

ISP Convenes Commission To Increase Awareness and Implementation Of Firearm Restraining Orders

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois State Police (ISP) recently convened the first meeting of the Commission on Implementing the Firearms Restraining Order Act (Commission). The General Assembly passed legislation in 2021 calling for the creation of the Commission to advise on strategies for the education and implementation of the Firearms Restraining Order Act.

The Commission is charged with developing a policy that will serve as the overall framework for timely relinquishment of firearms whenever a firearms restraining order is issued. The Commission will consult with counties and other states with extreme risk protection order laws that have been successful implementing such laws. Once the policy is approved, ISP will work with local law enforcement agencies to design a comprehensive strategy using the model policy.

The Commission, chaired by ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly, includes State's Attorneys, chiefs of police, a sheriff, circuit court judge, representatives of the Illinois Attorney General's Office, public defender, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board.

During today's meeting, the Commission reviewed the Firearm Restraining Order Act, how to improve its use, and how to effectively implement orders. The Commission coalesced around three main points; understanding how a firearm restraining order (FRO) fits into what decisions are made day to day; awareness, training, education, and knowledge by both law enforcement and the public; and the infrastructure needed to implement the Act. Members discussed how the current infrastructure in place for domestic violence Orders of Protection could help inform an infrastructure for FRO implementation. One distinction made was that requesting a FRO from a court is a civil procedure as opposed to a criminal one. These aspects will continue to be discussed in future meetings.

The Commission will submit an annual report to General Assembly that may include summary information about firearms restraining order use, challenges to Firearms Restraining Order Act implementation, and recommendations for increasing and improving implementation.