

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

ICYMI: AG GREWAL DIRECTS UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION BY N.J. LAW ENFORCEMENT IN COMBATING FIREARMS TRAFFICKING

Requires Law Enforcement to Share Information on Distributors and Purchasers of Firearms Used in Crimes in New Jersey

TRENTON – Attorney General Grewal today issued the State’s first directive requiring all state and local law enforcement agencies to share information regarding the dealers and purchasers of firearms used in crimes in New Jersey.

While state and local law enforcement agencies are already required to trace all crime guns recovered in New Jersey, law enforcement agencies have never before been required to share the results of such traces with one another for guns originally sold in other states – as the overwhelming majority of New Jersey crime guns are. Today’s directive, AG Directive 2018-4, changes that.

Now, every state and local law enforcement agency in New Jersey will be required to share information concerning the manufacturer or importer, dealer, and first purchaser for crime guns recovered across the State. This information will enable the New Jersey State Police to identify statewide patterns in sources of guns, and identify unlawful purchasers and bad faith dealers – which, in turn, will support prosecutions of straw purchasers and traffickers that illegally transport firearms into New Jersey.

“Combatting firearms trafficking is critical to public safety and law enforcement safety,” **explained Attorney General Grewal**. “But law enforcement can only reduce gun crime when we work together and today’s unprecedented directive, requiring all New Jersey law enforcement agencies to share information on the sellers and purchasers of all crime guns recovered in New Jersey, will enable us to bring firearms traffickers to justice. Although firearms crimes are down compared to this time last year, trafficking remains a major problem and this Directive gives us a new, strong tool to fight it.”

“By sharing critical information regarding the origins of crime guns, New Jersey law enforcement now has a powerful tool, which will greatly aid in disrupting the flow of firearms trafficking and arresting those responsible for it,” **said Colonel Patrick Callahan of the New Jersey State Police**. “This directive will not only reinforce our current partnerships, it will unite countless other agencies that are committed to removing crime guns from our communities.”

Today’s directive relies upon the Department of Law & Public Safety’s ongoing relationship with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). For any crime guns originally bought and sold out of state, New Jersey law enforcement depends on the ATF to trace the weapon and supply that law enforcement agency with information on the gun’s manufacturer or importer, the wholesaler and/or retailer, and the first retail purchaser. ATF only shares its results with the requesting agency, unless the requestor grants ATF permission to share with other law enforcement agencies in the state. AG Directive 2018-04 requires New Jersey law enforcement to permit ATF to share all that information with these other law enforcement agencies.

“This directive significantly strengthens the ability to combat firearms trafficking in New Jersey and compliments the operations of the New Jersey Crime Gun Intelligence Center by reinforcing the collaboration between ATF and our state and local partners,” **said Special Agent in Charge John B. DeVito of the ATF Newark Field Division**. “ATF is proud to be a vital component of the Attorney General’s ongoing endeavors to reduce violent gun crimes and we will continue to provide all of the resources and expertise we possess in our joint efforts to protect the citizens of New Jersey.”

This is not the first time that Attorney General Grewal has helped to shine a light on the problem of gun trafficking. Pursuant to an Executive Order by Governor Murphy, the Attorney General’s Office and the New Jersey State Police are releasing monthly reports on gun crimes in the State. Those reports include the offenses, the type of gun used, the number of people shot, and the municipality where the offense took place. Each quarter, the Department of Law & Public Safety and New Jersey State Police also share information on the source states for the crime guns in New Jersey.

And today’s action follows on the heels of multiple collaborative law enforcement efforts undertaken by the Attorney General’s Office to tackle gun crime in the state. Attorney General Grewal and U.S. Marshal for the District of New Jersey Juan Mattos announced earlier this month that federal, state, and local law enforcement had worked together as part of Operation Summer in the City to arrest 166 fugitives, including 61 documented gang members including 42 Bloods, 13 Crips, 3 Latin Kings, 1 Surenos, and 1 Trinitarios member. The operation resulted in the seizure of 11 firearms.

These collaborations are having an impact, explained Attorney General Grewal at the time. “In fact, six-month data for 2018 shows a decline of 24 percent in shooting ‘hit’ victims in New Jersey compared to the same period in 2017, and a 23 percent decline in shooting murder victims, and I think that law enforcement is having a real impact in these declines by leveraging the great cooperative relationships we have fostered and sharing intelligence to address major causes of violence.”

“In my time as Attorney General, my office has taken on peddlers of ghost guns and 3D printable gun codes, indicted a firearms trafficking ring from Ohio, and made public the source states of unlawful weapons,” **Attorney General Grewal added today**. “This directive shows we’re going to keep working with federal, state, and local law enforcement partners to root out gun crime and ensure public safety in New Jersey.”

AG_Directive_2018-4.pdf (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__t.e2ma.net_click_fl7lx_nrddit_vt49pf&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1mshJOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=xF3DPDNEH8rwpTwtOjb4MHQ0EgF6v3M0zt3hszQvyU&m=2DAS4QlpgJmJGd0I9UKWPj43LhWrs-Och0hNlscB-4&s=ecPmxxu1VY6JijymcspTc2UfKe-TJ6nJ6_MaueE700g&e)

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