



OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

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Performance Audit

Follow-Up Report

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Management Audit of the Firearm Owner's Identification Card and Concealed Carry License Programs Audit Follow-Up

In September 2021, the Office of the Auditor General released a management audit of the Illinois State Police's Firearm Owner's Identification Card and Concealed Carry License programs. The audit contained six recommendations. As part of the compliance examination of the Illinois State Police (Department) for the period ended June 30, 2022, predecessor auditors followed up on the status of the recommendations and reported that two were fully implemented, three were partially implemented, and one was not implemented. As part of the compliance examination of the Department for the period ending June 30, 2024, auditors followed up on the status of the four recommendations not fully implemented as reported in the June 30, 2022 report. The current status of the recommendations is shown in the table below. All recommendations have now been implemented.

STATUS OF PERFORMANCE AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

As of June 30, 2024

Rec. No.	Recommendation Description	Agency	Current Status		
			Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Implemented
1	FOID and CCL Application Processes	State Police	X		
2	Application Processing Timeliness	State Police	X		
3	Revoked FOID Cards and Concealed Carry Licenses	State Police	X		
4	FOID Card Enforcement Details	State Police	X		
5	Appeals	State Police	X		
6	Administrative Rules Update to Match Process	State Police	X		

Source: Summary of OAG follow-up.

Recommendation 1: FOID and CCL Application Processes

The Illinois State Police should seek to reduce manual verifications and checks of applicant information, reduce multiple and overlapping checks, and seek legislative remedies, if necessary, in order to increase the efficiency of the FOID and CCL application processes.

Current Status: Implemented

During the prior examination, the Department started streamlining the process for Firearm Owner's Identification (FOID) renewal applications. The Department also sought legislative changes to sync FOID and Concealed Carry License (CCL) validity dates. FOID cardholders who are approved for a new or renewed CCL are allowed to have their FOID card automatically renewed for 10 years from the date of approval of the CCL. Additionally, if a FOID card expires during the term of a licensee's concealed carry license, the FOID card and the CCL remain valid, and the licensee does not have to renew his or her FOID card during the duration of the CCL.

During the current examination, the Department began instituting new streamlined processes in December 2022 for FOID application, CCL application, and CCL renewal. Consequently, the Department's statistical comparison between Fiscal Years 2022, 2023, and 2024 showed the processing times for FOID applications, CCL applications, and CCL renewal applications were ahead of the statutory requirements.

Recommendation 2: Application Processing Timeliness

The Illinois State Police should ensure that all FOID and CCL applications are approved or denied within the required statutory timeframes.

Current Status: Implemented

During the prior examination, the Department did not process timely FOID and CCL applications. During Fiscal Year 2022, 34.3% of FOID new applications, 3.4% of FOID renewal applications, 33.5% of CCL new applications, and 54.6% of CCL renewal applications were either untimely processed or a processing timeline could not be determined.

During current examination, the Department has significantly decreased the average processing times of FOID and CCL applications and renewals to be within the statutory time frames. The following average processing times were noted based on Department records:

- FOID new applications: 17.58 days (Fiscal Year 2023), 8.79 days (Fiscal Year 2024);
- FOID renewal applications: 33.32 days (Fiscal Year 2023), 6.95 days (Fiscal Year 2024);
- CCL fingerprint applications: 52.54 days (Fiscal Year 2023), 45.80 days (Fiscal Year 2024); and
- CCL non-fingerprint applications: 79 days (Fiscal Year 2023), 51.94 days (Fiscal Year 2024).

Recommendation 3: Revoked FOID Cards and Concealed Carry Licenses

The Illinois State Police should ensure that Sheriffs are notified of revocations as is required by the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act; and continue to work with local law enforcement agencies to ensure revoked FOID cards and Concealed Carry Licenses are returned to the Department in accordance with the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act and the Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

Current Status: Implemented

During the prior examination, the majority of FOID cards and CCLs were not returned to the Department as required by law. Additionally, the Department was unable to provide documentation that the county Sheriff was notified as required by law.

During the current examination, for all 18 (100%) revoked cards tested, the Sheriffs were appropriately provided a copy of written notice of revocation.

Recommendation 5: Appeals

The Illinois State Police should establish a case management system for tracking appeals; and update its administrative rules to reflect the current appeals process.

Current Status: Implemented

During the prior examination, the Department did not have a case management system in place to track appeals and could not provide information for the audit period in order to determine, for certain types of FOID appeals cases, if appeals were being adjudicated in a timely manner. The Department also did not amend the administrative rules to reflect the current process for filing an appeal, which has changed since 2020. The Department had completed the procurement process for an appeals case management system but had not implemented the system.

During the current examination, the Department was able to keep track of FOID card application denials and revocation appeals through a case management system. With the creation of the FOID Card Review Board (Board), which began processing appeals on January 1, 2023, the Department determined it was not fiscally responsible to purchase a robust case management system. Since the Board began processing appeals, the Department's workload in the appeals process was dramatically reduced. The current process involves processing all decisions made by the Board through sending correspondence to the FOID cardholders or applicants, updating their status on the Department's FOID system, and sending new or replacement FOID cards as ordered by the Board. Further, the Department's Administrative Rules for records challenge pursuant to the FOID Act were updated effective February 3, 2023. Any appeals for revocation or denial due to a federal or out of state conviction must be filed in the jurisdiction of conviction for relief. The Director may not grant relief for firearm prohibitors from FOID cardholders and applicants. The Administrative Rule was updated to reflect the appeals to be considered by the Board and the Department's responsibility to process all decisions made by the Board.

Follow-up was conducted as part of the Fiscal Year 2023 and 2024 State compliance examination by our special assistant auditors, Adelfia, LLC. This was the second time follow-up has been done on the recommendations from the September 2021 performance audit.