm was received.

**Transferee's Sections of Form 4473:**
It is YOUR responsibility to make sure that the buyer or other transferee provides ALL information required in Section A (Items 1 to 17), and Section C (Items 24 and 25), if applicable, of the Form 4473 BEFORE you transfer the firearm. The buyer must personally complete Sections A and C.

**Licensee's Sections of Form 4473:**
You must fully and correctly provide ALL information required in Section B (Items 18 to 23) and Section D (Items 26 to 36) of the Form 4473. This information must be recorded on the Form 4473 and not merely be contained in attached or other available documents.

If information required on the Form 4473 is also contained on a State firearms transfer document or other record, you must still enter the information on the Form 4473, even if that means entering the same information on two or more forms. However, you may attach photocopies of additional documentation provided by legal aliens rather than record the type of documentation in response to Items 20b and 20c.

**Errors and Omissions on the Form 4473:**
If, after the firearm has been transferred, you discover that the Form 4473 is incomplete or was improperly completed, do not alter the original. Instead, you should make a photocopy of the inaccurate Form 4473. Only the buyer or transferee may make changes or corrections to Sections A and C of the photocopy. You or an authorized representative must make any changes or corrections to Sections B and D of the photocopy. Do NOT make the changes on the original Form 4473. Attach the corrected photocopy to the original Form 4473 and retain as part of your records.

ATF suggests that you consider implementing a secondary review procedure in which another employee reviews Forms 4473 for errors and omissions prior to transferring a firearm.

**Background Checks**
You must conduct a National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) check or appropriate State background check for each and every sale or other transfer of a firearm to a non-licensee. The NICS or State background check ensures that any person who purchases a firearm from you may lawfully possess firearms. A NICS or State background check MUST be conducted before:

1. The sale or trade of a firearm;
2. The return of a consigned firearm;
3. The redemption of a pawned firearm;
4. The loan or rental of a firearm for use off of your licensed premises; or
5. Any other non-exempt transfer of a firearm.

Failure to conduct a background check has a significant impact on public safety. You could be fined, have your license suspended or revoked, or be prosecuted.

**Note:** You may only deliver the firearm to the person on whom the NICS or State background check was conducted and NOT a spouse, relative, or other representative of that person.

**Exceptions to the Background Check Requirement:**
You are NOT required to conduct a NICS or State background check with respect to the following:

1. The sale or transfer of a firearm where the transferee presents a valid State permit/license from the State in which your licensed premises is located AND the State permit or license is recognized by ATF as a qualifying alternative to the background check requirement;
2. The transfer of a firearm to another FFL (including collectors when transferring a Curio & Relic firearm);
3. The return of a repaired firearm to the person from whom it was received;
4. The sale of a firearm to a law enforcement agency or a law enforcement officer for official duties if the transaction meets the specific requirements of 27 CFR § 478.134 (discussed on page 13);

5. The transfer of a replacement firearm of the same kind and type to the person from whom a firearm was received;

6. The transfer of a firearm that is subject to the National Firearms Act if the transfer was pre-approved in writing by ATF.

Prohibited Transfers

You MAY NOT sell or transfer a firearm or ammunition to any person you know or have reasonable cause to believe is prohibited from possessing or receiving a firearm. Do not sell or otherwise transfer a firearm and do not contact NICS if you have reason to believe that a person seeking to obtain a firearm is prohibited from receiving or possessing a firearm.

Note: If a person answers “No” to Item 11.a or 12 of Form 4473, or answers “Yes” to one or more questions in Items 11.b through 11.l of Form 4473, that person has given you reason to believe he or she is prohibited and the transaction must be stopped.

You MAY NOT sell or transfer a firearm or ammunition to any of the following prohibited persons or in the following circumstances:

1. Straw Purchaser: A “straw purchaser” is a person who is not the “actual buyer” of the firearm; that is, a person who obtains a firearm for another person. Straw purchases are a primary source of firearms used in crime. If you suspect that a transaction is a straw purchase or there are suspicious circumstances surrounding the potential sale—such as one person picking out the firearm, handling the firearm, and providing the payment for the firearm while another person completes the Form 4473—you should not sell the firearm. Similarly, if one person attempts to purchase a firearm, NICS denies or delays the attempted purchase, and another person with him or her attempts to buy the same firearm, you must not complete this sale.

2. Person Under Indictment: A person “under indictment” includes any person who has been charged by indictment or information in any court with a crime for which he or she may be sentenced to imprisonment exceeding 1 year—EVEN if the court actually placed the person on probation or sentenced the person to a term of imprisonment for 1 year or less.

3. Person Convicted of a Crime Punishable by Imprisonment for a Term Exceeding 1 Year: This prohibited person category includes any person who has been convicted of a felony or other crime for which the person could have been sentenced to imprisonment for a term exceeding 1 year—EVEN if the court actually placed the person on probation or sentenced the person to a term of imprisonment for 1 year or less.

4. Fugitive from Justice: A fugitive from justice is a person who has fled from any State to avoid prosecution for a crime (felony or misdemeanor) or to avoid giving testimony in any criminal proceeding.

5. Unlawful Drug User or Drug Addict: This prohibited person category includes any person who unlawfully uses—or is addicted to—marijuana, depressants, stimulants, narcotic drugs, or other controlled substances. Alcohol is NOT considered a controlled substance.

6. Adjudicated Mental Defective or Person Involuntarily Committed to a Mental Institution: This prohibited person category includes any person who has EVER been adjudicated by a court, board, commission, or other lawful authority to be, as a result of marked subnormal intelligence or mental illness, incompetency, condition, or disease, a danger to himself or herself or to others or to lack the mental capacity to contract or to manage his/her own affairs. This category also includes any person who has been subject to a finding of insanity in a criminal case, including a finding that he or she is incompetent to stand trial. Also included is any person who has EVER been formally committed to a mental institution by a court or other lawful authority. This category does NOT include a person committed to a mental institution solely for observation or a person who was voluntarily admitted to a mental institution.

7. Person Dishonorably Discharged from the Military: A person is considered dishonorably discharged only if he or she was separated from the Armed Forces of the United States as a result of a dishonorable discharge or a dismissal adjudged by a general court-martial. This prohibition does NOT include persons with a bad conduct discharge or any other less than honorable discharge.

8. Person Subject to a Restraining Order: This prohibited person category includes any person who is currently subject to a court order that
restrains the person from harassing, stalking, or threatening an intimate partner, child of the person, or child of the intimate partner OR engaging in other conduct that would place the intimate partner in reasonable fear of bodily injury to the intimate partner or child. The court order must meet the specific requirements of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8) to be prohibiting.

9. Person Convicted of a Misdemeanor Crime of Domestic Violence: This prohibited person category includes any person who has EVER been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence regardless of the title of the offense. The offense must meet the definition of “misdemeanor crime of domestic violence” in 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(33). Note: Unlike other prohibited person categories, law enforcement officers purchasing firearms for official use are NOT exempt from this prohibited person category.

10. Person who has Renounced U.S. Citizenship: A person has renounced his or her United States citizenship if he or she takes formal steps to renounce her/his citizenship before a diplomatic or consular officer or before an officer designated by the Attorney General during a time of war.

11. Aliens Illegally or Unlawfully in the United States: This prohibited person category includes any person who unlawfully entered the United States or who illegally remains in the United States after his or her authorized period of stay has expired.

11a. Nonimmigrant Aliens: A nonimmigrant alien is an alien who is lawfully in the United States on a temporary basis for purposes of travel, business, study, etc. The term does NOT include a permanent resident alien (someone who possesses a “green card.”) A nonimmigrant alien may only purchase or receive a firearm if he or she: (a) was admitted to the United States for lawful hunting or sporting purposes or presents a valid hunting license or permit issued by a State; (b) qualifies as a foreign diplomat, official, or law enforcement officer as defined at 18 U.S.C. § 922(y)(2); or (c) has received a waiver of the prohibition from the Attorney General.

12. Sale of a Firearm or Ammunition to a Person Under Age 18: You may not sell or deliver a firearm or ammunition to a person you know or have reasonable cause to believe is less than 18 years old.

13. Sale of a Handgun or Handgun Ammunition to a Person Under Age 21: You may not sell or deliver a firearm other than a rifle or a shotgun—or ammunition other than rifle or shotgun ammunition—to a person who you know or have reasonable cause to believe is less than 21 years old. A firearm frame or receiver is not a rifle or shotgun and may not be sold to a person under 21 years old.

14. Sale in Violation of State Law or Published Ordinance: You may not sell or deliver a firearm to any person in any State where the purchase or possession would be in violation of a State law or published ordinance.

We recommend that you refer to the most recent edition of ATF’s State Laws and Published Ordinances—Firearms.

Age Restrictions

As noted above, under Federal law, the minimum age to purchase firearms and ammunition from an FFL is 18. If the firearm is other than a rifle or a shotgun—or ammunition for other than a rifle or a shotgun—the minimum age is 21 [18 U.S.C. 922(b)(1)]. However:

1. You may sell ammunition that is interchangeable between rifles and handguns to a buyer who is at least 18 years of age if you are satisfied that he or she will use the ammunition in a rifle.

2. Regardless of less restrictive State and local age requirements for firearms and ammunition purchases, you must adhere to the above Federal minimum age provisions.

Transfers Between Licensees

Generally, FFLs may transfer firearms to other FFLs, including interstate transfers, without completing Form 4473 for these transactions. In these instances, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Transactions between licensees must be recorded in the bound book (Acquisition and Disposition or A&D) records of both licensees.

2. The FFL who is buying the firearm must furnish a certified copy of their license to the selling FFL prior to the transfer of any firearm. This certified copy may be emailed or faxed.
State Residency Requirements

Generally, you **MAY NOT** sell or transfer a firearm to a non-licensee who resides outside the State in which your licensed premises is located. A person’s State of residence is the State in which the person resides and the person is present with the intent of making a home in that State.

**Military members on active duty and legal aliens have special residency considerations.**

A member of the Armed Forces on active duty is a resident of the State in which his or her permanent duty station is located. FFLs may accept electronic permanent change of station (PCS) orders, accompanied by a valid military identification card, to establish residency for an active duty military member of the Armed Forces.

A buyer who is not a citizen of the United States must provide additional documentation (beyond a valid Government-issued photo identification that contains the buyer’s name, residence address, and date of birth) to establish that he or she has resided in a State continuously for at least 90 days immediately prior to the date of the sale or delivery of the firearm. Examples of acceptable documentation include, but are not limited to, utility bills, bank statements, rent receipts, and mortgage payments. This original documentation must contain the buyer’s name (not the name of someone they are living with) and home address.

**Permitted Sales to Non-Residents of Your State**

You may sell a firearm to a person who does not reside in your State by shipping the firearm to a licensed dealer in the buyer’s State of residence and having the buyer take possession of the firearm from that licensee. The licensed dealer in the buyer’s State of residence is responsible for the Form 4473 and NICS background check. Your A&D records should reflect the transfer to the out-of-State FFL and not to the end purchaser.

You may make an over-the-counter sale of a rifle or shotgun to a non-resident if the transaction complies with all the laws of your State and the laws of the buyer’s State.

We recommend that you refer to the most recent edition of ATF’s *State Laws and Published Ordinances—Firearms*, prior to consummating an over-the-counter sale of a rifle or shotgun to an out-of-State resident.

General Identification Requirements

You **MUST** verify the identity of each non-licensee buyer by examining the person’s identification document(s) prior to transferring a firearm. A proper “identification document” is:

1. A document containing the name, residence address, date of birth, and photograph of the person;
2. A document that was made or issued by or under the authority of the U.S. Government, a State or local government, or a foreign government;
3. A document that is of a type commonly accepted for the purpose of identification of individuals.

Common examples of acceptable identification documents are a valid driver’s license or a valid State identification card issued in lieu of a driver’s license. Social security cards are not acceptable because they do not contain a residence address, date of birth, or photograph. However, a firearms buyer may be identified by any combination of documents which together contain all of the required information (as long as all the documents are Government issued): name, residence address, photograph, and date of birth.

**Military members and legal aliens may have special identification document considerations.**

No additional valid identification documentation is required of an active-duty member of the Armed Forces or a legal alien if he or she possesses a valid identification document (e.g., driver’s license) that contains his or her name, residence address, date of birth, and photograph and is issued by the State in which your business premises is located. If a member of the Armed Forces or a legal alien does not possess a valid, State-issued identification document with the necessary information, you may accept a combination of valid Government-issued documents to satisfy the identification document requirement. A member of the Armed Forces on active duty may satisfy the identification document requirement by presenting his or her military identification card along with official orders showing his or her permanent duty station.
Nonimmigrant Aliens Purchasing and Renting Firearms from an FFL for Possession in the United States

Nonimmigrant aliens generally MAY NOT receive or possess firearms or ammunition in the United States. However, a nonimmigrant alien lawfully admitted to the United States may receive or possess firearms or ammunition if he or she fits within one of the exceptions to the nonimmigrant alien prohibitions. These exceptions apply to an alien who has been lawfully admitted into the United States under a nonimmigrant visa, if that alien is:

1. Admitted to the United States for lawful hunting or sporting purposes or is in possession of a hunting license or permit lawfully issued in the United States;
2. An official representative of a foreign government who is (a) accredited to the U.S. Government or the Government’s mission to an international organization having its headquarters in the United States; or (b) en route to or from another country to which that alien is accredited if the firearm is being possessed or received in the representative’s official capacity;
3. An official of a foreign government or a distinguished foreign visitor who has been so designated by the Department of State; or
4. A foreign law enforcement officer of a friendly foreign government entering the United States on official law enforcement business.

Any individual who has been admitted to the United States under a nonimmigrant visa may receive a waiver after submitting a petition to and obtaining approval from ATF.

In addition to meeting at least one of the exceptions for nonimmigrant aliens, buyers must also satisfy the legal residency requirements, as discussed below.

A nonimmigrant alien must provide the required Government-issued photo identification document(s) and documentation establishing residency in your State for 90 days immediately before the sale or transfer of the firearm. He or she must also provide documentation of his or her hunting license or permit, Attorney General waiver, or documentation for any other exception.

Note: You may attach a photocopy of the additional documents provided rather than record the type of documentation in Items 20c and 20d of the ATF Form 4473.

If a nonimmigrant alien meets these criteria and residency requirements and a properly completed NICS check is conducted by the FFL, then the alien is eligible to purchase a firearm from an FFL.

Sales of Firearms to Law Enforcement Officers

Section 925(a)(1) of the GCA generally exempts law enforcement agencies from the transportation, shipment, receipt, possession, or importation controls of the GCA when firearms or ammunition are to be used for official agency business.

In this regard, law enforcement officers purchasing firearms for official duty need to provide certain documentation. If a law enforcement officer is issued a certification letter on official agency letterhead signed by a person in authority within the agency (other than the person purchasing the firearm) stating that the officer will use the firearm in official duties and that a records check reveals that the purchasing officer has not been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, then the officer may purchase the firearm for official use. There are no restrictions as to the purchasing officer’s State of residence or agency location. You are not required to prepare a Form 4473 for the transaction or to conduct a NICS Check; however, the disposition to the officer must be entered into your A&D records, and the certification letter from the officer must be retained as part of your required records.

ATF considers the following as persons having authority to certify the eligibility of law enforcement officers:

1. In a city or county police department, the director of public safety or the chief or commissioner of police.
2. In a sheriff’s office, the sheriff.
3. In a State police or highway patrol department, the superintendent or the supervisor in charge of the office to which the State officer or employee is assigned.
4. In Federal law enforcement offices, the supervisor in charge of the office to which the Federal officer or employee is assigned.

Certification letters may be signed by persons other than those listed above, provided there is a proper delegation of authority. Because individual circumstances vary, FFLs with any questions are encouraged to check with their local ATF field office before accepting certifications letters from other officials.
Sales to Members of the Armed Forces

A member of the Armed Forces on active duty is a resident of the State in which his or her permanent duty station is located. However, if a military member maintains a home in one State and has a permanent duty station in a another State to which he or she commutes each day, the military member has two States of residence and may purchase a firearm in either State—and must list both the residence address and permanent duty station in Item 2 on the Form 4473.

A military member on active duty must present either a current driver’s license or State identification card from your State, or a copy of the official orders showing the military member’s permanent duty station in your State along with a military photo identification card, an out-of-State driver’s license, or an out-of-State identification card.

ATF has determined that you may accept electronic Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders. You are reminded to exercise due diligence to ensure that these electronic orders reflect a PCS, not a temporary move or deployment (TDY) and that the dates of the transfer are identified on the document and are inclusive of the date of the attempted firearm acquisition. You are required to verify the identity of the transferee by examining a valid identification document.

Acquisition and Disposition (A&D) Record

You MUST at all times maintain on your licensed premises A&D records that document the acquisition and disposition of firearms. The A&D record must include information about the acquisition and disposition of ALL firearms for sale or trade, consignment firearms, pawned firearms, repair firearms (if sent for repairs or kept overnight), replacement firearms, firearms loaned or rented for use off your licensed premises, and all other acquisitions and dispositions of firearms. All firearms that you acquire must be documented in your A&D record.

Note: You may maintain a computerized A&D record if the record meets the criteria outlined in ATF Ruling 2008-2.

Required Acquisition Information

For each firearm you acquire, you must completely and accurately record all of the following information in your A&D record:

1. The date of receipt of the firearm;
2. The name and address of the non-licensee or the name and FFL license number of the licensee from whom you received the firearm;
3. The name of the manufacturer and importer (if any) of the firearm;
4. The model of the firearm;
5. The serial number of the firearm;
6. The type of firearm (pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, receiver, frame, etc); and
7. The caliber or gauge of the firearm.

Required Disposition Information

For each firearm you sell or otherwise dispose of, you must completely and accurately record the following information in your bound book:

1. The date of sale or other disposition of the firearm;
2. The name and address of the non-licensee or the name and FFL license number of the licensee to whom the firearm was transferred.

Alternatively, if you file your Forms 4473 in numerical order, you may record your internal Form 4473 number in the A&D record in lieu of recording the name and address of the non-licensee to whom you sold or transferred the firearm.

Time Requirements for Recording Acquisition Information

The required acquisition information must be recorded in your A&D record no later than the close of the next business day following the date of acquisition. However, if you maintain a commercial record of the acquisition, and the commercial record meets the requirements of 27 CFR §478.125(g), you may delay the recording of the acquisition information in your bound book for 7 days following the date of acquisition. Note: If the acquisition information is not entered in the A&D record prior to the sale or other disposition of the firearm, you must enter the acquisition information at the time of the sale or disposition.

Time Requirements for Recording Disposition Information

The required disposition information must be recorded in your A&D record no later than 7 days following the date of the sale or other disposition. When the disposition is made to a non-licensee, you must retain the Form 4473 separate from your other Forms 4473—and keep it readily available for inspection—until the disposition information is entered in the A&D record.
Licensed Firearms Manufacturers

If you hold a Type 07 FFL, you are required to keep your acquisition and disposition records in accordance with the regulatory requirements of 27 CFR 478.123(a), (b) and (d).

Time Requirements for Recording Acquisition and Disposition Information in Manufacturer Records

The required acquisition information for each firearm manufactured or otherwise acquired and the date of such manufacture or acquisition shall be recorded not later than the seventh day following such manufacture or other acquisition. Firearms for which acquisition information must be recorded include both completed weapons that will or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive and frames or receivers that may be sold, shipped, or otherwise disposed of separately. The sale or other disposition shall be recorded not later than the seventh day following the transaction.

Note: Acquisition records of manufacturers and importers must be retained as permanent records.

Licensed Firearms Importers

If you hold a Type 08 FFL, you are required to keep your acquisition and disposition records in accordance with the regulatory requirements of 27 CFR 478.122(a), (b) and (d).

Time Requirements for Recording Acquisition and Disposition Information in Importer Records

The required acquisition information for each firearm imported or otherwise acquired and the date of such importation or acquisition shall be recorded within 15 days of the date of importation or other acquisition. The date of importation is the date the firearm was brought into the United States. The sale or other disposition shall be recorded not later than the seventh day following the transaction.

Note: Acquisition records of manufacturers and importers must be retained as permanent records.

Alternate Methods or Procedures (Variances)

In certain circumstances, you may apply to ATF for a variance in the event that you wish to operate your firearms business in a manner that differs from the requirements of the regulations. The regulations that allow ATF to grant a variance can be found in 27 CFR 478.22 and 27 CFR 478.125(h).

ATF may only authorize an alternate method or procedure when it is substantially equivalent to the procedure specified in the law and the alternate method does not hinder the effective administration and enforcement of the law and regulations or increase costs to the Government. Your request should be sent to:

Chief, Firearms Industry Programs Branch
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
99 New York Avenue, NE.
Room 6N/672
Washington, DC 20226

Reporting Multiple Sales

You MUST report to ATF on Form 3310.4 (Report of Multiple Sale or Other Disposition of Pistols and Revolvers) any sale or transfer of two or more pistols, revolvers, or any combination of pistols and revolvers totaling two or more to an unlicensed individual that takes place at one time or during any 5 consecutive business days. The report must be made no later than the close of business on the day that the multiple sale or other disposition occurs.

Mail the original or fax a copy of the completed Form 3310.4 to ATF as directed on the Form 3310.4. You must also forward a completed copy of the Form 3310.4 to the official designated by the State or local authorities to receive the form. In the absence of such a designation, forward a completed copy of the Form 3310.4 to the department of State police or State law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over the place where the transaction(s) occurred.

The ATF mailing address and fax number are:

ATF, National Tracing Center
P.O. Box 0279
Kearneysville, West Virginia 25430-0279
1-877-283-0288 (fax)

Retain a copy of the completed Form 3310.4, attached to the back of the ATF Form 4473 for the transfer, as part of your records.

No Form 3310.4 is necessary for the return of multiple handguns to the same person from whom they were received—such as the return of multiple consignment, pawned, or repaired handguns.

Accountability for Firearms

Violations related to firearms missing from inventory are among the most commonly cited GCA violations, and have a direct impact on public safety. These violations
occur when FFLs have “open entries” in their A&D records but are unable to physically locate the firearms in inventory.

To reduce or eliminate violations resultant from unaccounted for firearms, please consider the following best practices to ensure accountability of your firearms inventory:

1. Consider setting aside in a centralized location all completed Forms 4473 in a centralized location for each day’s sales. At the close of the business day, document in the disposition record the disposition of each firearm recorded on the Forms 4473.

2. Consider setting aside in a centralized location each day’s firearms taken into your business. We suggest that you document in the acquisition record the acquisition of each firearm at the end of each business day.

3. Some FFLs periodically conduct full inventory reconciliations. A full inventory reconciliation will enable you to balance each firearm in physical inventory with an open entry in your A&D record and identify any discrepancies between your records and physical inventory:
   a. Consider taking a full count of all firearms in the business inventory and taking a count of all open entries in your A&D record;
   b. Ensure that all sales receipts (FFL transactions, repairs) and Forms 4473 have been entered as dispositions in the A&D record;
   c. Be alert for discrepancies—if there are more “open entries” than firearms in inventory, then there are firearms missing from inventory. If there are more firearms in inventory than there are “open entries,” then there are likely firearms that have not been recorded as acquisitions;
   d. You can ensure the accuracy of your documentation by using the A&D record information (in particular, the make, model, caliber, serial number) to compare each “open entry” to the appropriate firearm in the business inventory;
   e. You can also ensure that all firearms are recorded in the A&D record by verifying each firearm to an entry in the acquisition record where an open entry (disposition) exists.

Implementing these best practices in your daily business operations will better enable you to account for your business assets, identify security issues, and provide quick reporting of firearms that have been lost or stolen from your business.

Lost or Stolen Firearms

You MUST report to ATF each missing, lost, or stolen firearm within 48 hours of discovery of the loss or theft by calling 1-800-930-9275 and by completing and forwarding an original Form 3310.11 (Federal Firearms Licensee Theft/Loss Report) to ATF as directed on the Form 3310.11.

A loss of a firearm occurs when you cannot determine the disposition of a firearm and cannot locate it. These lost firearms are different from stolen firearms because there is no indication that they were stolen. You must also report the theft or loss to the appropriate local law enforcement agency. The “open entries” in your A&D record of lost or stolen firearms must be closed out by documenting in the disposition section that the firearm was lost or stolen and the ATF issued incident number. Retain a copy of the Form 3310.11 as part of your records. See ATF Publication 3317.2, Safety and Security Information for Federal Firearms Licensees, for additional information.

Providing False Information

You must not provide information on required records (including Forms 4473, bound books, Forms 3310.4, Forms 3310.11, license renewal applications) that you know is false or that you have reason to believe is false.

You must not transfer a firearm to a buyer or transferee—or any other person—who provides information on a Form 4473 or other required record that you know is false or have reason to believe is false. You must terminate the transaction.

Licensed Collectors

Licensed collectors may buy curio or relic firearms from any source and dispose of curio or relic firearms to another licensee anywhere. As a licensed collector, you may dispose of and receive curio or relic firearms to non-licensed residents of your State.
You must maintain A&D records. Your collector’s license entitles you to conduct transactions in curios and relics only. A licensed collector has the same status as a non-licensee in any transaction involving firearms other than curios and relics. ATF Form 4473 is not required for curio and relic transactions.

A curio or relic license does not entitle the holder to engage in the business of dealing in firearms, including dealing in curio or relic firearms.

Sale of Business or Going Out of Business
You must give written notice to the Chief, FFLC, within 30 days after you sell or discontinue your firearms or ammunition business. If you sell or discontinue your firearms or ammunition business and are succeeded by a new licensee, your firearms dealer records should be marked to show this fact and must be delivered to the successor. If you do not have a successor, you must deliver all of your firearms records within 30 days of going completely out of the firearms business to:

ATF National Tracing Center
Out-of-Business Records Center
244 Needy Road
Martinsburg, WV 25405

or any ATF office that serves the area where the business was located. These records provide vital assistance to law enforcement in tracing firearms used in crimes.

Conclusion
As a Federal firearms dealer, it is your responsibility to make sure that you comply with all applicable firearms laws and regulations. The following resources may assist you:

- *Federal Firearms Regulations Reference Guide*;
- ATF Website at [www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov);
- FFL Newsletters;
- Instructions on ATF Forms 4473, 3310.4, and 3310.11;
- State Attorney General for questions concerning State firearms laws and regulations.

If you are unable to determine the appropriate course of conduct, call your local ATF office for guidance.
For questions concerning unlawful activities, contact the ATF Criminal Enforcement Field Divisions below:

Atlanta Field Division
2600 Century Parkway, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30345-3104
(404) 417-2600

Baltimore Field Division
G.H. Fallon Building
31 Hopkins Plaza, 5th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201-2825
(443) 965-2000

Boston Field Division
Federal Building
10 Causeway Street, Room 791
Boston, MA 02222-01047
(617) 557-1200

Chicago Field Division
525 West Van Buren Street, Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60607
(312) 846-7200

Columbus Field Division
230 West Street, Suite 400
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 827-8400

Dallas Field Division
1114 Commerce Street, Suite 303
Dallas, TX 75224
(469) 227-4300

Denver Field Division
1961 Stout Street, Room 674
Denver, CO 80294
(303) 844-7450

Detroit Field Division
1155 Brewery Park Blvd, Suite 300
Detroit, MI 48207-2602
(313) 202-3400

Houston Field Division
15355 Vantage Pkwy West, Suite 200
Houston, TX 77032-1965
(281) 372-2900

Kansas City Field Division
2600 Grand Avenue, Suite 200
Kansas City, MO 64108
(816) 559-0700

Los Angeles Field Division
550 North Brand Avenue, 8th Floor
Glendale, CA 91203
(818) 265-2500

Louisville Field Division
600 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Place
Suite 322
Louisville, KY 40202
(502) 753-3400

Miami Field Division
11410 N.W. 20th Street, Suite 201
Miami, FL 33172
(305) 597-4800

Nashville Field Division
5300 Maryland Way, Suite 200
Brentwood, TN 37027
(615) 565-1400

New Orleans Field Division
One Galleria Boulevard, Suite 1700
Metairie, LA 70001
(504) 841-7000

New York Field Division
241 37th Street, 3rd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11232
(718) 650-4000

Newark Field Division
1 Garret Mountain Plaza, Suite 500
Woodland Park, NJ 07424
(973) 413-1179

Philadelphia Field Division
601 Walnut Street, Suite 100E
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 446-7800

Phoenix Field Division
201 East Washington Street, Suite 940
Phoenix, AZ 85004
(602) 776-5400

San Francisco Field Division
5601 Arnold Road, Suite 400
Dublin, CA 94568-7724
(925) 479-7500

Seattle Field Division
915 2nd Avenue, Room 790
Seattle, WA 98174
(206) 389-5800

St. Paul Field Division
30 East Seventh Street, Room 1900
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 726-0200

Tampa Field Division
400 North Tampa Street, Room 2100
Tampa, FL 33602
(813) 202-7300

Washington Field Division
1401 H Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20226
(202) 648-8010

For questions concerning your license, contact the ATF Firearms Licensing Center:
ATF Firearms Licensing Center
244 Needy Road
Martinsburg, WV 25405
1-866-662-2750

To Obtain Assistance Regarding Your License
ATF Firearms Licensing Center
244 Needy Road
Martinsburg, WV 25405
1-866-662-2750

To Receive ATF Forms and Publications
ATF Distribution Center
1519 Cabin Branch Drive
Landover, MD 20785-3816
(301) 583-4696

To Ship Out-of-Business Records
ATF National Tracing Center
244 Needy Road
Martinsburg, WV 25405
(304) 260-1500 or 1-800-788-7133
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Firearm</th>
<th>Receipt</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
<th>Address of Licensee No. If licensee, or Form 4473 Serial Number if Forms 4473 filed numerically</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturer and Importer (if any)</td>
<td>Name and Address or Licensee No.</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Name and Licensee No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Ithaca</td>
<td>John’s Fine Guns</td>
<td>8/2/01</td>
<td>James House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Smith &amp; Wesson</td>
<td>Sinap Shop</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>Al Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Western Field</td>
<td>John’s Fine Guns</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>Oak Hill, IL 6051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Winchester</td>
<td>Smith &amp; Wesson</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>Thomas Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Remington</td>
<td>Western Field</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>William Boume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Remington</td>
<td>Remington</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>Fit Or Melt It, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Browning</td>
<td>Browning</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>Jon Doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Western Field</td>
<td>Western Field</td>
<td>8/4/01</td>
<td>Stolen Reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Smith &amp; Wesson</td>
<td>ABC International Arms/West Coast Importers, LLC</td>
<td>12/7/02</td>
<td>Matthew Johnson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Highlighted notations are optional.
Explanation of Dispositions

1. This entry documents a sale to an unlicensed person. The buyer’s name is inserted directly across from the address or the name and license number of the licensee from whom the firearm was received. In order for the store owner, Brian Smith, to obtain this firearm he had to submit a current copy of his FFL to John’s Fine Guns (27 C.F.R. §478.94).

2. This firearm has not been traded, sold, loaned, stolen or transferred out. It should be on hand and available for inspection.

3. This entry documents a firearm that was brought in for repair. If a firearm is repaired and returned to the owner on the same business day, no entry need be made. However, if the firearm cannot be returned that day it must be entered as an acquisition. Gunsmithing transactions may be recorded in a separate record that meets the regulatory requirements.

4. In this entry, Mr. Bounce borrows a firearm for temporary use off the premises of the licensee for lawful sporting purposes. It is not a sale but it is a disposition. Form 4473 must be filled out. (See 27 C.F.R. § 478.97 for information regarding loans and rentals by clubs.) When Mr. Bounce returns the firearm it must be shown as an acquisition.

5. In this entry, Mr. Smith is unable to repair the firearm brought in by Mr. Problem and sends it to a gunsmith for repair. Gunsmiths must be licensed and Brian’s Sport Shop must obtain a current certified copy of Fix It or Melt It, Inc.’s license prior to delivery of the firearm.

6. This entry documents the removal of a firearm from inventory into the owner’s personal collection.

7. This entry documented a firearm brought in by Jon Doe for sale on consignment that was not sold. Form 4473 must be completed by Jon Doe when the firearm is returned to him.

8. This entry reflects that a firearm was stolen. The entry shows the disposition of the firearm as “stolen” and shows the date the theft was reported to the local authorities. If Brian Smith had known the actual date the firearm was stolen, he would have recorded it here. If the police case number is available, please report it here. Notification of ATF is required within 48 hours of discovering the missing firearm. When ATF is notified, it will provide the licensee with a control number. This number should be placed in the disposition record. It is also helpful to include the date ATF was contacted. A copy of the ATF Form 3310.11 (Federal Firearms Licensee Theft/Loss Report) must also be retained by the licensee.

9. This entry records a transaction in which a firearm was sold to an out-of-State policeman for official use, as evidenced by the certification letter. See instructions on “Sale to Law Enforcement Officers” for specific information. The applicable regulations do not require an FFL to specifically note that a police department certification is on file. Mr. Smith opted to use this notation for his own records.

10. This entry reflects that Mr. Problem got his repaired firearm back. He did not need to fill out Form 4473. The firearm was returned to the same person who brought the firearm in for repair. If someone picked the firearm up for Mr. Problem a Form 4473 would have to be completed by that person (27 C.F.R. § 478.124(a)).

11. This entry documents a sale to a corporation. The authorized person purchasing the firearm on behalf of the corporation must complete the Form 4473, with his/her personal information and undergo a NICS check.