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Gov. Wolf: Pennsylvania State Police Prepared to Implement Stricter Ghost Gun Regulations in Commonwealth

York, PA – Governor Tom Wolf was joined by Pennsylvania State Police Commissioner Colonel Robert Evanchick today to announce that, following the Biden Administration’s new final rule on ghost guns, Pennsylvania stands ready to implement the same regulation at the state level.

The new regulation will ensure that partially manufactured frames and receivers require a background check at the point of sale, in addition to requiring dealers and gunsmiths in the commonwealth to serialize and inventory any unregistered firearms that come into their business.

“The numbers don’t lie: ghost guns are being seized and recovered from crime scenes at an alarming rate,” said Gov. Wolf. “If you want to own a gun, you need to go through checks and balances that are necessary to ensure public safety. Unserialized guns are an untraceable threat to our society, that’s why we’re ready to immediately mirror this new federal regulation at the state level as soon as possible.”

Ghost guns have been recognized as a fast-growing safety concern for the United States. In recognition of this, the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) began officially tracking seizure of and recovery of ghost guns from crime scenes in 2021. Philadelphia began tracking these same numbers in 2019. Philadelphia recorded 95 seizures and recoveries in 2019, 250 in 2020, and a startling 571 in 2021. PSP recorded 24 seizures and recoveries in 2021. Combined, PSP and Philadelphia have recorded 147 to date in 2022.

The Wolf Administration has been anticipating the [new regulation on ghost guns](#) announced by the Biden Administration earlier this month and PSP intends to mirror the new regulations at the state level. The federal regulation will take effect 120 days from April 26, 2022, the date it was published in the federal register.

“Violent crime involving firearms is one of our top public safety concerns, and the existence of ghost guns can compound this issue,” said Colonel Evanchick. “Ghost guns can make it more difficult to solve violent crimes and hold those responsible accountable.”

“Let’s be frank, whether in a school, on a street corner, or at a local mall, gun violence is the number one threat our communities are facing all across this state,” said York City Police Commissioner Muldrow.

"The one thing I hope we can all agree on, no matter what side of the line you fall on, is doing the things we have to do to keep our kids and communities alive."

Governor Wolf has worked throughout his administration to combat gun violence in Pennsylvania and even to specifically address incidents involving ghost guns. In 2019, [Gov. Wolf and Attorney General Josh Shapiro worked together](#) to implement a strategy to treat 80% receivers—the external housing of a firearm which are commonly used to make unserialized ghost guns—as classified firearms in Pennsylvania that require a serial number and background check to purchase.

Additional efforts to curb gun violence in Pennsylvania include:

- In 2019, he signed an [executive order](#) making sweeping changes to gun violence in Pennsylvania including the creation of a Special Council on Gun Violence.
- He has [invested more than \\$50 million](#) in grassroots, community gun violence prevention programs around the commonwealth.
- In December 2021, he [vetoed Senate Bill 565](#), dangerous legislation that would have removed licensing and background check requirements for concealed carry permits and overturned Philadelphia's requirement for a permit to open carry.
- In January of this year, he [vetoed House Bill 979](#), which would discourage local jurisdictions from attempting to regulate firearms.

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