

Wide-Ranging Efforts Are Announced To Improve Firearms Safety In State

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SPRINGFIELD – Today, Illinois State Police (ISP) Director Brendan F. Kelly joined by Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) Col. Mark Peyton and Division of Justice Services (DJS) Col. Isaiah Vega, announced the continued wide-ranging efforts to improve operations, information sharing, and enforcement of firearms safety laws on the second anniversary of the deadly shooting at the Henry Pratt warehouse in Aurora.

“There are no words for the kind of evil that robs members of our communities of their hopes, their dreams, their futures. Today we honor the lives of the victims who were lost in this act of senseless violence and remember the bravery of the first responders whose actions saved countless lives,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Over the last two years, my administration has taken concrete steps towards bolstering public safety by strengthening the FOID program and implementing policies and practices aimed at preventing guns from landing in the hands of those with criminal intent.”

“It has been two years since that awful day, but the Illinois State Police has not forgotten. The victims and survivors are at the heart of our continued fight to strengthen public safety,” said ISP Director Kelly. “While progress has been made, the Henry Pratt shooting revealed clearly the need to use less of our resources on an outdated, inefficient renewal process that’s similar to that of a fishing license and more on enforcement against real threats to public safety. We will need authority from the legislature to untangle and integrate this decades-old patchwork of FOID, concealed carry, firearms transactions, and records checks if we are going to strengthen our ability to protect the public.”

After the events in Aurora, the ISP responded with transparency and action. As part of that effort:

- The ISP created a web portal for local law enforcement, prosecutors and other justice stakeholders to access so agencies could identify individuals within their jurisdictions who were and were not in compliance with the FOID Act. Since February 2019, the portal has been accessed more than 39,000 times by those agencies.
- ISP has conducted over 480 firearms enforcement details since April of 2019. These special details were created by the ISP after the Henry Pratt shooting in Aurora in February 2019.
- Submissions of mandatory firearms disposal reports of firearms possessed from an individual after FOID revocation have increased to 4,799 in 2020 – a 70% increase from 2019.
- After a thoughtful, deliberate assessment of the firearms background check systems by the ISP, firearms eligibility analysts were directed in 2020 to enhance efforts to correlate criminal records and other firearms prohibiting records submitted through numerous systems with possible FOID card holders. If such records correlate with

FOID card holders, the FOID card is then revoked. Since beginning that initiative, the rate of record review has improved 58% and in 2020 over 71,000 potential prohibiting records were assessed through this critical correlation process.

- In 2020, 11,742 FOIDs were revoked – an 8% increase of revocations over 2019.
- 5,527 attempts to purchase firearms illegally were stopped by the ISP background check process in 2020 – a 77% increase from 2019.
- 11,512 attempts to unlawfully obtain a FOID card were stopped by the ISP background check process in 2020 – over a 290% increase from 2019.

There are more than 2.2 million FOID cardholders in this state, up from 1.2 million a decade ago. The ISP has remained focus on improving background check processes and enforcement while dealing with the historic, unprecedented surge of firearms purchases and applications for FOID cards during the pandemic and civil unrest in 2020 and 2021.