



C A L I F O R N I A

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

# **CRIME GUNS, INSPECTIONS, AND HANDGUNS IN CALIFORNIA**

***CALENDAR YEAR 2025 (AB 1191 STATISTICS)  
CALENDAR YEAR 2025 (SB 965 STATISTICS)***

***JULY 1, 2026***



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## Introduction

Each year, licensed firearm dealers and other entities in California report records to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding the sale or acquisition of hundreds of thousands of firearms. Law enforcement agencies across our state also annually report records to DOJ pertaining to tens of thousands of firearms recovered as “crime guns.” A “crime gun,” as used in this report, is defined as a firearm that was recovered by a law enforcement agency after it was (1) used in a crime, (2) suspected to have been used in a crime, or (3) illegally possessed.<sup>1</sup>

DOJ crime gun data includes firearms reported into the Automated Firearms System as either crime guns or evidence guns. This may include firearms recovered from the scene of a crime, as well as found firearms reported to DOJ due to suspicion that the firearm may have been used in a crime or firearms recovered from suicide incidents. Additional breakdowns of the types of crimes associated with crime guns reported to DOJ have been included in subsequent sections of this report.

California is one of the few states that has established state law enforcement record systems for the legal sale and acquisition of firearms and for firearms recovered from crimes.<sup>2</sup> By cross-referencing these DOJ record systems, DOJ seeks to match crime gun records with sale or acquisition records for that same firearm. This process is called crime gun “tracing” and can provide valuable information about how and when a firearm shifted from legal markets to illegal use or possession. The process can also identify patterns indicating whether firearms manufactured or sold by certain manufacturers or dealers, or in certain jurisdictions, are disproportionately likely to be recovered in a crime.

One of the responsibilities of DOJ is to ensure the state’s firearm laws are administered fairly, enforced vigorously, and understood uniformly throughout California. DOJ provides oversight, enforcement, education, and regulation of California’s firearm and dangerous weapon laws throughout fifty-eight counties. DOJ provides instruction, information, and guidance to firearm dealers, ammunition vendors, firearms manufacturers, exempted Federal Firearms licensees, and gun show producers. In addition, DOJ conducts regulatory inspections in accordance with California law to ensure compliance by California’s firearm dealers and ammunition vendors. This report will, in part, discuss inspections completed by DOJ in 2025.

### **AB 1191: Crime Guns**

In 2021, California enacted Assembly Bill 1191 (AB 1191, McCarty), which requires DOJ to analyze “patterns and trends relating to recovered firearms that have been illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected to have been used in a crime, including the leading sources and origins of those firearms.” AB 1191 also requires DOJ to submit an annual report to the Legislature, starting in 2023, summarizing this crime gun tracing analysis and reporting specified information about crime guns recovered in the state, including the number of recovered crime guns disaggregated by firearm manufacturer and the number of recovered crime guns traced to the dealer where the most recent recorded sale or transfer of the firearms occurred. This report details the results of those analyses based on a review of records submitted to DOJ by local, state, and federal agencies.

California law additionally directs DOJ to maintain a firearm records repository, called the Automated Firearms System (AFS),<sup>3</sup> and requires various entities and individuals to submit records to DOJ for

- 1 California Penal Code section 11108.3 defines crime guns as “recovered firearms that are illegally possessed, have been used in a crime, or are suspected of having been used in a crime.”
- 2 GIFFORDS Law Center: <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/gun-sales/maintaining-records/>
- 3 The AFS is a repository of historical and law enforcement firearm records maintained by DOJ, as established by Penal Code section 11106. The AFS is populated by way of firearm acquisitions, purchases or transfers at a California licensed firearm dealer, registration of assault weapons and 50 BMG rifles (during specified registration periods), an

retention in AFS, such as information from lawfully recorded firearm sales and transfers, firearm licenses, and other firearm-related transactions. AFS tracks serial numbers of recorded firearms, including but not limited to, firearms taken into law enforcement custody (e.g., seized, destroyed, held in evidence, reported stolen, or recovered), voluntarily recorded, and purchased or transferred by a firearm dealer through transactions. A majority of the records in AFS are submitted by California licensed firearm dealers, who are required to electronically report information to DOJ about firearms acquired, sold, or transferred by that dealer, including when dealers process a “private-party transfer” of a firearm between two unlicensed individuals. Dealers are required to report information about each firearm, including the manufacturer, make, model, caliber, and serial number.

Additionally, California law requires state and local law enforcement agencies to report to DOJ “all available information necessary to identify and trace the history” of all crime guns recovered by that agency within seven calendar days of obtaining that information (Pen. Code § 11108.3).

To conduct this report’s analysis, DOJ reviewed all crime gun records submitted to DOJ between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025. Data is presented for crime guns reported to DOJ in the 2025 calendar year, as well as aggregated for the previous three calendar years from 2023 through 2025. DOJ sought to connect these crime gun records to other firearm records in AFS that contained matching information, including serial number, firearm manufacturer, caliber, and type (e.g., pistol or rifle). In cases where there was a complete match between information reported in the crime gun record and information reported in another AFS firearm record across all information fields, DOJ connected the crime gun to the manufacturer and, where possible, to a California firearm dealer associated with the most recent recorded transfer (or “source event”) for that firearm.

Nearly two-thirds (62.5%) of crime guns recovered in California in 2025 had no prior sale or transaction record that could be confirmed in AFS, and nearly three-quarters (70.6%) could not be traced to a specific dealer in California.

A crime gun may have no traceable sale record in AFS for a number of reasons. This may indicate that the firearms were acquired, sold, or transferred illegally (e.g., not sold or transferred lawfully by a dealer in California), that they were illegally manufactured without serial numbers, or that their original serial numbers were illegally defaced. It could also indicate that the firearms were acquired outside of California and imported into California without being lawfully reported to DOJ, or that the firearms were legally owned but their ownership or sales were not reported to AFS or it could mean the crime gun was a long gun lawfully acquired before 2014, when California law did not authorize DOJ to retain sale or transfer records for long guns.<sup>4</sup> As discussed in more detail below, various factors, including inconsistent and incomplete information in crime gun and AFS records submitted to DOJ, can also prevent DOJ from being able to confirm that certain crime guns are a match with an AFS record. This may occur, for example, if a crime gun record has the same serial number and manufacturer as a reported sale record in AFS but the law enforcement agency reporting the crime gun reported the firearm as having a different caliber than the dealer that reported the sale.

Interstate gun trafficking plays a significant role in gun crime activity in California. As discussed in other DOJ reports, a large percentage of crime guns recovered in California are traced to sellers in other states where there are fewer gun safety regulations and safeguards. Analysis of crime gun data reported by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) found that in 2023, 46% of the firearms recovered by law enforcement in California and successfully traced by ATF to

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individual’s report of firearm ownership to DOJ, Carry Concealed Weapons License records, or records entered by law enforcement agencies.

4 Note that 3% of all crime guns recovered in 2023 had a prior transfer or self-report of ownership (e.g., such as a report indicating a new California resident is bringing a firearm into California, or an intra-familial transfer). These firearms do not have a California dealer sales history in AFS and contribute to the 65% of crime guns without sale records.

a gun dealer were traced to dealers located in other states, especially Arizona, Nevada, and Texas.<sup>5</sup> New research published in February 2026 also found that the largest gun trafficking corridor in North America was for crime guns trafficked from Arizona to California.<sup>6</sup> These crime guns will not have a California Dealer Record of Sale associated with the firearm in AFS records.

Unserialized “ghost guns” also play a very significant role in gun crime in California. A significant number of crime guns could not be traced to an AFS record because they had no identifying serial number. Approximately 29,688 crime guns entered into AFS between 2023 and 2025, and more than 8,800 entered in 2025 were recorded as unserialized in AFS.<sup>5</sup> Many, though not all, of these unserialized crime guns were “ghost guns”, or firearms manufactured or assembled without a serial number or other identifying markings by individuals who do not have a license to manufacture firearms.<sup>7</sup> Some crime guns may also not have serial numbers if, for instance, the original manufacturer’s serial number was defaced or obliterated, or if the firearm was manufactured before the federal Gun Control Act of 1968.

Previously, California law did not require DOJ to record specific dealer information for transactions prior to 2010 and did not authorize DOJ to retain information for long gun sales and transfers conducted by dealers prior to 2014; as a result, handguns sold or transferred by a dealer prior to 2010 may not be traced to a specific dealer, and long guns acquired, sold, or transferred by a dealer prior to 2014 would generally not be associated with a California dealer in AFS records. Additionally, firearms that were acquired, sold, or transferred by California dealers would not be recorded in AFS if the dealer unlawfully failed to report a record of that firearm transaction to DOJ.

### ***SB 965: Data on Firearm Dealer Inspections, Firearm and Ammunition Sales, and the Roster of Certified Handguns***

The DOJ, through the Bureau of Firearms (BOF), is responsible for inspecting licensed California firearm dealers and ammunition vendors (Pen. Code §§ 26720, 30345).<sup>8</sup> These inspections help to verify that dealers and vendors are complying with California firearm laws and regulations related to firearm and ammunition transfer requirements, recordkeeping, and site-security standards.

In 2024, California enacted Senate Bill 965 (SB 965, Min), which requires DOJ to report specified information related to the department’s activities inspecting firearm dealers and ammunition vendors in California. SB 965 requires the report to include information about department staffing for inspections; detailed information about each inspection conducted, including any violations identified and follow-up efforts to resolve those violations; and specified information about the number of firearm and ammunition background checks submitted by licensed firearm dealers and ammunition vendors.

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5 See DOJ Office of Gun Violence Prevention, “A Strategic Plan to Sustain California’s Record Reductions in Gun Violence: Part 1,” p. 80-83 (Apr. 2026), <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/OGVP-AB1252-Report-2026.pdf>.

6 See id. (citing Eugenio Weigend Vargas and Jason E. Goldstick, “Geographic Patterns of Firearms with Short Time-to-Crime in the U.S. and the Americas, 2015–2023,” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (Feb. 18, 2026), at [www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(26\)00053-X/abstract](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(26)00053-X/abstract)).

7 Because these firearms are completed, assembled, or manufactured by unlicensed manufacturers, they are sometimes called “privately made firearms” or “PMFs”. Ghost guns are distinct from firearms produced by licensed commercial firearm manufacturers where an individual sought to deface or obliterate the serial number. They are also distinct from firearms produced by unlicensed individuals using serialized, regulated firearm frames and receivers. For more detailed information, see DOJ Office of Gun Violence Prevention, “California’s Fight Against the Ghost Gun Crisis: Progress and New Challenges” (Oct. 2024), <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ogvp-report-ghost-guns.pdf>. For information specifically on California laws surrounding ghost guns, see DOJ Office of Gun Violence Prevention, “California Ghost Gun Laws Reference Guide” (Updated Dec. 2025), <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ogvp-ghost-guns-reference-guide-2025.pdf>

8 All firearm dealers are also considered ammunition vendors; Cal Pen Code § 16151.

Additionally, SB 965 requires DOJ to include specified information about the Roster of Certified Handguns (Handgun Roster) that is described in Penal Code section 32015 and maintained by the DOJ, including the total number of handguns on the Handgun Roster, and the number of handguns added to, removed from, or denied approval to be listed on the Handgun Roster.<sup>9</sup>

This report will shed light on inspection data and trends, including the rate at which BOF obtains resolved violations and the link between firearm dealers resolving violations and complying with state laws and regulations. Additionally, the report will provide a more detailed picture of crime gun recoveries, dealer practices, and reflect a link between firearm dealers and inspection trends as it relates to crime guns recovered by law enforcement.

The data analysis mandated by SB 965 will highlight the number of violations per dealer/vendor inspection, the number of resolved violations per dealer/vendor inspection, and the approximate hours spent on these inspections. The related analyses will connect dealer inspections with crime gun data by documenting the number and percentage of crime guns sold by and later traced back to the inspected dealers in the one-year period prior to the inspection. Finally, the analysis will document the total number of eligibility checks submitted by the inspected dealers and vendors for a twelve-month period prior to the inspection, and the results of those checks.

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<sup>9</sup> The Handgun Roster is publicly available, and searchable, on the DOJ's website at <https://oag.ca.gov/firearms/certified-handguns/search>.



## Top Highlights: Crime Guns

- Approximately 140,883 unique crime guns with identifiable serial numbers were recovered by law enforcement agencies in California and entered into AFS between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2025. In 2025, 46,288 of these unique crime guns were entered into AFS.
- Approximately 29,688 crime guns were entered into AFS without any recorded serial number in the same time period, including 8,877 entered in 2025.
- For crime guns reported in 2025, 17,343 (37.5%) of the serialized crime guns entered into AFS could be associated with a transaction record in AFS. AFS started maintaining transaction records with dealer-specific information for sales or transfers conducted on or after January 1, 2010. For crime guns reported in 2025, 13,613 (29.4%) were traceable to 1,213 distinct California firearm dealers. The remaining 3,730 crime guns were associated with pre-2010 transactions.
- For crime guns reported between 2023 and 2025, 50,516 (35.9%) were traceable to a transaction record in AFS, while 38,592 (27.4%) were traceable to specific dealer sales or transfers since January 1, 2010. These crime guns were traced to 1,683 different California firearm dealers.
- 363 dealers were associated with only one crime gun recovered in 2025, and 86 dealers were associated with roughly half of all traceable crime guns in 2025 (6,798 firearms). The dealer location associated with the highest number of associated crime guns was Turner's Outdoorsman San Bernardino, which was associated with 238 crime guns reported in 2025, and 781 crime guns reported between 2023 and 2025.
- On average, among dealers that were associated with at least one crime gun, each licensed dealer sold or transferred 11.2 firearms that were later identified as a crime gun in 2025, and 22.9 firearms that were later identified as a crime gun between 2023 and 2025.
- The manufacturers associated with the most crime gun records in 2025 are Glock; Smith & Wesson; Sturm, Ruger, & Co.; Taurus Forjas; and Springfield.
- From 2013 to 2021, California experienced a very significant increase in the number of crime guns recovered without serial numbers, primarily due to the dramatic increase in ghost guns recovered as crime guns. In 2025, however, there was a 13% drop from the previous year in the number of crime guns without serial numbers reported statewide, continuing a 33% decline from the 2021 peak. Since 2021, California has taken strong action to address the ghost gun crisis through affirmative litigation in the courtroom, law enforcement actions, local gun safety ordinances, and by enacting the nation's most comprehensive ghost gun reform legislation. For more detailed data and discussion about California's efforts to address the proliferation of ghost guns in crime, see the California DOJ's Office of Gun Violence Prevention report titled, "California's Fight Against the Ghost Gun Crisis: Progress and New Challenges" (October 2024) and California Ghost Gun Laws Reference Guide.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See DOJ Office of Gun Violence Prevention, "California's Fight Against the Ghost Gun Crisis: Progress and New Challenges" (Oct. 2024), <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ogvp-report-ghost-guns.pdf>, and "California Ghost Gun Laws Reference Guide" (rev. Dec. 2025), at <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ogvp-ghost-guns-reference-guide-2025.pdf>.



## Top Highlights: Firearm Dealer Inspections

- From January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, DOJ inspected 220 firearm dealers across 221 separate inspections.
- Throughout these inspections, DOJ representatives recorded 13,268 violations and 12,137 (91.4%) of them have been resolved as of March 2026.
- DOJ representatives spent at least 3,192 hours inspecting firearm dealers.
- The average number of violations per firearm dealer inspection was 60.3 and the median number of violations was 24.5. The highest number of violations recorded for a single dealer inspection was 600. Zero violations were recorded for 13 dealer inspections. (Note that each instance of the same violation is counted as a separate violation).
- A total of 33 lost or stolen firearms were reported, across six dealers.

### During the one-year prior to the firearm dealer and ammunition vendor inspection:

- The 220 inspected firearm dealers submitted 154,538 firearm background checks in total; of these background checks, 144,609(93.6%) were approved; 6,467(4.2%) were cancelled by the dealer; 1,147 (0.7%) were denied; 1,829 (1.2%) were undetermined; and 486 (0.7%) were rejected.<sup>11</sup> During this time, inspected dealers submitted an average of 702 background checks each.
- Inspected firearm dealers sold 146,314 firearms in total. The average number of firearms sold by each inspected dealer was 665 (with a median of 141.5).<sup>12</sup>
- 241 crime guns recovered in 2025 were traced back to transactions conducted by these inspected dealers. In 2025, each inspected dealer sold an average of roughly one (1.10) firearm that was recovered as a crime gun (with a median of zero) during the same year. Of the 220 inspected dealers, 160 had zero associated crime guns in 2025.
- From January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, DOJ inspected 95 ammunition vendors and recorded a total of 236 violations and 217 (92%) of those violations have been resolved as of March 2026.
- DOJ representatives spent a total of 247 hours inspecting ammunition vendors.

11 **Approved:** The Department determined the DROS applicant was eligible to purchase or possess firearms. **Denied:** The Department determined the Dealer's Record of Sale (DROS) applicant was not eligible to purchase or possess firearms due to a felony conviction, domestic violence conviction, a qualifying misdemeanor conviction, mental health-based event, various types of civil or criminal restraining orders, or other state or federal prohibiting categories. **Undetermined:** The Department was unable to ascertain the DROS applicant's eligibility to purchase or possess a firearm within 30 days of the DROS submission. Consequently, the DROS will result in an "undetermined" determination pursuant to Penal Code section 28220, subdivision (g)(4). In such a case, the dealer has the discretion to either refuse or permit the sale or transfer of the firearm. **Cancelled:** The DROS transaction was cancelled by the dealer. **Rejected:** Two of the most common rejection reasons are: the applicant attempted to purchase a firearm with an invalid, suspended, revoked, or expired California driver's license or California identification card (Cal. Penal Code §§ 16400, 26815) and the applicant attempted to purchase or receive a firearm that matched an entry in the DOJ Automated Firearms System (AFS) indicating the firearm is stolen (Cal. Penal Code § 28220, subd. (d)). Please note: this list is not inclusive of all rejection reasons.

12 The number of firearms sold by inspected dealers ranged from 0 to 10,675. It should be noted that DES approved/undetermined counts are background-check outcome records, but they do not necessarily equal completed firearm deliveries/sales. Some approved records may not be delivered if the applicant does not pick up the firearm within the required period or if the DROS/sale is later canceled. A dealer must take action (deliver or cancel) on an approved or undetermined DROS.



## Terminology

For the purpose of this report, DOJ defines “crime gun,” “source,” and “origin” as follows:

### **Crime Gun**

California Penal Code section 11108.3 defines crime guns as “recovered firearms that are illegally possessed, have been used in a crime, or are suspected of having been used in a crime.” For this report, “crime guns” are identified in AFS as records that have been logged as a crime gun or entered into evidence records. Evidence records are included because law enforcement agencies may enter firearms as evidence in connection to their use or suspected use in a crime but not log those firearms as crime guns. As such, using evidence records provides a more complete accounting for crime guns in AFS.

### **Source and Origin**

This report focuses on the “source” events of a firearm’s “origin.” California Penal Code section 11108.2 does not define “source” or “origin.” For the purposes of this report, the “source” of firearms is defined as the licensed dealer or place someone came into possession of a particular firearm. “Sources” include any licensed firearm dealer in California. Conversely, the “origin” of a firearm is defined, for this report, as the type of transaction or event by which an individual obtained a firearm. Origins included in this report are dealer sales, private-party transfers, pawn redemptions, and the return of firearms to an owner that were temporarily stored at a dealer. Each of these events involve an unlicensed individual acquiring a firearm in a transaction that is facilitated by a licensed firearm dealer.



## Data Considerations

### *Crime Guns*

Interpreting the crime gun analysis of this report requires several considerations. First, it can be challenging to confirm a match between firearm records reported to DOJ at the time the firearm was legally acquired and by law enforcement at the time the firearm was later recovered from a crime. Firearms may be difficult to track between crime events and source events, in part, because the data-entry system used to report these records allows law enforcement agencies to enter records using an unrestricted (i.e., “free-form”) entry type, and can prevent users from leaving data fields blank or from inadvertently entering incorrect data. Firearm dealers may also report information — including the serial number — inaccurately or incorrectly. Purchasers can also alter the characteristics of a firearm following the purchase, such as changing the caliber or removing the serial number, which can make the firearm difficult to trace if the serial number and make are not consistent between the sale record and crime gun record. For example, if a gun owner illegally removes a serial number or switches out parts of a firearm, it can become very challenging to trace that firearm to other records in AFS.<sup>13</sup>

Second, as noted above, a majority of crime guns reported to DOJ do not have any associated record of sale through a California firearm dealer, including firearms that were acquired through illegal sales, firearms that were illegally trafficked into California from other states, unserialized ghost guns, or sales or transfers for which dealers, residents, and other entities were not required to report any record under California law (such as sales and transfers of most long guns prior to 2014).

Third, data in AFS changes on a continuous basis and records dating back several years can be updated. For example, a law enforcement agency may discover that a firearm recovered in a previous year had not been reported into AFS, and provide the crime gun record to DOJ at a later date. Consequently, the total numbers of firearms may then shift depending on when the data was extracted from AFS and caution should be used when comparing numbers from one annual report to the next. The data used in this report was extracted on March 20, 2025. Data pertaining to crime gun and sales counts for firearm dealers was extracted on April 22, 2025.

### *Firearm Dealer Inspections*

Interpreting dealer inspection data requires several considerations. First, although the on-site portion of inspections conducted during this time period have been completed, DOJ representatives might still be working on post-inspection-related items, such as the collection and review of violation corrections, inspection report writing, and following-up with firearm dealers or ammunition vendors. Once the post-inspection tasks are fully completed, the number of resolved violations and the hours spent on each inspection may change. The related numbers should be interpreted accordingly.

Second, DOJ was not able to obtain data on the amount of ammunition reported or discovered lost or stolen by firearms dealers and ammunition vendors during the one-year period prior to the inspection. While firearm dealers and ammunition vendors are required to report the loss or theft of ammunition to local law enforcement within 48 hours under state law<sup>14</sup>, there is currently no mechanism to transmit this information to DOJ. Moving forward, DOJ will capture this information during its inspection process by surveying firearms dealers and ammunition vendors.<sup>15</sup>

13 Intentionally altering a firearm’s serial number, or other identifying markings is classified as a felony under California Penal Code 23900.

14 Pursuant to California Penal Code section 26885(b), within 48 hours of discovery, a licensee shall report the loss or theft of any firearm or ammunition to the appropriate law enforcement agency in the city, county, or city and county where the licensee’s business premises are located.

15 Pursuant to [California Penal Code section 11108.3\(g\)\(3\)\(I\)](#), the DOJ is required to report the number of ammunition

Third, the term “violation” can include a relatively broad range of conduct; some violations may be corrected relatively quickly, such as when dealers may have failed to post a notice informing purchasers about specified fees charged at the time of sale. Others may require longer-term corrective action or accountability measures.

Finally, it is also important to note that each instance of a violation is counted as a separate violation in this data. For example, if a dealer failed to properly record all information about the make and model of the firearm safety device the dealer transferred to a purchaser at the time of sale, each improperly completed form listing the firearm safety device will be counted as a separate violation. As a result, nuanced consideration is required to consider both the number and severity of violations. A dealer with a small number of very dangerous violations could present a more significant safety risk than a generally more responsible dealer that had 500 instances of the same quickly correctable administrative error.

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the vendor reported or discovered lost or stolen during the one-year period prior to the inspection. However, there is no current reporting mechanism to relay this information to DOJ.

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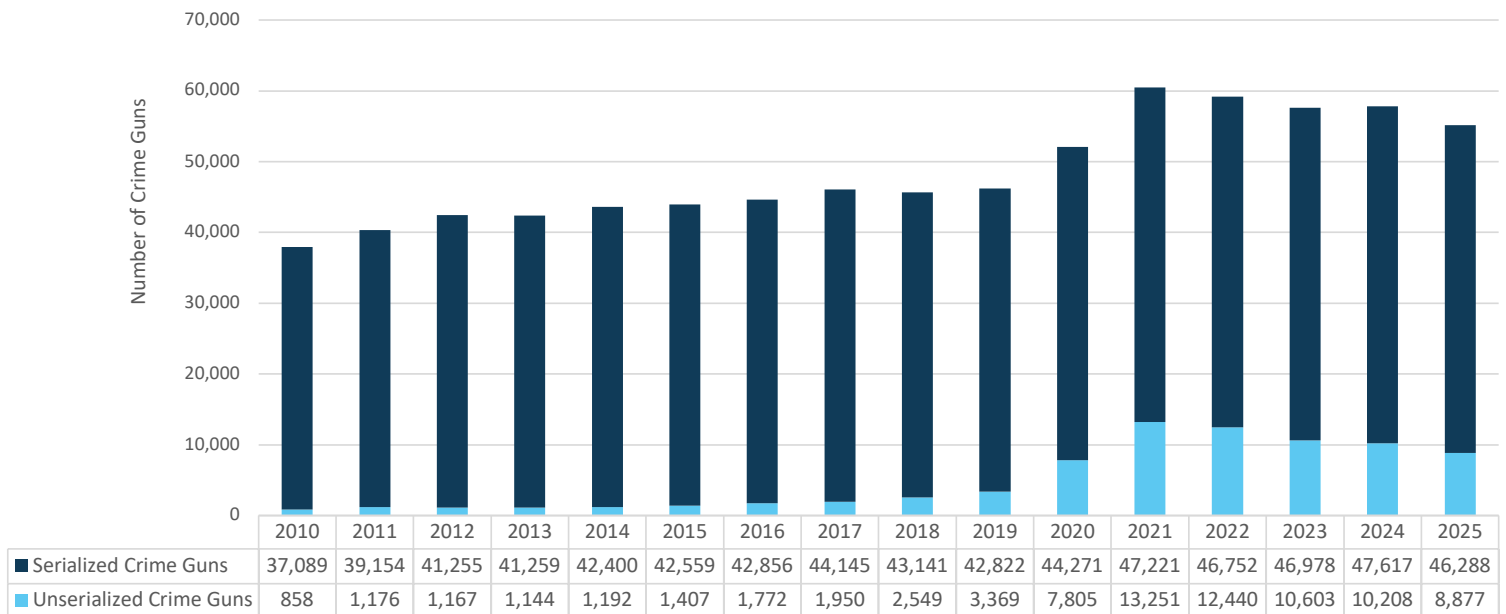
# Part I: Mandated Statistics and Analysis: Crime Guns

## Total Number of Crime Guns in AFS

As of January 1, 2026, of the 1,223,013 crime guns or evidence records in AFS, approximately 695,807 were unique serialized crime guns reported from 2010-2025. This includes 140,883 reported from 2023 through 2025 and 46,288 reported in 2025 alone, which are the primary focus of this report. This report describes approximate numbers of firearms due to potential overlap among unserialized firearms that cannot be definitively differentiated within AFS. DOJ has excluded these unserialized firearms from the results of Figure 1 (“Number of Distinct Serialized Crime Guns, by Year”) and reported them separately below.

Furthermore, a single crime gun or serial number may be associated with multiple crimes. The number of crime guns entered into AFS each year has been on a small upward trend since 2010. However, changes from year-to-year are generally small. See Figure 1 for accounts of all crime guns by year.

Figure 1. Number of Distinct Serialized and Unserialized Crime Guns Reported to DOJ, by Year



To trace the “source and origin of crime guns,” DOJ connected crime guns to the most recent source event preceding the crime gun entry as of December 31, 2025. This data is presented below both for the 2025 calendar year as well as from 2023-2025.

For crime guns reported in 2025, 17,343 (37.5%) were traceable to a prior transaction recorded in AFS, and 13,613 (29.4%) were traceable to a post-2010 transaction with specific dealer information. These 13,613 crime guns were associated with 1,213 dealers across California. For a full list of dealers with the associated number of firearm transactions and crime guns, see Appendices A and B. Among dealers that had at least one crime gun traced to them, the number of crime guns acquired, sold, or transferred from 1 to 238 in 2025. The 86 dealers associated with the greatest number of crime guns accounted for 6,798 (50%) of the 13,613 traceable crime guns reported in 2025 (see Appendix A). In comparison, 363 dealers were associated with only one crime gun reported in 2025.

Of the 140,883 unique serialized crime guns reported between 2023 and 2025 in AFS, 50,516 (35.9%) could be traced to a preceding source event such as a dealer sale, a private party transaction private-party transaction, a pawn redemption, or the return of firearms to an owner that were temporarily stored at a dealer, including sales before 2010 when DOJ did not retain specific dealer information. 38,592 (27.4%) of the unique serialized crime guns reported between 2023 and 2025 were traceable to 1,683 firearm dealers in California.

The greatest number of crime guns acquired, sold, or transferred by a single dealer from 2023 to 2025 was up to 781. Among dealers who sold at least one crime gun, dealers sold an average of 11.2 firearms that were later recovered as a crime gun in 2025.<sup>16</sup> This indicates that most dealers were associated with a relatively low number of crime guns and a few, typically high-volume dealers were associated with a large number of crime guns.

DOJ's analysis found that between 2023 and 2025, 1,683 dealers were associated with firearms recovered as crime guns. While many of these crime guns were sold or transferred by the dealer before 2023, DOJ's analysis found that 669 dealers sold or transferred at least one firearm between 2023 and 2025 that was recovered as a crime gun within that same three-year period. Among these 669 dealers, an average of 0.78% of the dealers' firearm transactions between 2023 and 2025 were associated with a crime gun recovered during the same three-year period.<sup>17</sup> The number of crime guns associated with a Crimes Against Persons NIBRS Offense Code appears in Appendices A and B.

Interpreting the number of crime guns associated with any specific dealer should be done with caution. Only 27.4% of the crime guns from 2023 to 2025 could be traced to a preceding source event with specific dealer information. In addition, as reflected in Appendices A and B, the number of crime guns associated with any dealer must be compared to the total number of firearms sold or transferred per dealer. A dealer could have a high number of crime guns associated with it because it sold or transferred more firearms in total, for example, not necessarily because a higher percentage of the firearms it sold or transferred are firearms associated with unlawful possessors or other crimes. Additionally, the fact that a dealer sold or transferred a firearm later recovered as a "crime gun" does not necessarily indicate negligence or wrongdoing by the dealer. For example, if a rigorously compliant firearm dealer sold or facilitated the delivery of a firearm to an eligible person who later modified it into an illegal weapon; or a firearm was seized by law enforcement from an eligible person who became legally prohibited from keeping it; or a firearm was associated with suicide or attempted suicides; or a firearm is found or recovered by a law enforcement agency without the agency specifically knowing whether the firearm was used in a crime, that firearm may be traced as a crime gun to that dealer.

## ***Total Number of Crime Guns, by Manufacturer***

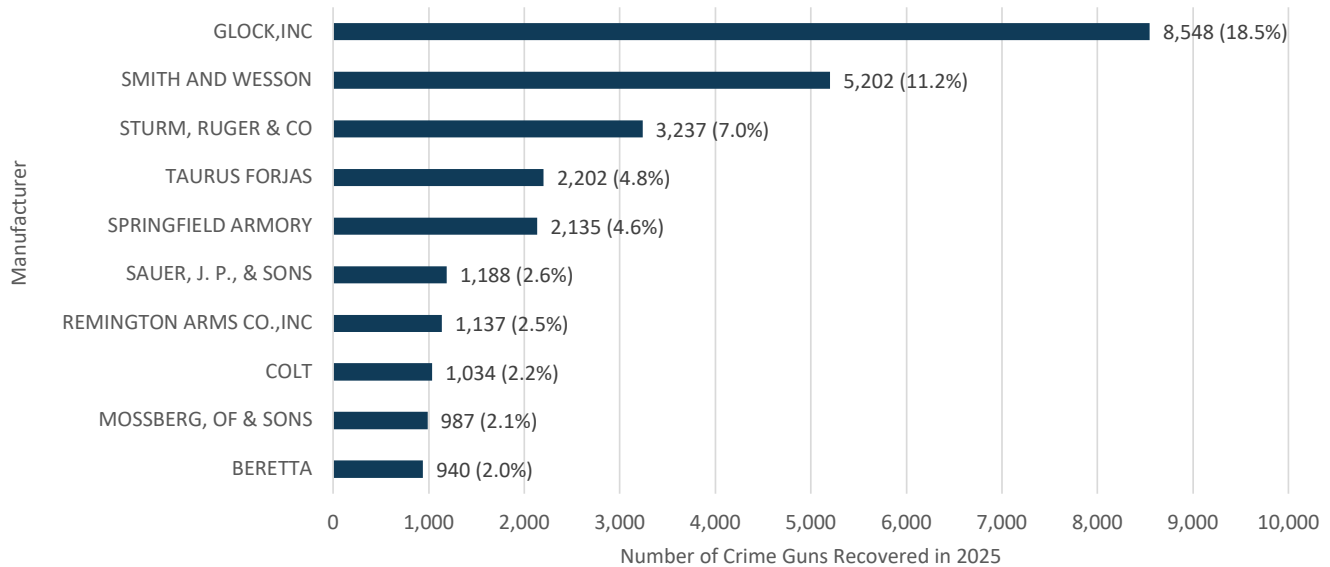
DOJ identified 1,080 firearm manufacturers for crime guns recovered in 2025 and 1,563 manufacturers for crime guns recovered in the past three years (between 2023 and 2025) in the AFS, and analyzed which manufacturers produced the most firearms recovered as crime guns. The manufacturers associated with the most crime gun records in 2025 are listed in Figure 2. For the period between 2023 and 2025 the manufacturers associated with the most recovered crime guns were: Glock (25,825 crime guns, 18.5% of all identified crime guns), Smith & Wesson (16,350 crime guns, 11.2%), Sturm, Ruger, & Co. (10,019 crime guns, 7.0%), Taurus Forjas (7,026 crime guns, 4.8%), and Springfield (6,163 crime guns, 4.6%). See Appendix C for a complete list of all 1,563 manufacturers.

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<sup>16</sup> With a median of three firearms and a standard deviation of 22.3 crime guns.

<sup>17</sup> With a standard deviation of 0.75%. The median point was 0.38%, with a maximum of 11.1%. However, the only dealer with 11.1% of their transactions associated with subsequent crime guns had a total of nine transactions on record during this three-year period, two of which were associated with a crime gun.

Figure 2. Top Ten Manufacturers Associated with Crime Guns Recovered in 2025



### Total Number of Crime Guns, by County

County information is provided for firearms logged as crime guns but may not be provided by law enforcement agencies for guns entered as evidence. For the purposes of this report, county information for firearms entered as evidence is determined based on the location of the agency that entered the record into AFS. The data presented here reflects the county where the firearm was recovered as a crime gun, and not the location of a crime gun sale.

Within the crime gun data, DOJ identified county information for 45,620 serialized crime guns recovered in 2025, and 138,553 crime guns recovered in the past three years. To see a full list of counties and the number of crime guns by county, see Appendix E.

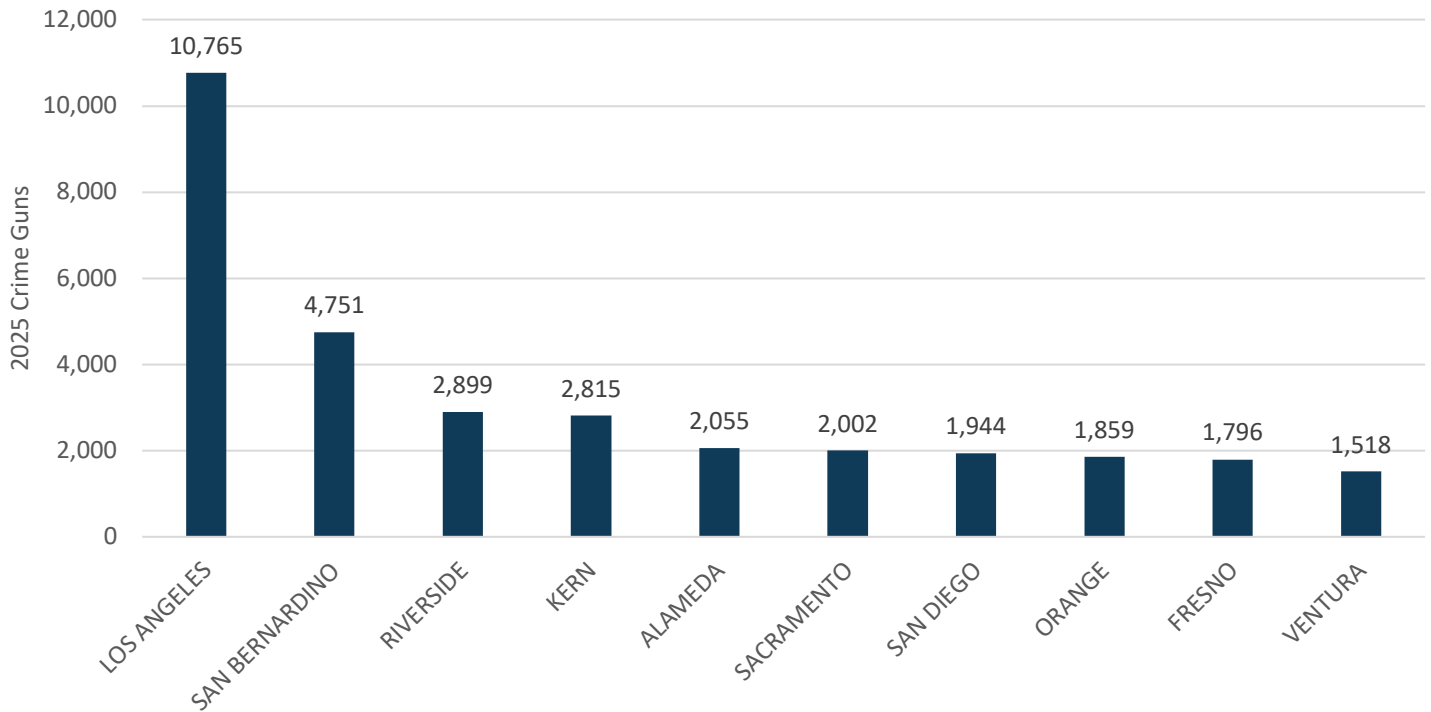
Law enforcement agencies in counties with larger populations tended to report recovering a larger number of crime guns overall. The county that reported the most crime guns recovered in 2025 was Los Angeles County, with 10,765 crime guns (23.6% of all recovered crime guns). Los Angeles County is also by far the most populous county in the state. The next four counties that recovered the highest number of crime guns in 2025 were San Bernardino (4,751, 10.4%), Riverside (2,899, 6.4%), Kern (2,815, 6.2%), and Alameda (2,055, 4.5%). These five counties accounted for 51.0% of all California crime guns in 2025, while accounting for 43.4% of California’s population. These numbers slightly change when calculated for all crime guns recovered during the past three years. Los Angeles County is again at the top of the list with 34,284 crime guns (24.7% of all recovered crime guns), followed by San Bernardino (14,406, 10.4%), Kern (8,806, 6.4%), Riverside (8,752, 6.3%) and San Diego (6,452, 4.7%).

The counties with the fewest crime guns recovered in 2025 were Alpine (0), Sierra (1), Mono (18), Lassen (21), and Plumas (25). For eight crime guns, there was insufficient information provided in AFS to determine the county in which the crime gun was recovered.

When accounting for population size, the counties with the highest number of reported crime guns per capita in 2025 were Modoc County (173.3 crime guns per 10,000 residents), Del Norte County (42.4 per 10,000) and Mariposa County (41.6 crime guns per 10,000).<sup>18</sup>

18 Note that these three counties with the highest crime guns per capita (Modoc, Del Norte, and Mariposa) have relatively small populations (<30,000). Modoc County had a total population of 8,600, so its 149 crime guns recovered in 2025 corresponds to 173.3 crime guns per 10,000 residents.

Figure 3. Number of Crime Guns Recovered in 2025, Top Ten Counties

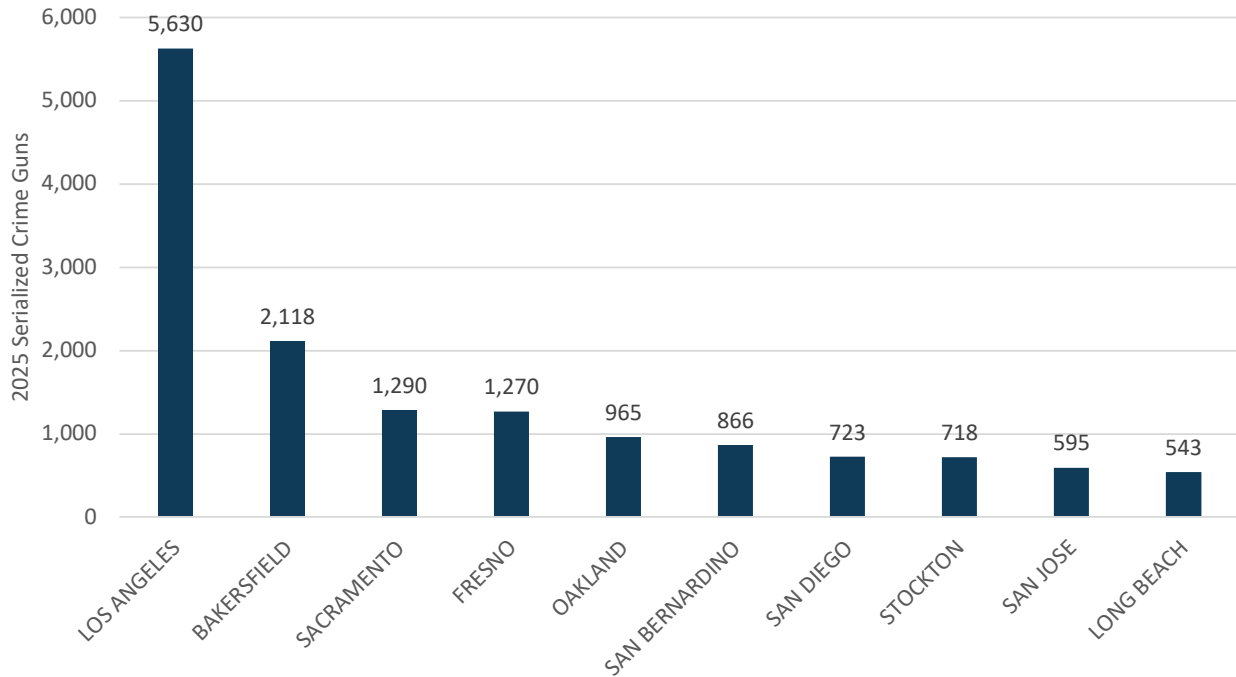


### Total Number of Crime Guns, by City

In 2025, DOJ identified 45,628 crime guns that could be associated with 843 cities in California.<sup>19</sup> In total, there are 1,618 cities or places in California represented in census data, including municipalities or designated places such as towns that are not officially incorporated cities. That means 52.1% of cities or designated places in California had at least one crime gun recovered in 2025. See Appendix F for more information. The city with the most crime guns recovered in 2025 was Los Angeles, with 5,630 associated crime guns. The next four cities with the greatest number of associated crime gun records were Bakersfield (2,118), Sacramento (1,290), Fresno (1,270), and Oakland (965). These five cities account for 24.7% of all crime guns recovered in 2025 and 16.3% of California’s total population. Among cities with at least one crime gun recovered in 2025, the 436 cities with the fewest number of crime gun records were associated with between one and 10 crime guns in 2025.

<sup>19</sup> Evidence guns reported to DOJ may be missing city information. Often, these may be reported by county wide agencies, therefore, specific city information will be missing for a portion of crime gun records in AFS.

Figure 4. Crime Guns Reported in 2025, Top 10 Cities



For the three-year period between 2023 and 2025, DOJ identified 126,305 crime guns that could be associated with 1,023 cities in California. The city with the highest number of crime guns recovered over this period was Los Angeles, with 18,335 associated crime guns. The next four cities with the greatest number of associated crime gun records over this period were Bakersfield (6,908), Sacramento (4,035), Fresno (3,354), and San Bernardino (2,999). These five cities accounted for 25.7% of all crime guns recovered from 2023 to 2025 and 15.7% of California’s total population.

Appendix I also reports information about the top five dealers associated with the largest number of crime guns recovered in each of California’s 10 largest cities by population.

### Total Number of Crime Guns without Serial Numbers

Many crime guns do not possess a serial number.<sup>20</sup> In 2025, DOJ identified 8,877 crime gun records without a serial number. For the period between 2023 and 2025, the number of unserialized crime guns was 29,688.

Several types of firearms may not have a serial number, including certain older antique firearms, unlawfully manufactured ghost guns assembled from products sold without background checks or required numbers ghost guns,<sup>21</sup> or commercially manufactured firearms where the serial number has been illegally defaced or removed (often reported as “obliterated” serial numbers). Individual firearms

20 For the purposes of this report, firearms without serial numbers are any firearm records that have “obliterated,” “2antique,” “antique2,” or “FMBUS” entered into their associated serial number field in AFS. While DOJ provides law enforcement agencies guidance on how to properly enter unserialized firearms into AFS, records may include entries in the serial number field such as “none,” “unknown,” or “ghostgun.” Such entries are included in the unserialized crime gun totals in this report.

21 Since July 1, 2018, California law has required individuals manufacturing or assembling firearms without a firearm manufacturer license to apply to DOJ for a unique serial number and engrave that serial number on the firearm within 10 days of its manufacture. California also enacted comprehensive ghost gun legislation in 2022 and 2023, which generally prohibits the possession of unserialized firearms and unserialized firearm precursor parts, as well as the sale of firearm precursor parts in general. See Cal. Penal Code sections 23920, 29180, and 30400.

without serial numbers cannot be traced in AFS because two different firearms of the same make, caliber, and type cannot be differentiated using the available data.

Additionally, firearms without serial numbers cannot be traced to a specific dealer sale or transaction.

Although the number of unserialized crime guns recovered by law enforcement has risen over the last decade, the past four years show a declining trend. As shown in Figure 5, the number of unserialized crime guns recovered by law enforcement dropped from 13,251 in 2021, to 12,440 in 2022, to 10,603 in 2023, to 10,208 in 2024, and to 8,877 in 2025. Those numbers had risen significantly over the past decade and especially since 2019. The number of unserialized firearms recovered as crime guns each year more than doubled between 2019 and 2020 and almost doubled again between 2020 and 2021 before the start of the declining trend in 2022. In 2025, the number of unserialized guns decreased by 13.0% compared to 2024.<sup>22</sup>

Figure 5. Total Number of Crime Guns without Serial Numbers, by Year.

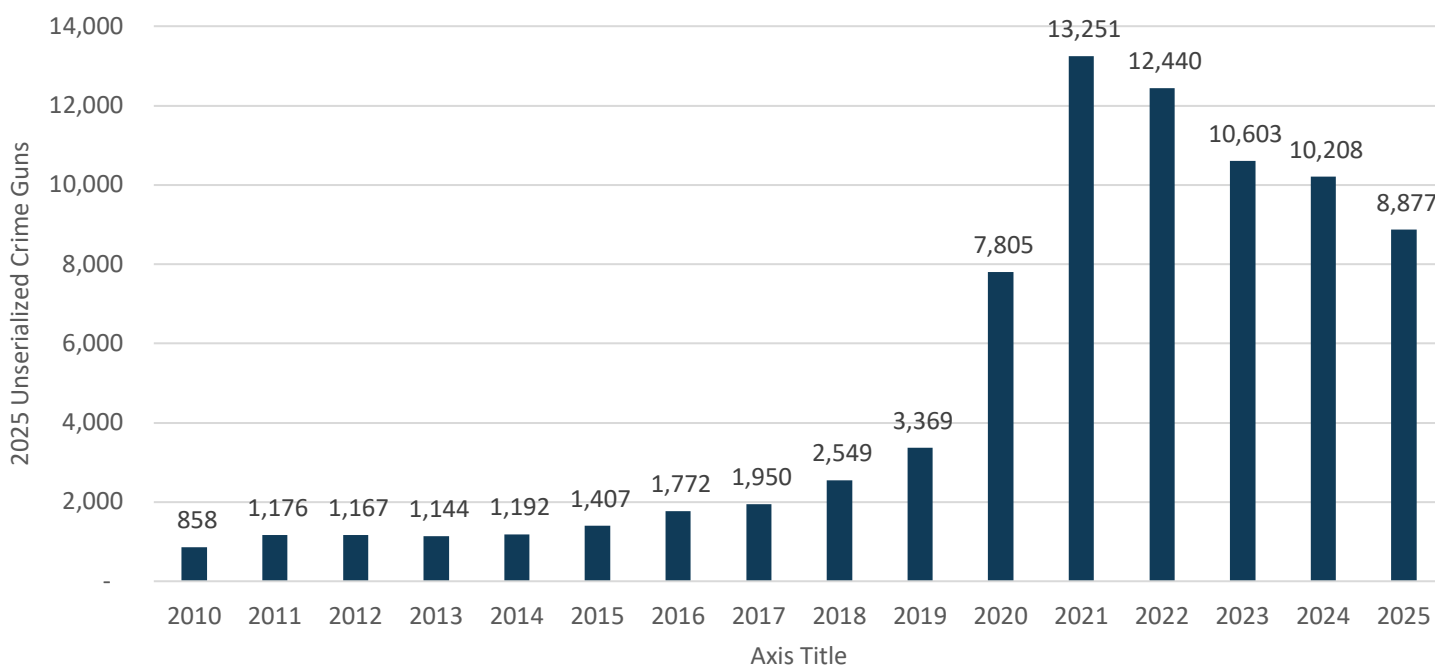


Figure 6 provides an additional breakdown of crime guns reported by the type of unserialized gun identified on the record. This shows that the increase in crime guns in recent years is primarily due to ghost guns, while antique firearms and firearms with obliterated serial numbers have increased only slightly during the same time period. Other unserialized crime guns include those reported as unserialized for which the associated records did not provide sufficient information to identify if the gun was a privately manufactured ghost gun; the gun could, for example, be an antique firearm, which may include firearms manufactured without serial numbers prior to the Gun Control Act of 1968, or had the serial number defaced or obliterated. Figure 7 additionally shows that while unserialized long guns (e.g., rifles and shotguns) have been recovered in increasing numbers in recent years, overall trends related to unserialized crime guns have been primarily driven by unserialized handguns.

22 The 2022 Crime Gun Tracing Report provided the total number of individual records for unserialized guns logged into AFS. The reporting method has been updated to provide the number of distinct unserialized crime guns by removing duplicate records from AFS data. This is because agencies may often submit a “crime gun” record into AFS, and also report the gun logged as “evidence” in a separate record, providing a double count of some unserialized crime gun records.

Figure 6. Unserialized Crime Guns, by Year and Unserialized Category

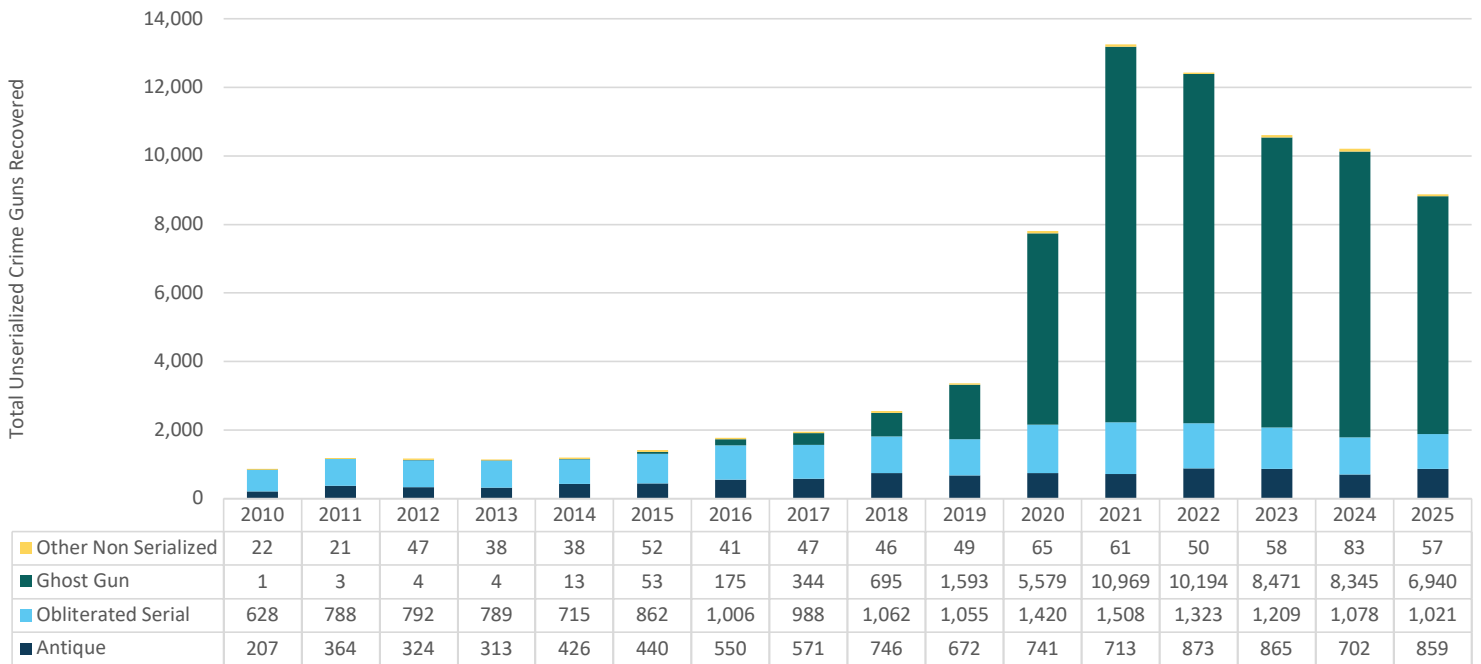
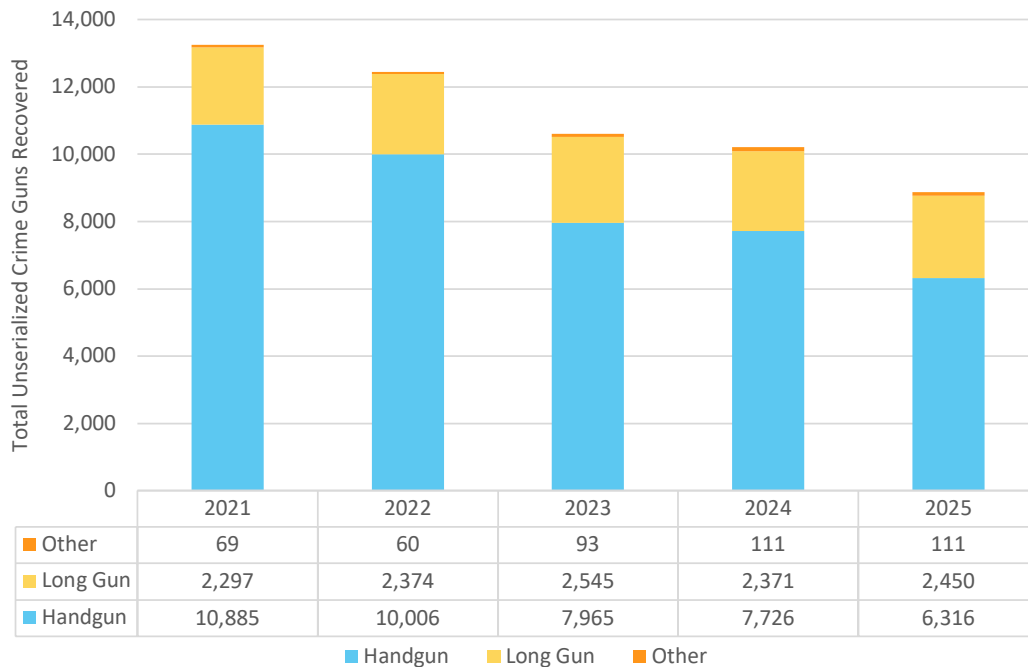


Figure 7. Unserialized Crime Guns by Gun Type, 2021-2025



## **Total Number of Crime Guns without Serial Numbers, by Manufacturer**

DOJ identified 298 manufacturers associated with crime guns reported without a serial number in 2025. The most common firearm make entries provided by law enforcement agencies for unserialized crime guns were “Privately Made Firearm” (6,522, 73.5% of all unserialized crime guns) and “United States” (355, 4.0%).

“Privately Made Firearm” and “United States” indicate the true manufacturer was either an unlicensed individual or unknown, respectively.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, the main components of unserialized ghost guns have often been manufactured by companies, such as Polymer80, that manufactured ghost gun frames and receivers but which would typically not be reported as the manufacturer of the completed crime gun.

The top five manufacturing companies identified for unserialized crime guns recovered in 2025 were Glock (170, 1.9%), Smith & Wesson (132, 1.5%), Remington Arms Co. (97, 1.1%), Polymer80, Inc (84, 0.9%), and Savage Arms Corp (84, 0.9%). Many of these firearms were likely commercially manufactured firearms with obliterated serial numbers. Note, again, that for unserialized ghost guns, law enforcement agencies typically identify the manufacturer as an unlicensed individual in this data, instead of a ghost gun company like Polymer80, Inc. that manufactured the ghost gun kits and firearm precursor parts used to assemble that firearm.

For crime guns reported over the past three years, DOJ identified 527 manufacturers associated with crime guns reported without a serial number. The five most common firearm make entries provided by law enforcement agencies for this period were “Privately Made Firearm” (21,577, 72.7%); “United States” (1,937, 6.5%); Polymer80, Inc (460, 1.5%); Glock (496, 1.7%); and Smith & Wesson (451, 1.5%). See Appendix D for a full list of all manufacturers.

## **Total Number of Crime Guns without Serial Numbers, by County**

For crime guns recovered in 2025: DOJ identified 8,877 crime gun records without serial numbers across 55 counties. The counties with the highest number of crime gun records without a serial number were Los Angeles (1,543, 17.4% of all unserialized crime guns), San Bernardino (1,207, 13.6%), Riverside (672, 7.6%), San Diego (557, 6.3%), and Sacramento (458, 5.2%). These five counties accounted for 50% of all crime guns without a serial number, while the top ten counties accounted for 68.7% of crime guns without a serial number.

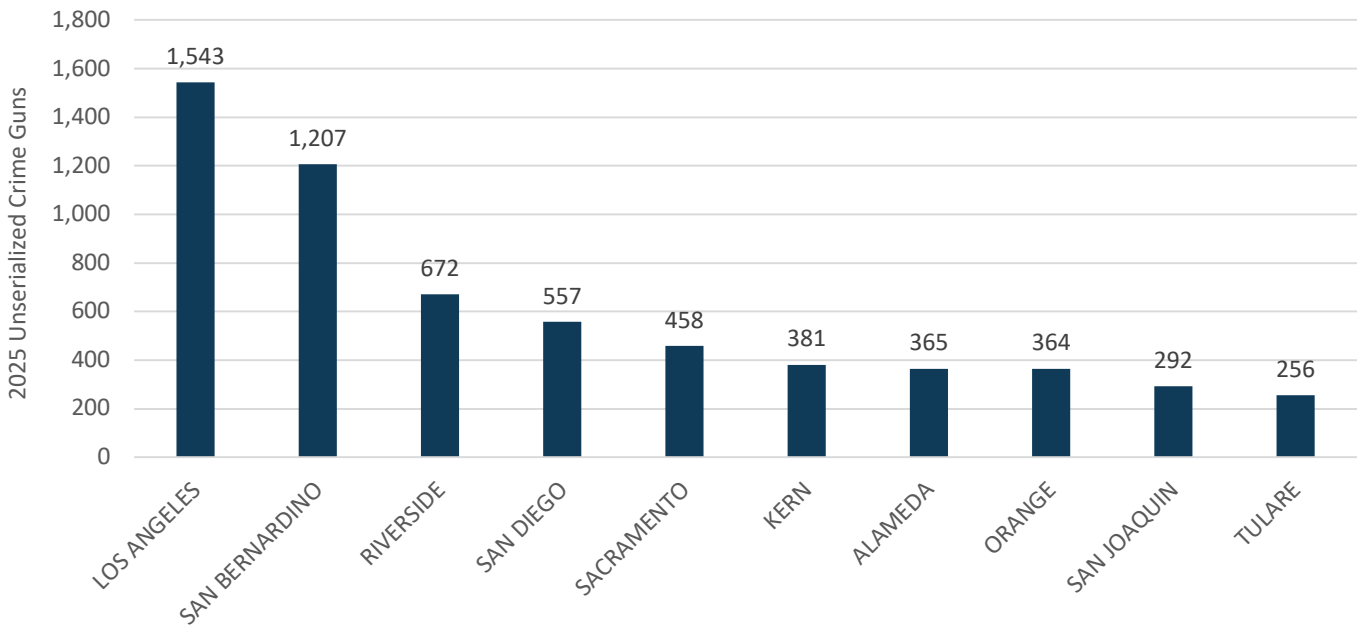
For the period between 2023 and 2025, DOJ identified 29,688 crime gun records without serial numbers across 56 counties. For this time period, the counties with the highest number of crime gun records without a serial number were Los Angeles (5,812, 19.6% of all unserialized crime guns), San Bernardino (4,173, 14.1%), Riverside (2,043, 6.9%), San Diego (1,989, 6.7%), and Sacramento (1,651, 5.6%). These top five counties accounted for 52.8% of all crime guns without a serial number, while the top ten counties accounted for 71.6% of crime guns without a serial number.

Figure 8 shows the number of unserialized crime guns for the top 10 counties in 2025. See Appendix G for information about the number of unserialized crime guns reported in all 55 counties.

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23 The designator of “United States” does not mean the country of United States is the manufacturer, but instead the country of origin is used as default if a manufacturer is unknown.

Figure 8. Unserialized Crime Guns by Top 10 Counties, 2025



### Total Number of Crime Guns without Serial Numbers, by City

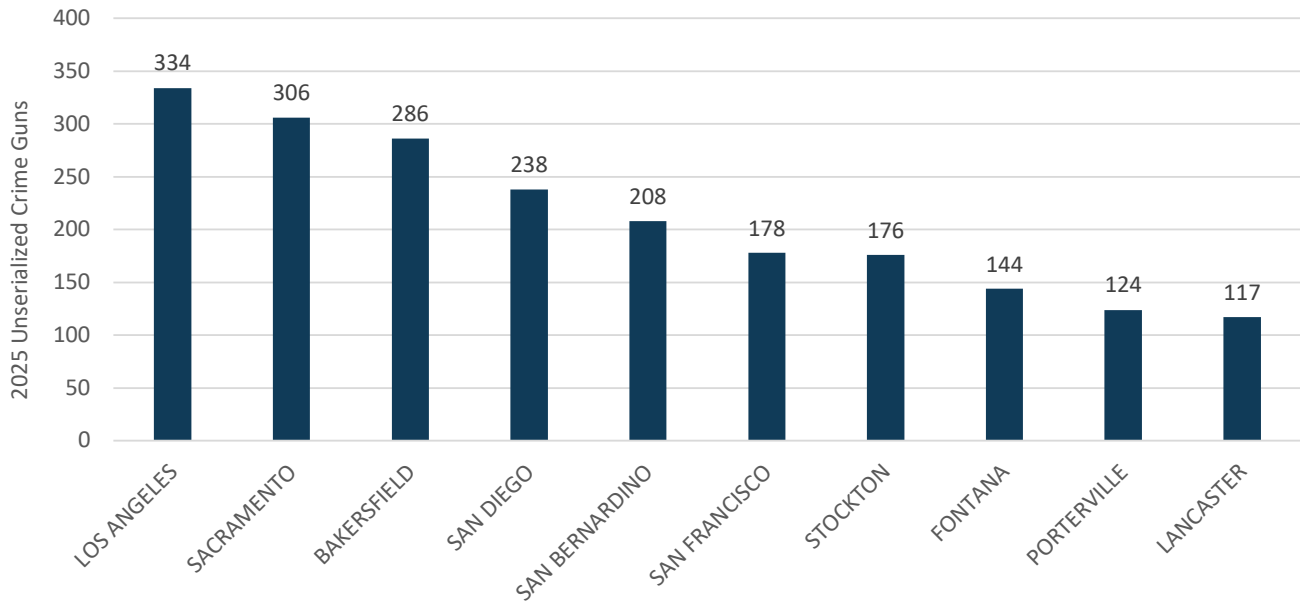
In 2025, DOJ identified 8,877 crime gun records without serial numbers across 559 cities. The cities with the highest number of crime gun records without a serial number were Los Angeles (334, 3.7% of unserialized crime guns statewide), Sacramento (306, 3.4%), Bakersfield (286, 3.2%), San Diego (238, 2.7%), and San Bernardino (208, 2.3%) These five cities account for 15.5% of all unserialized crime guns recovered in 2025.

For the period between 2023 and 2025, DOJ identified 29,688 crime gun records without serial numbers across 762 cities. For this time period, the city with the most unserialized crime guns recovered was Los Angeles, with 1,807 associated crime guns (6.1% of all unserialized crime guns statewide). The next four cities with the highest number of unserialized crime gun records were Sacramento (1,050, 3.5%), Bakersfield (1,007, 3.4%), San Diego (851, 2.9%), and San Bernardino (741, 2.5%). These five cities account for 18.4% of all unserialized crime guns recovered statewide in the past three years.

In 2025, the top 10 cities accounted for approximately a quarter of crime guns without serial numbers (23.8%). For the period between 2023 and 2025, the top 10 cities accounted for 26.4% of crime guns without serial numbers.

See Appendix H for information from all cities. Note that 690 (7.8%) of these unserialized crime guns had no city data reported, and reporting agency information was insufficient to reliably identify the city. Therefore, city level trends should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 9. Unserialized Crime Guns by Top 10 Cities, 2025



## Time-to-Crime Analysis

A crucial metric in understanding firearm trafficking is time-to-crime (TTC), which reflects the length of time between a firearm’s last known purchase and the date the firearm was recovered as a crime gun by law enforcement agencies. ATF assesses a short TTC as a potential indicator of illegal firearms trafficking, and considers investigating crime guns with short TTCs as an important tool to disrupt the

flow of illegal firearms through identified trafficking channels.<sup>24</sup> Empirical research also considers a TTC of less than three years as an indication of possible illegal trafficking; a TTC of less than one year is considered an even stronger indicator.<sup>25</sup>

This year’s report calculated TTC for crime guns recovered in the past year (2025), the past three years, and all years where data is available. For each of these time periods, there are two sets of TTC calculations provided below.

First, TTC was measured for all crime guns recovered over the relevant period of time that had a transaction date (such as a date of sale) reported in AFS, regardless of whether the crime gun could be traced to a specific licensed dealer.

Second, TTC was measured for the subset of crime guns with a transaction date reported that could be traced to a specific licensed dealer based on transaction records maintained in AFS on or after January 1, 2010 with more specific dealer information. Prior to January 1, 2010, AFS maintained transaction records for handguns and some other circumstances but did not maintain information about the specific dealer that conducted the sale or transfer of the weapon.

24 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. National Firearms Commerce and Trafficking Assessment (NFC-TA): Crime Guns - Volume Two. U.S. Department of Justice. Part III – Crime Guns Recovered and Traced within the United States and its Territories. Retrieved from <https://www.atf.gov/firearms/national-firearms-commerce-and-trafficking-assessment-nfcta-crime-guns-volume-two>, 2023.

25 See for instance: Daniel W Webster, Jon S. Vernick, Maria T. Bulzacchelli, and Katherine A. Vittes. “Temporal Association between Federal Gun Laws and the Diversion of Guns to criminals in Milwaukee.” *Journal of Urban Health* 89 (2012): 87-97; Hannah S. Laqueur, Christopher McCort, Colette Smirniotis, Sonia Robinson, and Garen J. Wintemute. “Trends and Sources of Crime Guns in California: 2010–2021.” *Journal of Urban Health* 100(5) (2023): 879-891.

## Time-to-Crime Analysis for All Crime Guns with a Transaction Date

For all crime guns with a transaction date in AFS (including crime guns that could not be traced to a specific dealer), the mean TTC is 5,051 days (about 13.8 years), and the median is 2,646 days (about 7.2 years). The lowest TTC identified for these crime guns was zero days, meaning that some firearms were recovered by law enforcement from crimes the same day they were purchased, while others took as long as 34,091 days (approximately 93 years).

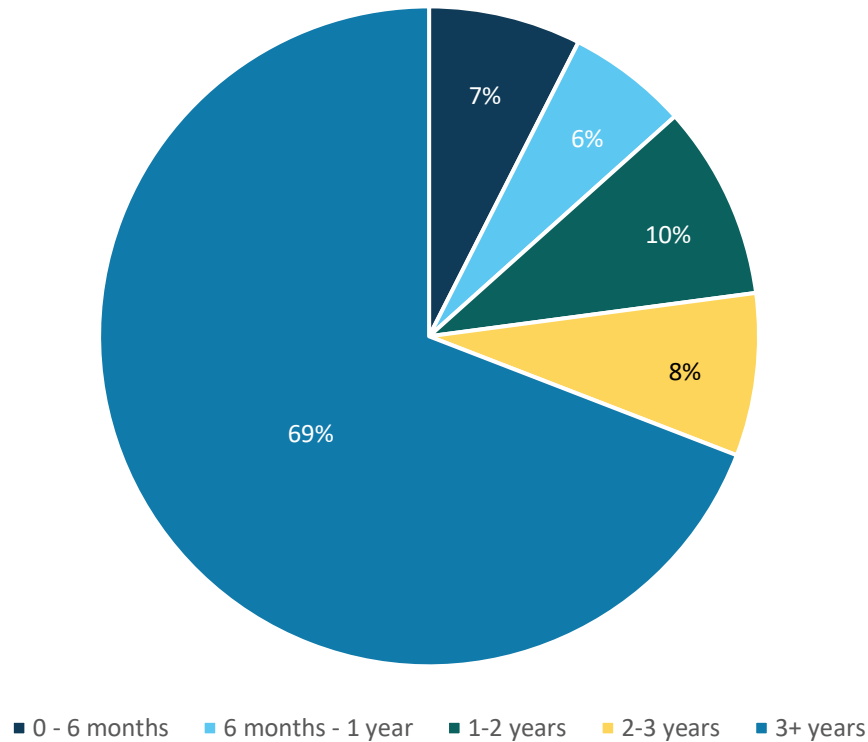
Table 1 demonstrates the TTC calculations for crime guns with a transaction date reported in AFS, regardless of whether they could be traced to a specific dealer. Of the crime guns recovered in 2025, roughly 69% had a TTC of more than three years. This percentage was 65.9% for crime guns recovered between 2023 and 2025, and 69.0% for all crime guns recovered with a transaction date. The ATF and empirical academic research consider a time to crime of under three years to be a short time to crime. For all of the time periods, the shortest TTC interval of six months or less constituted less than 8% of crime guns recovered. Overall, 13.4% of the crime guns recovered in 2025, 14.1% of the crime guns recovered in the past three years, and 13.9% of all recovered crime guns had a TTC of less than one year.

Table 1. Time-to-Crime for All Recovered Crime Guns with Transaction Dates in AFS

Time -to-Crime Intervals	Crime Guns Recovered in 2025	Percentage of Crime Guns Recovered in 2025	Crime Guns Recovered 2023-2025	Percentage of Crime Guns Recovered 2023-2025	All Crime Guns with a Recorded Transaction Date in AFS	Percentage of All Crime Guns with a Recorded Transaction Date in AFS
0 - 6 months	1,297	7.5%	3,908	7.7%	18,625	7.7%
6 months - 1 year	1,024	5.9%	3,215	6.4%	15,055	6.2%
1-2 years	1,650	9.5%	5,267	10.4%	23,336	9.6%
2-3 years	1,383	8.0%	4,856	9.6%	18,150	7.5%
3+ years	11,989	69.1%	33,270	65.9%	167,222	69.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,343</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50,516</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>242,388</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 10 shows TTC percentages for each interval for crime guns recovered in 2025. Overall, 69.1% of the crime guns recovered in the past year had a TTC of more than three years, and 7.5% had a TTC of less than six months.

Figure 10. Time to Crime Breakdown for Crime Guns Recovered in 2025 with Transaction Dates in AFS



### Time-to-Crime Analysis for Crime Guns Traced to a Dealer

For crime guns with a transaction date that could be traced to a specific dealer, the mean TTC was 1,141 days (around 3.1 years), and the median was 833 days (around 2.3 years). The lowest TTC identified for these firearms was zero days and the highest was 5,448 days (nearly 15 years). As noted above, this analysis is restricted to firearms with transaction dates on or after January 1, 2010, when AFS first maintained transaction records with more specific information about the dealer that conducted the sale or transfer of the firearm.

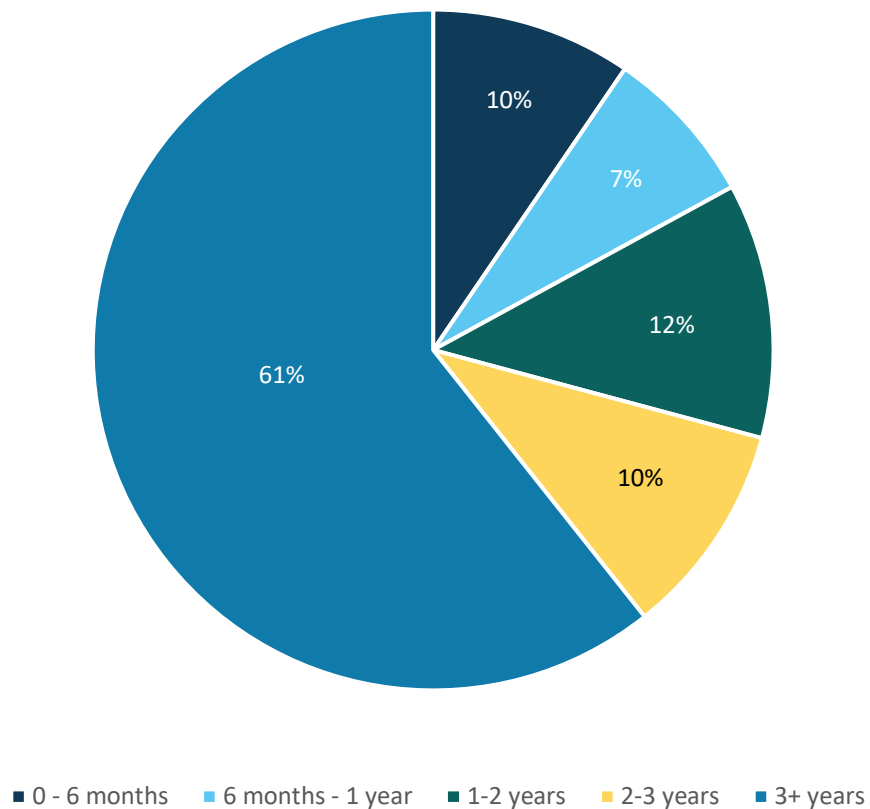
Table 2 shows TTC intervals for crime guns that could be traced to a specific dealer transaction on or after January 1, 2010. For these crime guns recovered in 2025, 60.7% had a TTC of more than three years. This percentage was 55.3% for crime guns recovered between 2023 and 2025, and 40.6% for all crime guns recovered. Overall, of crime guns that could be traced to a specific dealer, 17.0% of the crime guns recovered in 2025, 18.5% of the crime guns recovered between 2023 and 2025, and 27.3% of all recovered crime guns had a TTC of less than one year.

Table 2. Time-to-Crime for Crime Guns Traced to a Dealer

Time-to-Crime Intervals	Crime Guns Recovered in 2025	Percentage of Crime Guns Recovered in 2025	Crime Guns Recovered 2023-2025	Percentage of Crime Guns Recovered 2023-2025	All Crime Guns Traced to Dealer Transaction Since Jan. 1, 2010	Percentage of All Crime Guns Traced to Dealer Transaction Since Jan. 1, 2010
0 - 6 months	1,297	9.5%	3,908	10.1%	17,917	15.2%
6 months - 1 year	1,024	7.5%	3,215	8.3%	14,311	12.1%
1-2 years	1,650	12.1%	5,267	13.7%	32,689	18.3%
2-3 years	1,383	10.2%	4,856	12.6%	16,294	13.8%
3+ years	8,259	60.7%	21,346	55.3%	48,029	40.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,613</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>38,592</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>129,240</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 11 demonstrates TTC percentages for crime guns recovered in 2025 that were traced to a dealer. The results show that 60.7% of the crime guns recovered in the past year have a TTC of more than three years, while 9.5% have a TTC of zero to six months.

Figure 11. Time to Crime Breakdown for Crime Guns Recovered in 2025 That Were Traced to a Dealer





# AFS Firearm Tracing Methods and Limitations

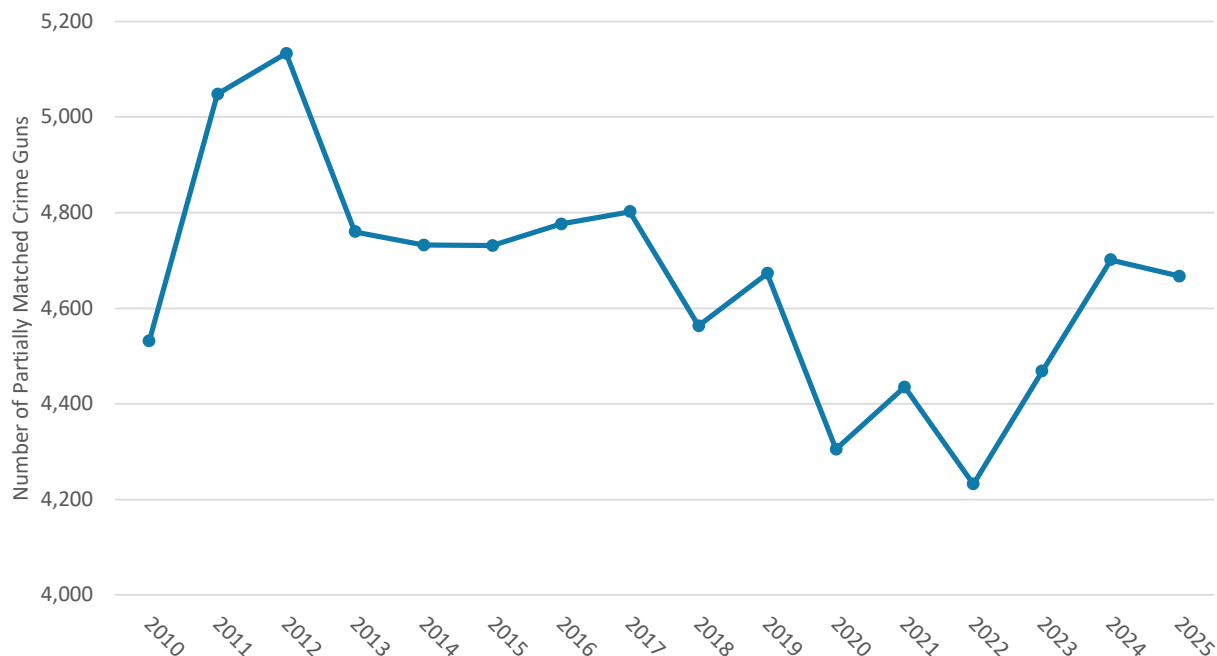
## Analysis of Partially Matched Crime Gun Recovery and Sale Records

In the 2025 Crime Gun Report, which includes data for 2024, DOJ provided an analysis of sale records that matched a crime gun recovery record on serial number and at least two of three other required fields: firearm make, firearm caliber, and firearm type. For a variety of reasons, the information reported by a law enforcement agency about a recovered crime gun’s make, caliber, or firearm type may differ from the information the firearms dealer had previously reported for that same firearm at the time of sale.

DOJ has conducted analysis of other “partially matched” crime guns for which the sale record and crime gun recovery record match on serial number, and has identified several issues related to the firearm make and caliber information fields that may prevent DOJ from successfully identifying confirmed matches for some crime guns. As DOJ continues to explore methodological changes that may mitigate these issues without introducing erroneous matches, it continues to track the frequency of crime guns that partially match a California sale record.

As Figure 12 demonstrates, while the number of crime guns with at least one partially matched sale record had been trending downwards, having decreased from 5,133 in 2012 to 4,232 in 2022, the number has since increased back up to 4,701 in 2024. Although 2025 saw a small decrease in the number of such crime guns to 4,667, their overall frequency remains near levels observed in 2016. Analysis provided in the prior Crime Gun Report found that over time, serial numbers have become more complex both in length, and variety of characters such as through the inclusion of letters. This increased complexity may be a partial explanation for the decline in partially matching crime gun and dealer records over time.

Figure 12. Annual number of crime guns with a partially matched sale record



## ***Potential Data Entry Errors and Manufacturer Data Evaluation***

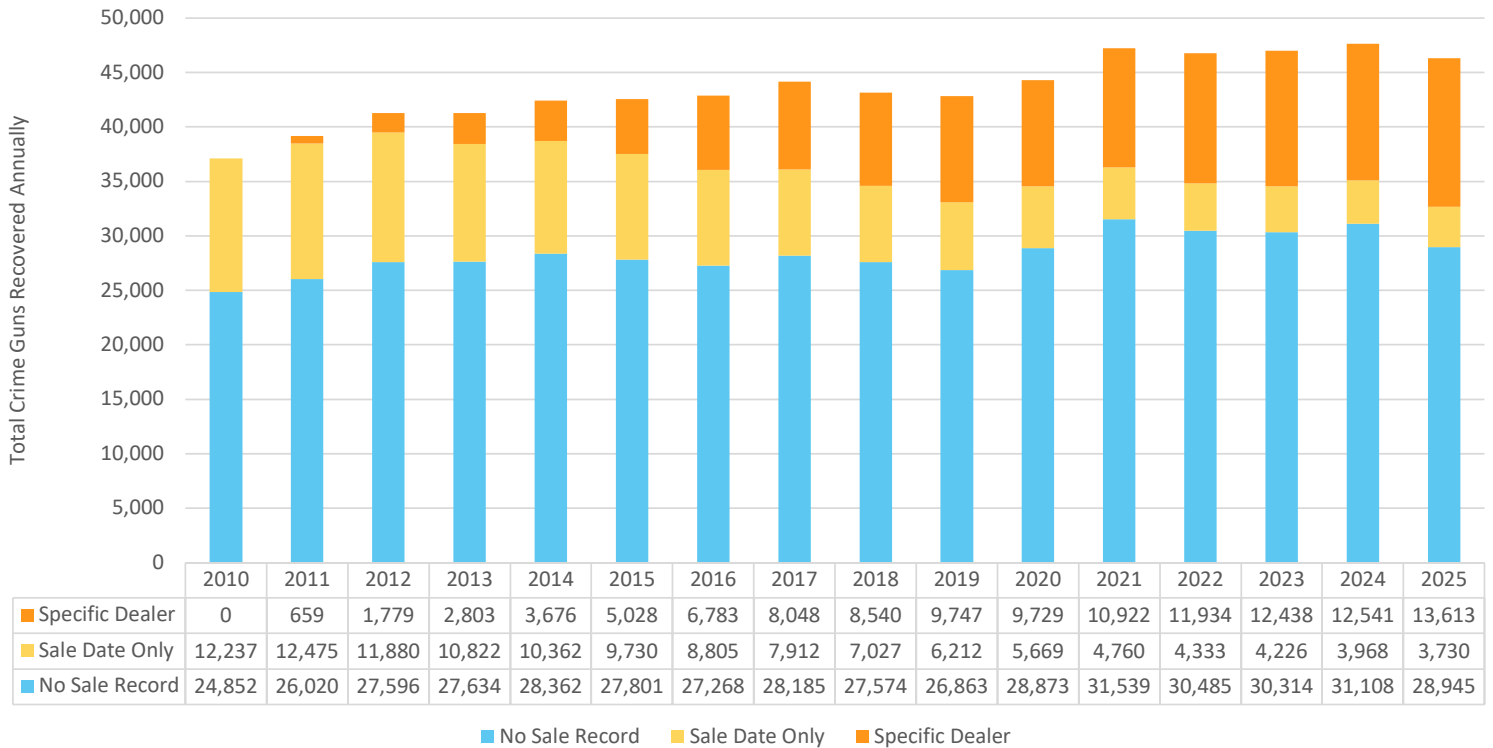
A challenge for DOJ in matching crime guns to a source or origin in AFS relates to either errors or differences in data entry. For example, an agency may enter incorrect data for a firearm, due either to making typing errors or selecting an incorrect option from a drop-down menu. Additionally, there may be differences in how firearm data is entered between agencies and AFS. Firearm calibers, for example, consist of a four-digit code, such as "0038;" if an agency mistakenly entered this as "0380," the AFS records would fail to match. Firearm manufacturer data also has a greater potential for data entry differences, as firearm manufacturer data may be entered as the country of origin, the company labeled on the firearm, or a parent company of the direct manufacturer, among other alternative formats.

Because DOJ must assume that the information entered into AFS is accurate for the purposes of this report, crime guns where either the crime gun or transaction record data is entered incorrectly will not be traceable to an origin or source. To ensure law enforcement agencies report firearm information properly in AFS, the DOJ publishes the AFS Terminal Operator's Guide that provides definitions and specifications of each firearm data field that must be entered on firearm records. Additionally, the DOJ offers monthly trainings to law enforcement agencies that cover reporting accurate firearm information, such as, but not limited to, the actual firearm manufacturer, caliber, model, and firearm type and category.

## ***Crime Gun Tracing Trends***

The DOJ was not statutorily authorized to retain dealer level information associated with transactions until 2010, and was also not statutorily authorized to retain long gun sale records until 2014. Therefore, crime guns reported during or in the years prior to 2010 were not commonly associated with specific dealers. Of all the crime guns reported since 2010 through the end of 2025, 242,388 are associated with a transaction record in AFS. However, only 118,240 of these are associated with a post-2010 transaction that contains dealer information. Figure 13 shows the annual trends in the number of crime guns, indicating whether they are traceable to a sale record without dealer information (a pre-2010 transaction), a sale record with dealer information, or have no associated dealer transaction history in AFS. On average, approximately 35% of all crime guns reported each year since 2010 have been associated with a dealer sale transaction record in AFS, suggesting a stable and reliable trend. At the same time, the portion of these records that can be linked to specific dealers has dramatically increased since 2010 due to crime guns reported in recent years being more likely to be associated with post-2010 transactions.

Figure 13. Serialized Crime Guns by Traceability Status, 2010-2025



The 2025 data shows that 31.4% of crime guns recovered in California are traceable to a sale in California (37.5% of serialized crime guns). This closely aligns with data published by the Federal National Tracing Center, which traces crime guns reported by law enforcement. The ATF found that out of 56,382 crime guns recovered in California in 2023 (compared to 57,581 reported to AFS the same year):

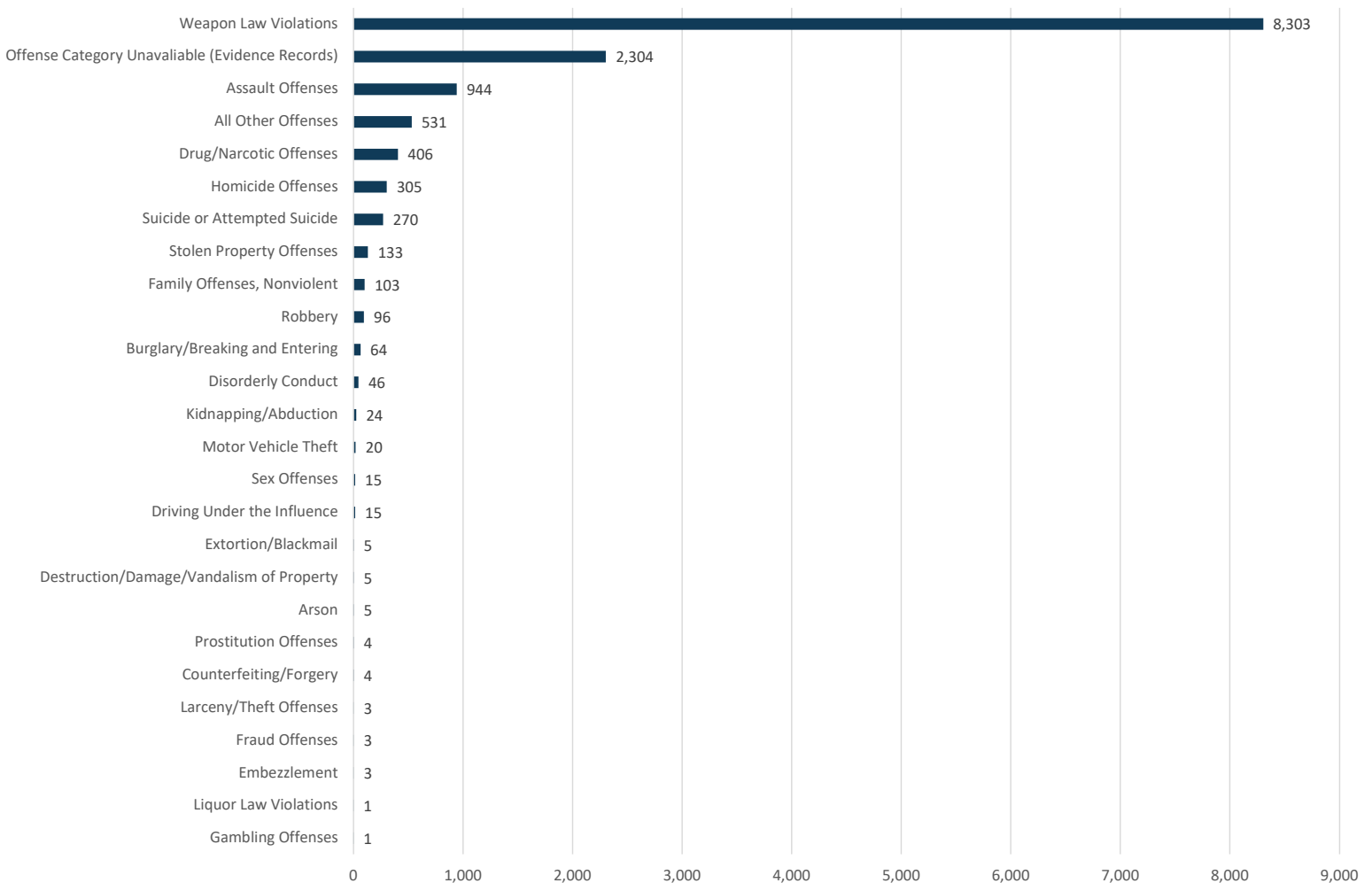
- 32.6% (18,402) of crime guns recovered in California were traced to California sales.
- 27.8% (15,685) of crime guns recovered in California were traced to sales in other states.
- 39.5% (22,295) of crime guns recovered in California were not traceable to a documented sale in the United States. In 2023, AFS records showed 10,602 total unserialized guns, accounting for approximately 18.4% of crime guns in AFS. This means that roughly half of the crime guns reported untraceable by the ATF may be unserialized, while the remainder of these may be serialized firearms obtained through undocumented sales, trafficking, or other means.

Additionally, examining the most recent source event for crime guns that did have prior history in AFS, only 3.6% contain a self-report or transfer of ownership report, while 6.8% contain a record of a law enforcement agency returning a gun to the owner before it was used in a crime. Of crime guns with a prior record in AFS, 89.6% were acquired directly from a firearm dealer before being used in a crime. The results show that few crime guns had a lawfully recorded change of ownership after a dealer transaction before being used in a crime. This does not indicate, however, that the original purchaser was in possession of the firearm at the time of the crime. A firearm may be accessed by an individual other than the purchaser and used in a crime, and crime guns are frequently purchased by straw purchasers and other traffickers who unlawfully transfer the firearm without a licensed dealer or other recorded transaction, meaning the change of ownership would generally not be reported to DOJ.

## Firearm Offense Categories

Most crime guns reported to California DOJ are recovered in connection with weapon law violations, including unlawful possession offenses. The FBI’s National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) categorizes different types of criminal offenses; DOJ identified 26 NIBRS Offense Categories for crime guns traced to a dealer in 2025. The most common NIBRS Offense Category was Weapon Law Violations with 8,303 (60.99%) associated crime guns, followed by Offense Category Unavailable (Evidence Records) with 2,304 (16.92%) associated crime guns and Assault Offenses with 944 (6.93%) associated crime guns (Figure 14).<sup>26</sup> Together, these three NIBRS Offense Categories contain nearly 85% (84.84%) of crime guns traced to a dealer in 2025. Counts for crime guns with NIBRS Offense Categories corresponding to Crimes Against Persons are included in Appendix A.

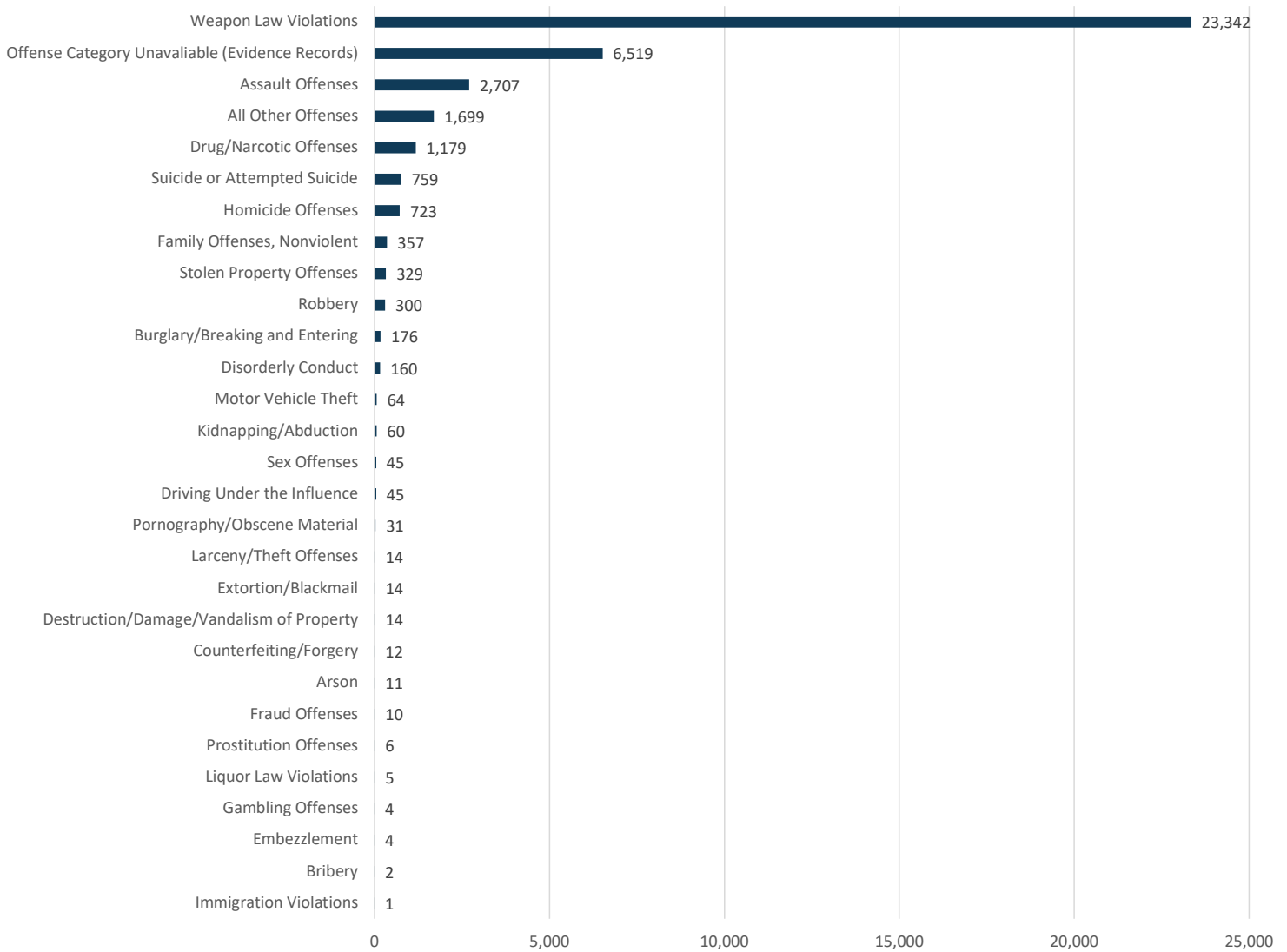
Figure 14: Offense Categories for Crime Guns Traced to Dealer, 2025



<sup>26</sup> Law enforcement is not required to report offense data for Evidence records unless the firearms are entered in connection to their use or suspected use in a crime. In that case, law enforcement may disclose information about the crime, along with any other details, within the miscellaneous field of the Evidence record. Because this field is free format to accommodate supplemental information, the Department cannot readily parse the collected data to classify the offenses into categories. However, some of the common offenses reported include drug narcotic offenses, weapons law violations and assault offenses.

For the years 2023 to 2025, DOJ identified 29 NIBRS Offense Categories for crime guns traced to a dealer. Within this timeframe, the most common NIBRS Offense Category was Weapon Law Violations with 23,342 (60.48%) associated crime guns, followed by Offense Category Unavailable (Evidence Records) with 6,519 (16.89%) associated crime guns and Assault Offenses with 2,707 (7.01%) associated crime guns (Figure 15). Together, these three NIBRS Offense Categories contain nearly 85% (84.38%) of crime guns traced to a dealer between 2023 and 2025. Counts for crime guns with NIBRS Offense Categories corresponding to Crimes Against Persons included in Appendix B.

Figure 15: Offense Categories for Crime Guns Traced to Dealers, 2023-2025





## Part II: Mandated Statistics and Analysis: Firearm Dealer Inspections

### *Firearm Dealer Inspections and Violations Identified Through the Inspections*

SB 965 (2024, Min) requires this report to include specified information about firearm dealer and ammunition vendor inspections conducted by DOJ from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025. It is important to note that firearm dealers are also ammunition vendors (transacting in both firearms and ammunition), but ammunition vendors are only permitted to sell ammunition. During 2025, DOJ representatives conducted 316 inspections of firearm dealers and ammunition vendors. Specifically, 221 of the inspections were for firearm dealers and 95 of them were for ammunition vendors. Throughout these firearm dealer inspections, 13,268 violations were recorded and 12,137 (91.4%) of them have been resolved as of March 2026. Violations may be considered unresolved for reasons such as if: the firearm dealer closed their business prior to correcting some or all violations; the firearm dealer has yet to provide corrections and is still attempting to comply; or the firearm dealer has not complied or is no longer responsive. Note, again, that each instance of a violation is counted as a separate violation in this data; for example, if a dealer failed to properly record all information about the firearm safety device the dealer transferred to a purchaser at the time of sale, each improperly completed sale will be counted as a separate violation.

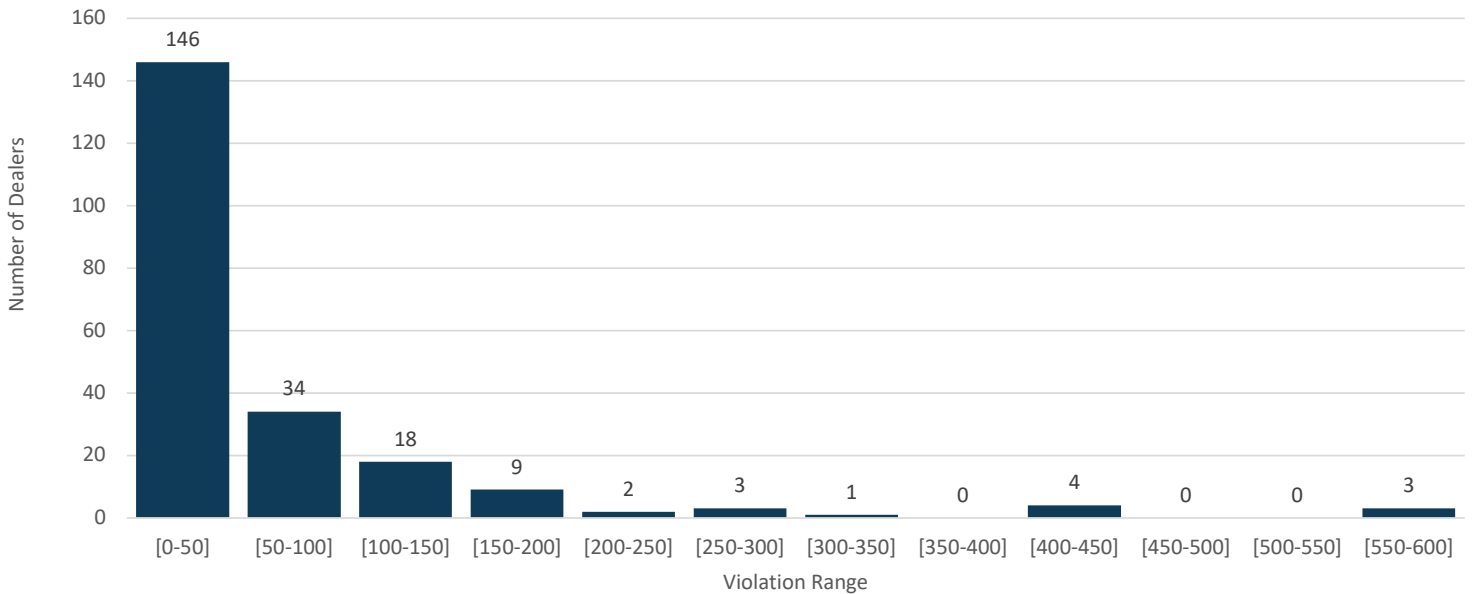
In 2025, DOJ representatives spent at least 3,192 hours total on these dealer inspections. The average number of hours spent per inspection was 14 hours and 31 minutes and the median was 6 hours. The maximum number of hours spent inspecting one dealer was 141 hours and 30 minutes, whereas the minimum was two hours and 45 minutes. It should be noted that in some cases, the onsite portion of an inspection (i.e., the time the DOJ representative is at the physical location of the firearm dealer or ammunition vendor) has concluded prior to publication of this report but the DOJ representative is actively working on post-inspection-related activities. For dealer-level counts of resolved violations and inspection hours, see Appendices N and O, respectively.

The highest number of violations recorded during a single firearm dealer inspection was 600,<sup>27</sup> and zero violations were recorded for 13 dealer inspections. The average number of violations per dealer was 60 and the median number of violations was 24.5. The difference between the average and the median number of violations shows that the data is skewed, with a few dealers having a high number of violations and most dealers having fewer violations. The top 50 firearm dealer inspections were associated with 9,571 (72%) of the violations. Figure 16 shows the distribution of violation numbers. As the figure demonstrates, most of the inspected dealers have 50 or fewer violations, and only a small number (13) of the inspections resulted in more than 200 violations. Out of the 220 firearm dealers inspected, 146 had violation counts between zero and 50.

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<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that the majority of violations documented during this inspection were administrative in nature.

Figure 16: Distribution of Violation Counts, 2025



Appendix K provides more detailed information about the number of violations per dealer inspection. (Appendix J also presents the raw firearm dealer inspection file, which includes more detailed inspection level information). This detailed table shows the number of firearm dealer inspections conducted and, for each inspection, all the following information required under Penal Code section 11108.3, subdivision (g)(2):

- The name of the dealer.
- The dealer’s license number.
- The business address of the dealer.
- The number of hours spent to complete the inspection.
- A list of violations identified through the inspection, whether those violations were subsequently resolved and, if so, the date they were resolved, and any fines or penalties assessed.
- The date of reinspection, if applicable, and any violations identified during reinspection.
- The dates of any prior inspections.
- The number of violation types related to missing firearms.

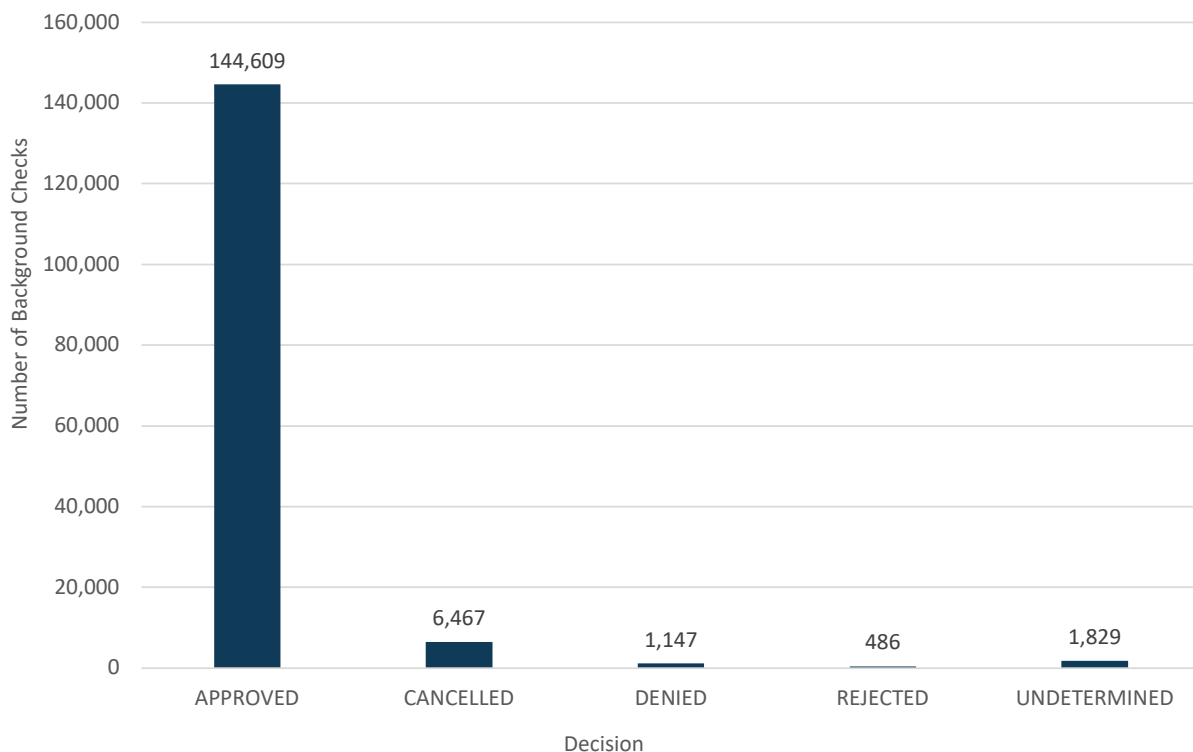
## The Number of Firearm Background Checks Submitted and the Outcome of Those Background Checks

During the one-year period prior to the inspection, 154,538 firearm background checks were submitted by the inspected firearm dealers. The detailed number and outcome of background checks for each dealer is presented in Appendix L. Of the 154,538 background checks conducted during this period:

- 144,609 (93.6%) were approved
- 6,467 (4.2%) were cancelled by the dealer
- 1,147 (0.7%) were denied due to firearm prohibitions
- 486 (0.3%) were rejected for other deficiencies (e.g., inadequate identification or firearm identified as stolen)
- 1,829 (1.2%) were undetermined

On average, during each one-year period prior to the inspection, 702 background checks were submitted per dealer. The median number of background checks was 150. The maximum number of background checks submitted by one dealer was 7,358 and the minimum is zero (since some dealers did not have any sales during the one-year period before the inspection). Figure 17 shows the number of background checks submitted by firearm dealers and the outcome of those checks.

Figure 17: Background Checks Submitted by Firearm Dealers, During the One-Year Period Prior to Inspection



## ***Number of Crime Guns Traced to a Dealer and the Percentage of Total Sales by the Dealer***

In the one-year period prior to their inspection, the inspected dealers sold a total of 146,314 firearms. The average number of firearms sold by each inspected dealer was 665 (with a median of 141.5). The large difference between the mean and median indicate an uneven distribution of firearm sales across dealers. The total number of recovered crime guns traced to these dealers during the same period was 241. Each dealer inspected sold an average of 1.10 firearms that were later recovered as a crime gun within the same one-year period prior to inspection (with a median of zero). Of the 220 dealers inspected, 160 had zero associated crime guns. The highest crime gun-to-sales percentage was 1.27%. More detailed information about recovered crime guns and firearms sales traced back to each inspected dealer is presented in Appendix M.

It should be noted that this data, shown in Appendix Table M, shows the number of firearms that were sold by a dealer in the one-year period prior to DOJ inspection that were then also recovered from a crime within this same one-year period. The decision to constrain this analysis to these short-TTC crime guns was made for better comparability between dealers.<sup>28</sup>

## ***The Number of Firearms Reported or Discovered Lost or Stolen***

BOF's firearm dealer inspections identified how many lost and stolen firearms were associated with the inspected dealers. There were a total of 33 firearms that were reported lost or stolen. Among 220 inspected dealers, only 6 had reported lost or stolen firearms. The highest number of lost/stolen guns reported by a dealer was 15. Appendix N shows the number of lost and stolen firearms per dealer.

## ***Ammunition Vendor Inspections and Violations Identified Through the Inspections***

Appendix R presents the inspection-level information for ammunition vendors. This appendix shows the number of inspections conducted and, for each inspection, all the following information required under Penal Code section 11108.3, subdivision (g)(3):

- The name of the vendor.
- The vendor's license number.
- The business address of the vendor.
- The number of hours spent to complete the inspection.
- A list of violations identified through the inspection, whether those violations were subsequently resolved and, if so, the date they were resolved, and any fines or penalties assessed.
- The date of reinspection, if applicable, and any violations identified during reinspection.
- The dates of any prior inspections.

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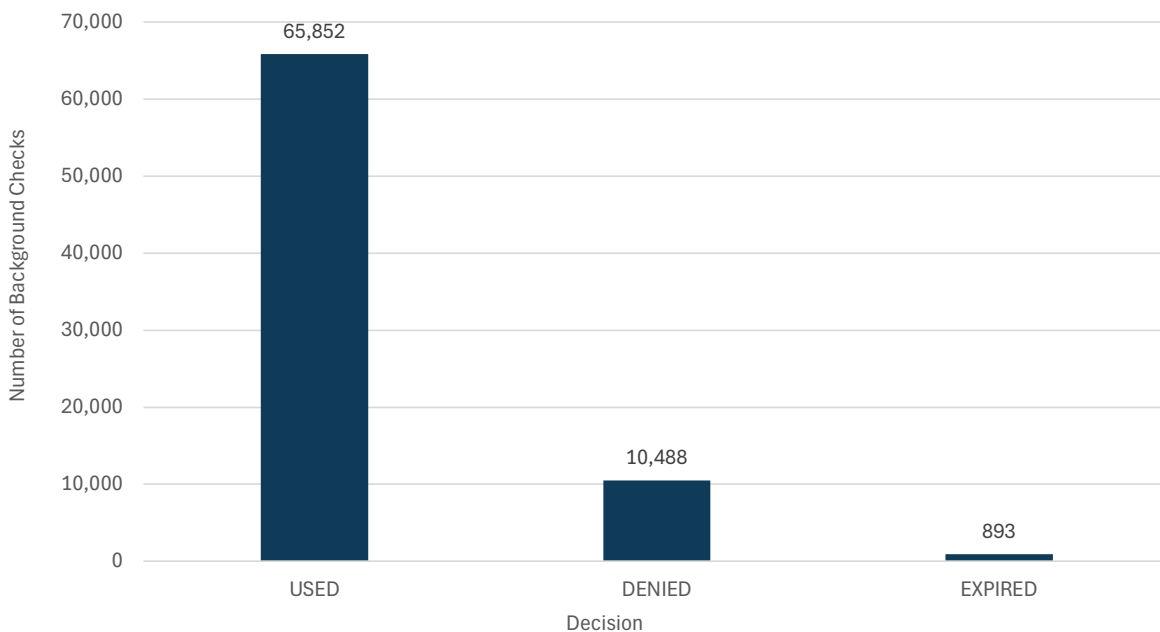
<sup>28</sup> If this analysis instead compared a dealer's one-year sales volume to the number of crime guns recovered in that year regardless of when that crime gun was originally sold, the analysis would be biased against dealers that had been in operation for a longer period of time and might inaccurately suggest that relatively newer dealers had a comparatively lower percentage of sales recovered from crime.

During the one-year period prior to the inspection, 95 vendors were inspected and a total of 236 violations were recorded. 217 (92%) of those violations were resolved as of March 2026. (see Appendix T for more detailed information about resolved violations per dealer). DOJ representatives spent a total of 247 hours on these inspections. The average number of hours spent inspecting each ammunition vendor was two hours and 36 minutes. The highest number of hours spent inspecting one ammunition vendor was 25, and the lowest was one (see Appendix U for vendor-level counts of inspection hours). On average, 2.48 violations were recorded for each ammunition vendor (with a median of one). The highest number of violations recorded for one ammunition vendor was 35, and the lowest was zero. Among the 95 total inspected vendors, 37 had zero recorded violations. The difference between the highest and lowest number of recorded violations (and between the mean and the median number of violations) is very significant, which indicates that the distribution of violation counts is quite skewed. Appendix Q demonstrates aggregated violation counts per each inspected vendor.

### **The Number of Ammunition Background Checks Submitted and the Outcome of Those Background Checks**

During the one-year period prior to the inspection, the inspected ammunition vendors submitted a total of 77,193 background checks. 65,852 (85%) of the submitted background checks were “used”, 10,448 (14%) were “denied”, and 893 (1%) were “expired” (Figure 18). On average, each vendor submitted 812 background checks. The highest number of background checks submitted by a single vendor was 14,963 and the lowest was zero (some vendors did not have any sales in the one-year period prior to the inspection). Appendix S shows the number of background checks as well as the outcome of those background checks for each vendor inspected.

*Figure 18: Background Checks Submitted by Ammunition Vendors During the One-Year Period Prior to the Inspection*



## **The Amount of Ammunition Reported or Discovered Lost or Stolen**

The amount of ammunition reported or discovered lost or stolen is not currently collected via the inspection process. Also, AFS does not record specific events of lost or stolen ammunition for the DOJ to examine. As a result, no such event records exist, and this analysis could not be completed due to data unavailability. Moving forward, DOJ will survey each firearm dealer and ammunition vendor during the inspection process to collect information on the number of ammunition reported or discovered lost or stolen by firearms dealers and ammunition vendors during the one year period prior to the inspection.

## **Staffing Levels for Conducting Firearm Dealer and Ammunition Vendor Inspections**

As of January 1, 2025, DOJ had 13 filled positions and 9 vacant positions for conducting firearm and ammunition dealer inspections. Staffing levels for 2025 are shown in Table 3.

*Table 3: Staffing Levels for Conducting Firearm Dealer and Ammunition Vendor Inspections, 2025*

<b>Staffing Levels for Conducting Firearm Dealer Inspections By Calendar Year (As of January 1st of each year)</b>			
<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>Filled Positions</b>	<b>Vacant Positions</b>	<b>Total Authorized Positions</b>
2025	13	9	22

## **Statistics for the California Roster of Certified Handguns**

Table 4 presents data on the number of handguns added to and removed from the Handgun Roster, the number of handguns denied for listing on the Handgun Roster, and the number of handguns on the Handgun Roster as of December 31, 2025. In 2025, 117 handguns were added to the Handgun Roster while 27 handguns were removed from it. During the same period, 6 handguns were denied for listing on the Handgun Roster. As of December 31, 2025, there were 1,020 handguns on the Handgun Roster.

*Table 4: Statistics for the California Roster of Certified Handguns (Handgun Roster) as of December 31 2025*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Handguns Added to the Handgun Roster</b>	<b>Number of Handguns Removed from the Handgun Roster</b>	<b>Number of Handguns Denied for Listing on the Handgun Roster</b>	<b>Number of Handguns on the Handgun Roster as of December 31</b>
2025	117	27	6	1,020

Table 5 summarizes the reasons for the removal of handgun models from the Handgun Roster during 2025. In 27 instances, handguns were removed because the manufacturer declined to renew the handgun’s listing on the Handgun Roster in accordance with Penal Code section 32015, subdivision (b) and California Code of Regulations, title 11, sections 4070 through 4072.

*Table 5: Summary of Reasons for Removal of Handguns from the Handgun Roster, 2025*

Removal Reason	Count
Handgun not renewed for listing by the manufacturer (Pen. Code, § 32015(b); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 11, §§ 4070(c)(1), 4071(d))	27

Table 6 provides a summary of reasons for handguns denied approval to be listed on the Handgun Roster for 2025. As seen in the table, six cases were denied since the handgun failed to meet the requirements for listing an untested handgun under Penal Code section 32030.

*Table 6: Summary of Reasons for Handguns Denied Approval to be Listed on the Handgun Roster, 2025*

Denial Reason	Count
Handgun failed to meet the requirements for listing an untested handgun under Penal Code section 32030	6

# Appendix

[APPENDIX A: CALIFORNIA FIREARM DEALER INFORMATION 2025 CRIME GUNS](#)

[APPENDIX B: CALIFORNIA FIREARM DEALER INFORMATION 2023-2025 CRIME GUNS](#)

[APPENDIX C: CALIFORNIA FIREARM MANUFACTURER INFORMATION 2025 CRIME GUNS](#)

[APPENDIX D: UNSERIALIZED CRIME GUN MANUFACTURER INFORMATION](#)

[APPENDIX E: COUNTY SERIALIZED CRIME GUN DATA](#)

[APPENDIX F: CITY SERIALIZED CRIME GUN DATA](#)

[APPENDIX G: COUNTY UNSERIALIZED CRIME GUN DATA](#)

[APPENDIX H: CITY UNSERIALIZED CRIME GUN DATA](#)

[APPENDIX I: TOP FIVE DEALERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MOST CRIME GUNS RECOVERED IN THE TOP 10 CITIES](#)

[APPENDIX J: CALIFORNIA FIREARM DEALER INSPECTIONS DATA](#)

[APPENDIX K: NUMBER OF VIOLATIONS, PER INSPECTED FIREARM DEALER](#)

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[APPENDIX M: NUMBER OF FIREARM AND CRIME GUN SALES, PER INSPECTED FIREARM DEALER](#)

[APPENDIX N: NUMBER OF LOST OR STOLEN FIREARMS PER FIREARM DEALER](#)

[APPENDIX O: NUMBER OF RESOLVED VIOLATIONS PER INSPECTED FIREARM DEALER](#)

[APPENDIX P: NUMBER OF INSPECTION HOURS SPENT, PER INSPECTED FIREARM DEALER](#)

[APPENDIX R: CALIFORNIA AMMUNITION VENDOR INSPECTIONS DATA](#)

[APPENDIX Q: NUMBER OF VIOLATIONS, PER INSPECTED AMMUNITION VENDOR](#)

[APPENDIX S: NUMBER OF BACKGROUND CHECKS SUBMITTED BY, AND THE RESULTS OF THOSE BACKGROUND CHECKS PER INSPECTED AMMUNITION VENDOR](#)

[APPENDIX T: NUMBER OF RESOLVED VIOLATIONS, PER INSPECTED AMMUNITION VENDOR](#)

[APPENDIX U: NUMBER OF INSPECTION HOURS SPENT, PER INSPECTED AMMUNITION VENDOR](#)