

# Firearm Registrations in Hawaii, 2022

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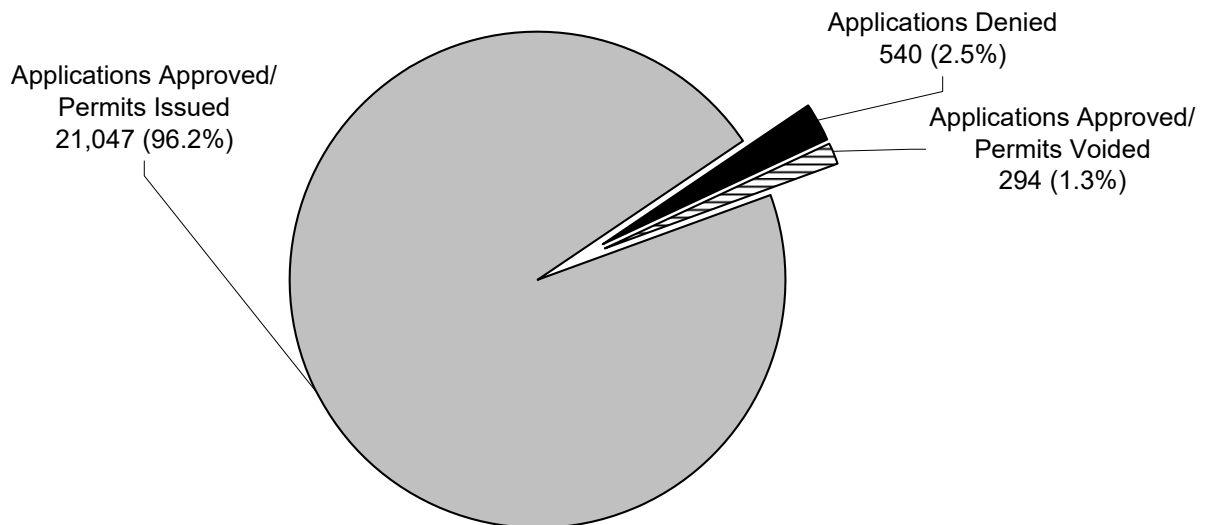
Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) § 134-14 requires the county police departments to provide to the Department of the Attorney General a monthly report of firearm registration activity. The data from these reports were compiled in order to provide the statistics presented herein for Calendar Year 2022. This is the twenty-third annual publication of *Firearm Registrations in Hawaii*.

## Permit Applications Processed, Issued, Voided, and Denied

A total of 21,881 personal/private firearm permit applications were processed statewide during 2022, marking a 6.1% decrease from 23,299 applications processed in 2021. Of the applications processed in 2022, 96.2% were approved and resulted in issued permits; 1.3% were approved but subsequently voided after the applicants failed to return for their permits within a specified time period; and 2.5% were denied due to one or more disqualifying factors. Figure 1 provides additional information. Denials are described in greater detail throughout this report.

**Figure 1: Firearm Permit Application Outcomes, State of Hawaii, 2022**

21,881 Applications Processed



## Registrations and Importations

The 21,047 permits issued statewide in 2022 cover a total of 51,883 firearms registered throughout the year, resulting in a 9.1% decrease from 57,091 firearms registered during 2021. Just over half (26,913, or 51.9%) of the firearms registered during 2022 were imported from out-of-state, with the balance accounted for by transfers of firearms that were previously registered in Hawaii. Independent estimates made during the late-1990s by the Department of the Attorney General and the City & County of Honolulu Police Department conservatively placed the number of privately owned firearms in Hawaii at “at least one million.” Adding to that rough tally during the 2000 through 2022 period, a total of 806,212 firearms were registered (including some more than once, by different owners) and 421,168 were imported, while an unknown number of firearms permanently left the state.

## Permits and Registrations, by Firearm Type

In the State of Hawaii, single-use permits are issued to acquire specific handguns, while annual permits are issued in order to acquire an unlimited number of longarms (rifles and shotguns). By firearm type, 54.1% (11,383) of the permits issued during 2022 were to acquire handguns, while 45.9% (9,664) were longarm permits. The tally of handgun permits is perennially confounded, however, as some of the county police departments issue a single permit listing all handguns that will be acquired simultaneously from the same source (i.e., one permit per transaction, per HRS § 134-2(e)), while the other departments issue one permit per handgun even if they are acquired in the same transaction.

Longarms accounted for 54.6% (28,279) of all firearms registered during 2022 (51,833). Broken out further, rifles and shotguns comprised 44.3% (22,939) and 10.3% (5,340) of total registrations, respectively. The remaining 45.5% (23,604) of firearms registered throughout 2022 were handguns.

## County Comparisons and Registration Trends

Table 1 shows the distribution of firearm registration activity during 2022 across the four counties and for the State of Hawaii overall.

**Table 1: Firearm Registration Activity, State of Hawaii and Counties, 2022**

	C&C of Honolulu	Hawaii County	Maui County	Kauai County	State Total
Applications Processed	13,276	4,510	2,691	1,404	<b>21,881</b>
Applications Approved/ Permits Issued	12,857	4,214	2,594	1,382	<b>21,047</b>
Applications Approved/ Permits Voided	225	15	46	8	<b>294</b>
Applications Denied	194	281	51	14	<b>540</b>
Denial Rate*	1.5%	6.2%	1.9%	1.0%	<b>2.5%</b>
Firearms Registered	31,670	9,653	7,146	3,414	<b>51,883</b>
Firearms Imported	16,095	5,779	3,324	1,715	<b>26,913</b>

\* The most comparable national figure is a 7.0% average denial rate in 2018 for 719 local law enforcement agencies nationwide that conduct background checks for firearm purchases (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021).

As compared to Hawaii's resident population distribution (U.S. Census Bureau data), firearm registration activity occurred disproportionately across the four counties during 2022 (see Figure 2). If the counties' registration activity occurred in equal proportion to their respective population sizes, the three bars depicted for each county in Figure 2 would be of equal value/height.

**Figure 2: County Distribution of Permit Applications Processed and Denied versus Resident Population Distribution, 2022**

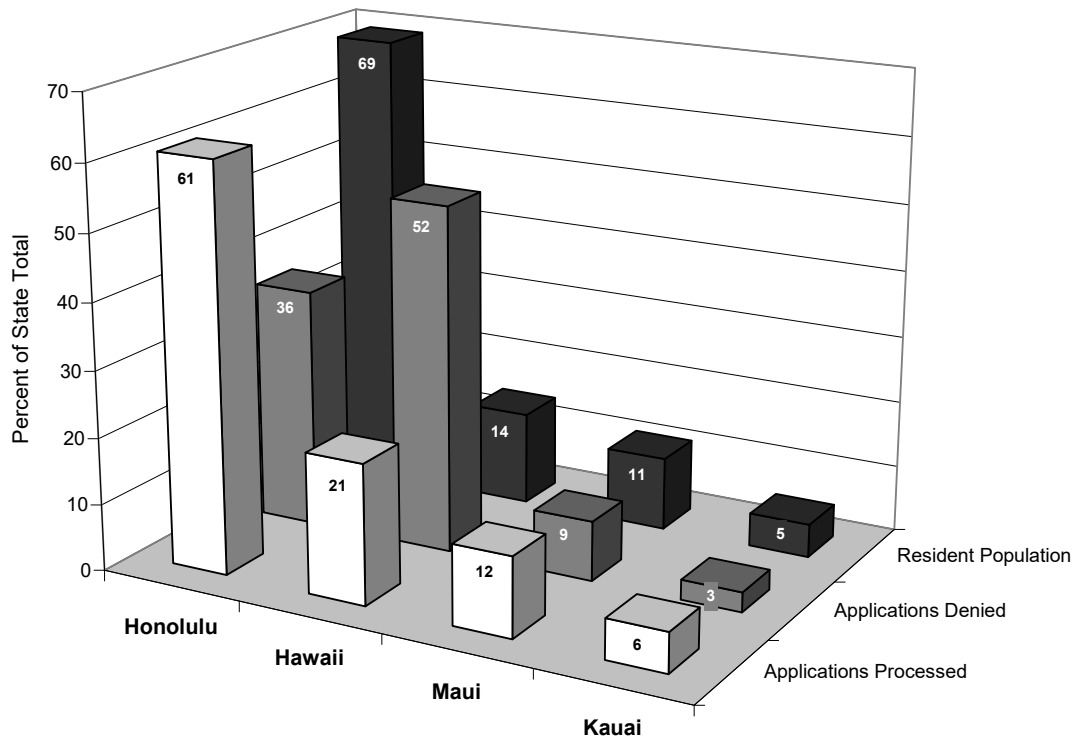
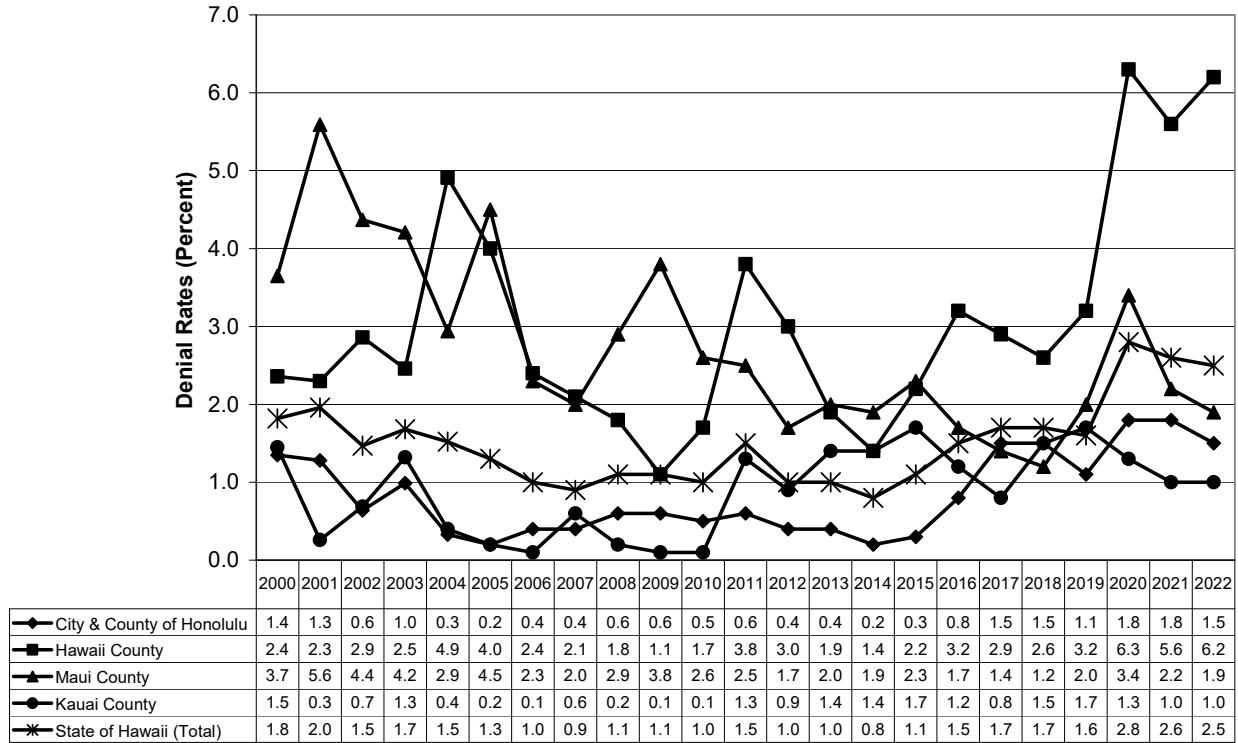


Figure 3 (next page) presents historical data on permit application denial rates for the State of Hawaii and each of the four counties.

**Figure 3: Firearm Permit Application Denial Rates, State of Hawaii and Counties, 2000-2022**



Firearm registration activity increased dramatically over the course of the 23 years for which these data have been systematically compiled and reported (see Figure 4). From 2000 through 2022, the number of statewide permit applications annually processed increased by 237.2%, the number of firearms annually registered climbed 281.0%, and the number of firearms annually imported leapt by 313.8%.

**Figure 4: Firearm Registration Trends, State of Hawaii, 2000-2022**

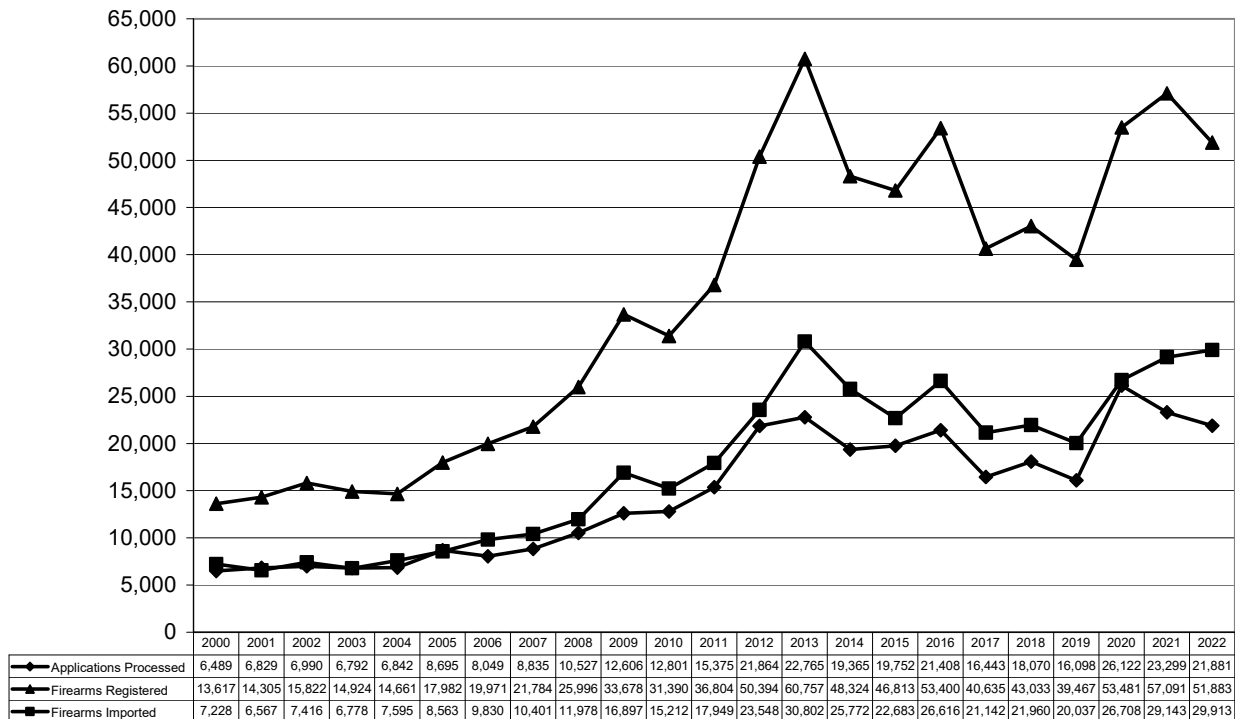
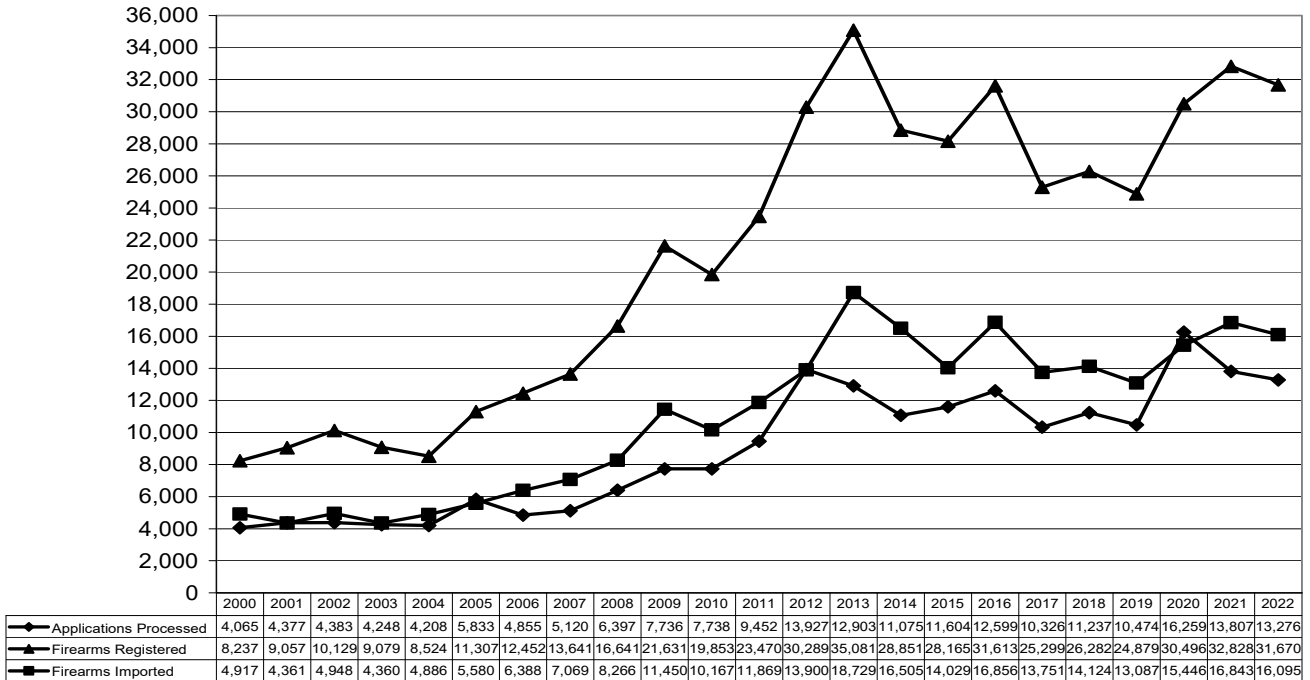


Figure 5 shows that, between 2000 and 2022 in the City & County of Honolulu, the annual tally of permits processed increased by 226.6%, the number of firearms annually registered rose by 284.5%, and the number of firearms annually imported climbed 227.3%.

**Figure 5: Firearm Registration Trends, City & County of Honolulu, 2000-2022**



As shown in Figure 6, the number of permits processed annually in Hawaii County during the 2000-2022 period leaped 293.5%, the number of firearms annually registered increased by 232.5%, and the number of firearms annually imported surged 365.7%.

**Figure 6: Firearm Registration Trends, Hawaii County, 2000-2022**

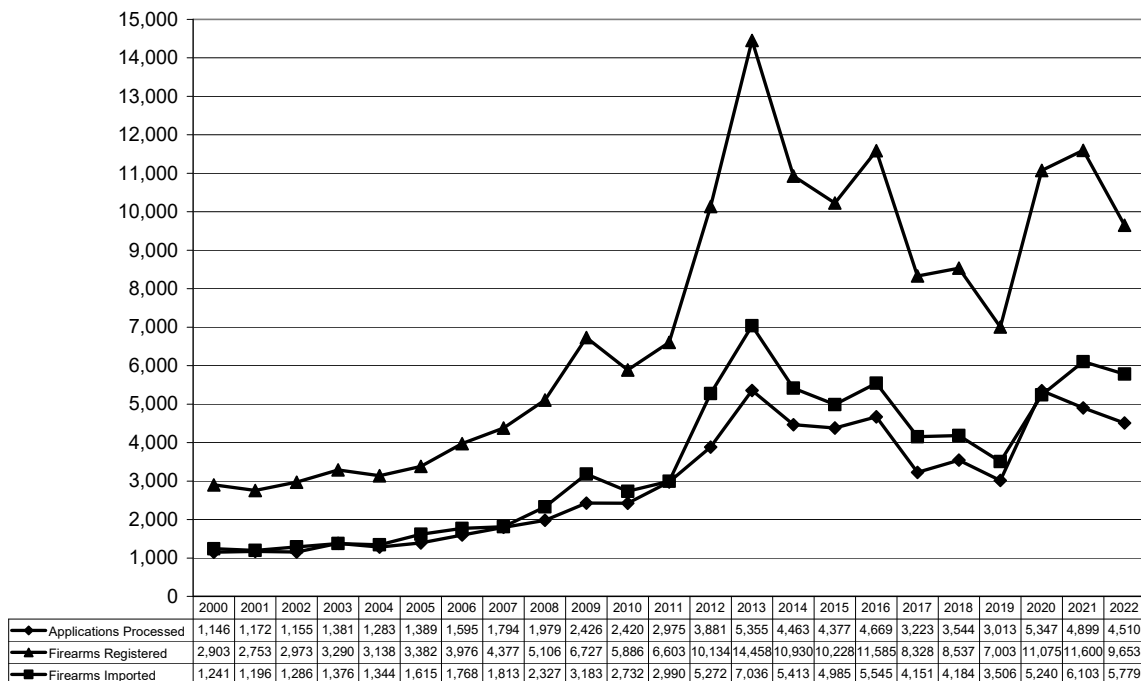
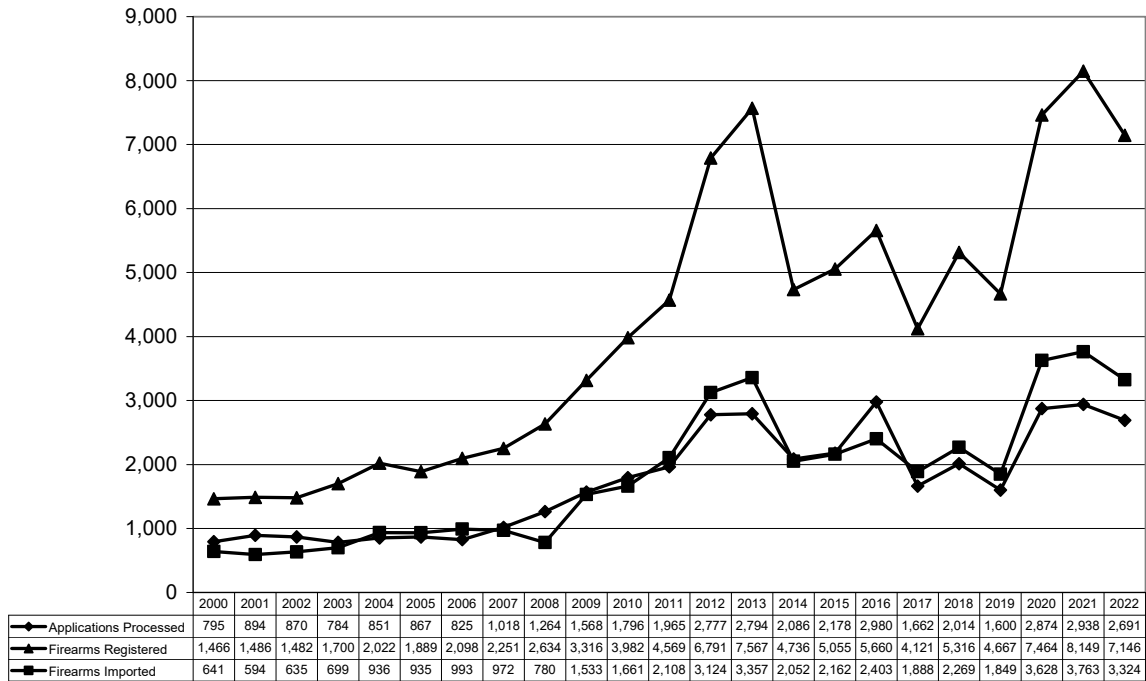


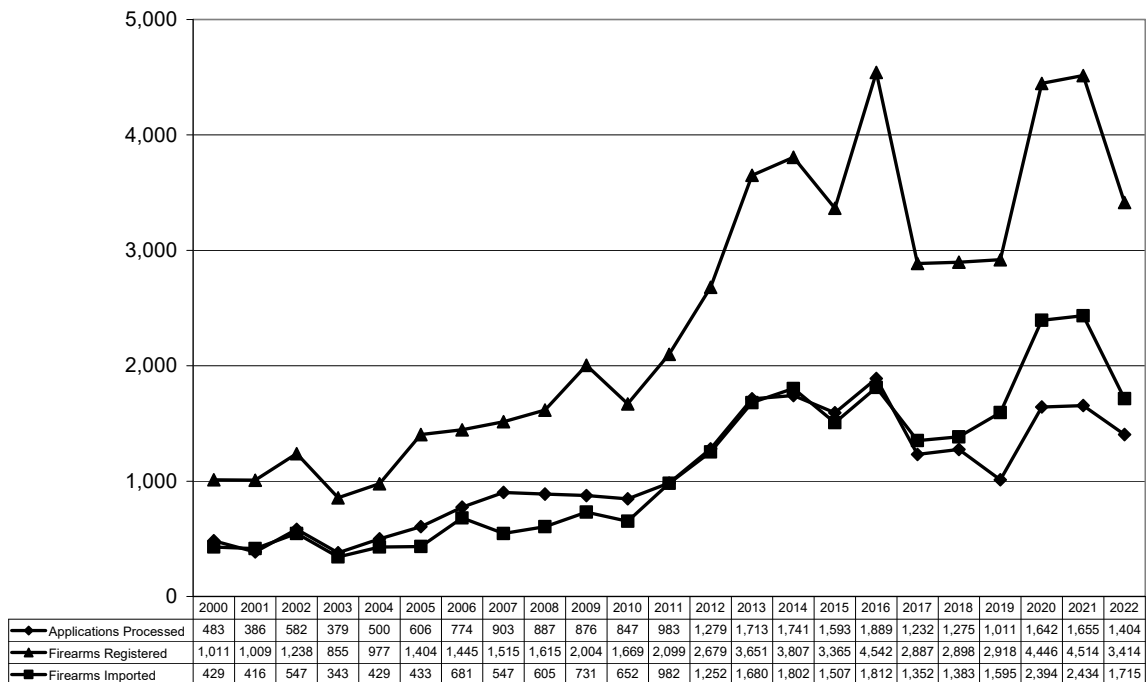
Figure 7 reveals that, between 2000 and 2022 in Maui County, the annual number of permits processed increased by 238.5%, the number of firearms annually registered soared 387.4%, and the tally of firearms annually imported skyrocketed 418.6%.

**Figure 7: Firearm Registration Trends, Maui County, 2000-2022**



As shown in Figure 8, the number of permits processed annually in Kauai County from 2000 through 2022 increased by 190.7%, the number of firearms registered leaped 237.7%, and the number of firearms imported surged 299.8%.

**Figure 8: Firearm Registration Trends, Kauai County, 2000-2022**



## Permit Application Denials

As noted earlier, 2.5% (540) of the permit applications were denied statewide in 2022. The majority of the denials were for longarm permit applications (371, or 68.7%) rather than handgun permit applications (169, or 31.3%). Following a trend since this annual report was first published, handgun permit applications in 2022 were denied at a rate (1.4%) that is less than half the denial rate for longarm permit applications (3.7%).

Roughly one-fifth (116, or 21.5%) of the denials in 2022 were due to the applicants' prior criminal convictions, while 1.5% (8) were due to pending cases.

It is a misdemeanor in the State of Hawaii to provide falsified information on firearm permit applications, unless the falsified information pertains to criminal or mental health histories, in which case it is a felony offense (HRS § 134-17). In 2022, falsified criminal or mental health information, or both, were provided in 55.6% (300) of the 540 denial cases; falsified information pertaining to anything other than criminal or mental health histories was provided in 4.6% (25) of the cases; and no falsified information was provided in 39.8% (215) of the cases.

Table 2 presents broad categorical data on the reasons for denied permit applications.

**Table 2: Reasons for Denied Firearm Permit Applications, State of Hawaii, 2022**

	#	%*
Medical Marijuana**	230	42.6
Mental Health-Related Issue***	139	25.7
Other Criminal Offense	124	23.0
Domestic Violence****	33	6.1
Drug Offense	13	2.4
Restraining/Protective Order	6	1.1
Disqualifying Juvenile Offense	1	0.2
Other Reason (e.g., citizenship issue, dishonorable discharge)	6	1.1

\* Figures do not total 100 percent due to multiple reasons for some denials.

\*\* Includes current and former medical marijuana patients. The police departments allow former patients to apply for firearm permits no less than one year after the expiration of their medical marijuana card.

\*\*\* Includes adverse mental health diagnoses and treatment, drug or alcohol abuse/addiction and treatment, and other/unspecified reasons provided by healthcare providers. Denials for any of these reasons can be satisfactorily cleared with a verified doctor's note stating that the applicant is not adversely affected. While an original denial cannot be appealed or overturned, a new application may be submitted and the appropriate permit will be issued. At least one of the state's major healthcare providers flags virtually any sort of mental health issue or treatment noted in their clients' historical medical records, and does not provide a means to obtain a clearance, leaving such applicants to seek clearance from outside doctors.

\*\*\*\* Includes domestic violence-related offenses and counseling/treatment.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of information entered into a description field for each denial in 2022.

**Table 3: Descriptions of Firearm Permit Application Denials, State of Hawaii, 2022**

	540 Total Denials	#	%*
abuse of family/household member		24	4.4
accessory after the fact		3	0.6
alcohol abuse treatment		6	1.1
alcohol addiction		1	0.2
alcohol and substance abuse treatment		2	0.4
assault		35	6.5
assault + disorderly conduct		1	0.2
assault + medical marijuana patient		3	0.6
assault + resisting arrest		1	0.2
assault arrest / no disposition		1	0.2
battery		5	0.9
battery + disorderly conduct		1	0.2
battery arrest / no disposition		1	0.2
battery of spouse		1	0.2
battery of spouse arrest / no disposition		1	0.2
burglary		4	0.7
crime of violence (unspecified)		9	1.7
crime of violence (unspecified) + medical marijuana patient		1	0.2
crime of violence arrest (unspecified) / no disposition		6	1.1
disorderly conduct arrest / no disposition		2	0.4
disqualifying juvenile offenses		1	0.2
domestic violence assault arrest / no disposition		2	0.4
domestic violence conviction (unspecified)		5	0.9
drug offense		7	1.3
drug offense + dishonorable discharge		1	0.2
drug offense + forgery + medical marijuana patient		1	0.2
drug offense arrest / no disposition		2	0.4
DUI (felony)		3	0.6
embezzlement arrest / no disposition		2	0.4
felony (unspecified)		6	1.1
felony arrest (unspecified) / no disposition		9	1.7
fraud		2	0.4
harassment		7	1.3
harassment + mental health issue		2	0.4
has no place of residence or sojourn		1	0.2
homicide arrest / no disposition		1	0.2
less than 21 years old		1	0.2
malicious mischief		1	0.2
medical marijuana patient		221	40.9
mental health issue		75	13.9
mental health issue + alcohol abuse treatment + medical marijuana patient		1	0.2
mental health issue + medical marijuana patient		2	0.4
mental health issue + substance abuse treatment		3	0.6
mental health treatment		23	4.3
motor vehicle theft		1	0.2
negligent homicide		1	0.2
negligent injury		1	0.2
not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident		2	0.4
renounced U.S. citizenship		1	0.2
restraining order		6	1.1
sexual abuse of a child		1	0.2
sexual assault		5	0.9
stolen property arrest / no disposition		3	0.6
substance abuse treatment		20	3.7
substance abuse treatment + medical marijuana patient		1	0.2
suicide attempt + mental health treatment		3	0.6



terroristic threatening	1	0.2
theft	1	0.2
theft + forgery	1	0.2
warrant	5	0.9

\* Due to rounding, figures do not total 100%.

## Permits to Carry Firearms

Hawaii’s county police departments also process permit applications for the carrying of firearms in public. Statewide in 2022, 76 employees of private security firms applied for and were issued carry permits, and two (2.6%) were denied. The police processed a total of 236 carry permit applications submitted by private citizens statewide in 2022, resulting in 213 (90.3%) permits being approved and issued, and 23 (9.7%) being denied. The vast majority of denials were for providing inaccurate/incomplete information in the application documents, or for not otherwise following the application instructions. The breakdown for each county’s processing of private citizens’ carry permit applications in 2022 is as follows: City & County of Honolulu (six applications processed/three permits approved and issued/50.0% denial rate); Hawaii County (90/89/1.1%); Maui County (75/56/25.3%); and Kauai County (65/65/0.0%).

## Confiscations

A total of six prohibited firearms were confiscated by police firearm registration personnel statewide in 2022, including three “assault pistols,” two short-barrel shotguns, and one short-barrel rifle, as defined and prohibited by state law. All six confiscations occurred in the City & County of Honolulu.

## Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with input and assistance from the county police departments’ firearm registration personnel. As the volume of registration activity documented in this report demonstrates, these dedicated professionals work hard to serve their communities.

### Hawaii County Police Department

**Jo-Ann Tallett**, Clerical Services Supervisor  
**Kerrine Akiona**, Acting Senior Police Records Clerk  
**Nicole Bucholtz**, Firearms Registration Clerk  
**Haley-Rose Kea**, Firearms Registration Clerk

### City and County of Honolulu Police Department

The entire Firearms Registration Section, in particular:  
**Suzy Yamasaki**, Firearms Registration Clerk

### Kauai County Police Department

**Scott Yamaguchi**, Weapons Registration Clerk

### Maui County Police Department

**Melanie Wong**, Firearms Registration Clerk

## Reference

Bureau of Justice Statistics (October 2021). *Background checks for firearms transfers, 2018*. U.S. Department of Justice: Office of Justice Programs. NCJ 301308.