

Firearm Registrations in Hawai‘i, 2024

Department of the Attorney General

• Crime Prevention & Justice Assistance Division

• ag.hawaii.gov/cpja

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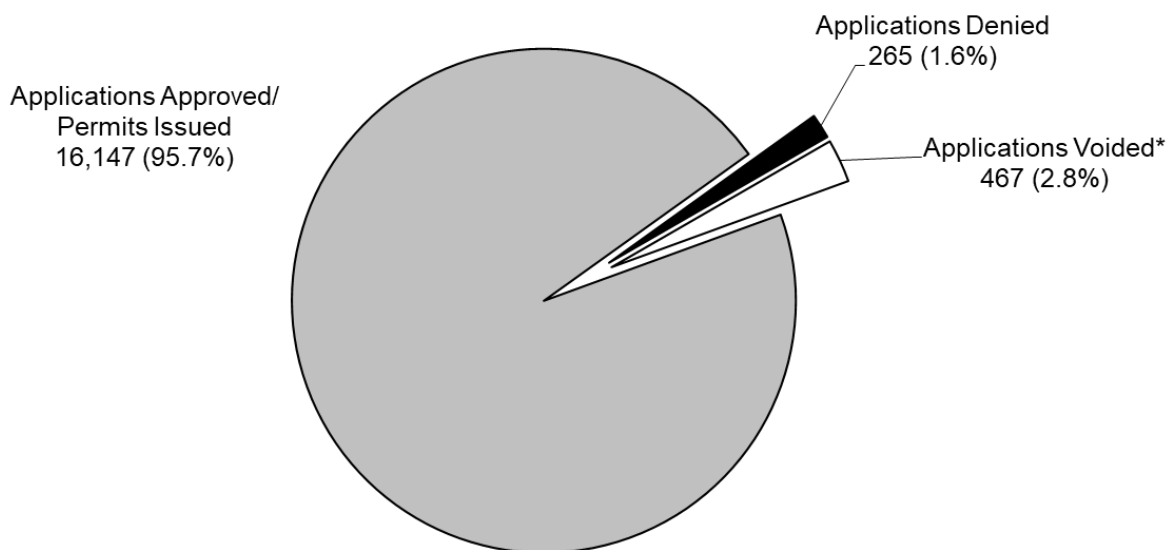
Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 134-14 requires the county police departments to provide to the Department of the Attorney General a monthly report of firearm registration activity. The data from those reports were compiled to provide the statistics presented herein for calendar year 2024. This is the twenty-fifth annual publication of *Firearm Registrations in Hawai‘i*.

Permit Applications Processed, Approved, Voided, and Denied

A total of 16,879 personal/private applications for permits to acquire firearms were processed statewide during 2024, marking a 28.3% decrease from 23,528 applications processed in 2023. Of the applications processed in 2024, 95.7% were approved and resulted in issued permits, 2.8% were voided (canceled/rejected for technical reasons; see note below), and 1.6% were denied due to one or more disqualifying factors. Figure 1 provides additional information. Denials are discussed in greater detail throughout this report.

**Figure 1: Firearm Permit Application Outcomes,
State of Hawai‘i, 2024**

16,879 Applications Processed



* The definition of voids was expanded in 2023 to include not only the cancellation of approved permits after applicants fail to pick them up within an allowed timeframe, but also the rejection of technically incorrect/incomplete application documents, as well as the failure to timely utilize permits to acquire handguns.

Registrations and Importations

The 16,147 permits issued statewide in 2024 cover a total of 44,624 firearms registered throughout the year, resulting in a 13.9% decrease from 51,807 firearms registered during 2023. Approximately half (26,267, or 50.7%) of the firearms registered during 2024 were imported from out-of-state, with the balance accounted for by transfers of firearms that were previously registered in Hawai'i. Independent estimates made during the late-1990s by the Department of the Attorney General and the Honolulu Police Department conservatively placed the number of privately owned firearms in Hawai'i at somewhere over one million. Adding to that during the 2000 through 2024 period, a total of 902,643 firearms were registered (including some more than once, by different owners) and 470,250 were imported, while an unknown number of firearms permanently left the state.

Permits and Registrations, by Firearm Type

In the State of Hawai'i, single-use permits are issued to acquire handguns, while annual permits are issued to acquire an unlimited number of longarms (rifles and shotguns). By firearm type, 57.9% (9,342) of the permits issued during 2024 were to acquire handguns, while 42.1% (6,805) 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 will be acquired in the same transaction.

Longarms accounted for 50.8% (22,673) of all firearms registered during 2024 (44,624). Broken out further, rifles and shotguns comprised 41.2% (18,373) and 9.6% (4,300) of total registrations, respectively. The remaining 49.2% (21,951) of firearms registered throughout 2024 were handguns.

County Comparisons and Registration Trends

Table 1 shows the distribution of firearm registration activity during 2024 across the four counties and for the State of Hawai'i overall.

**Table 1: Firearm Registration Activity,
State of Hawai'i and Counties, 2024**

	C&C of Honolulu	Hawai'i County	Maui County	Kaua'i County	State Total
Applications Processed	11,240	2,958	1,878	803	16,879
Applications Approved/ Permits Issued	10,699	2,852	1,803	793	16,147
Applications Voided	410	10	37	10	467
Applications Denied	131	96	38	0	265
Denial Rate*	1.2%	3.3%	2.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Firearms Registered	26,960	8,549	6,278	2,837	44,624
Firearms Imported	13,627	4,806	2,791	1,591	22,815

* The most comparable national figures are 6.9% (2019) and 6.0% (2020) denial rates for 715 local law enforcement agencies that conducted background checks for firearm purchases (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023).

As compared to Hawai'i's resident population distribution (U.S. Census Bureau data), firearm registration activity occurred disproportionately across the four counties during 2024 (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, 2024

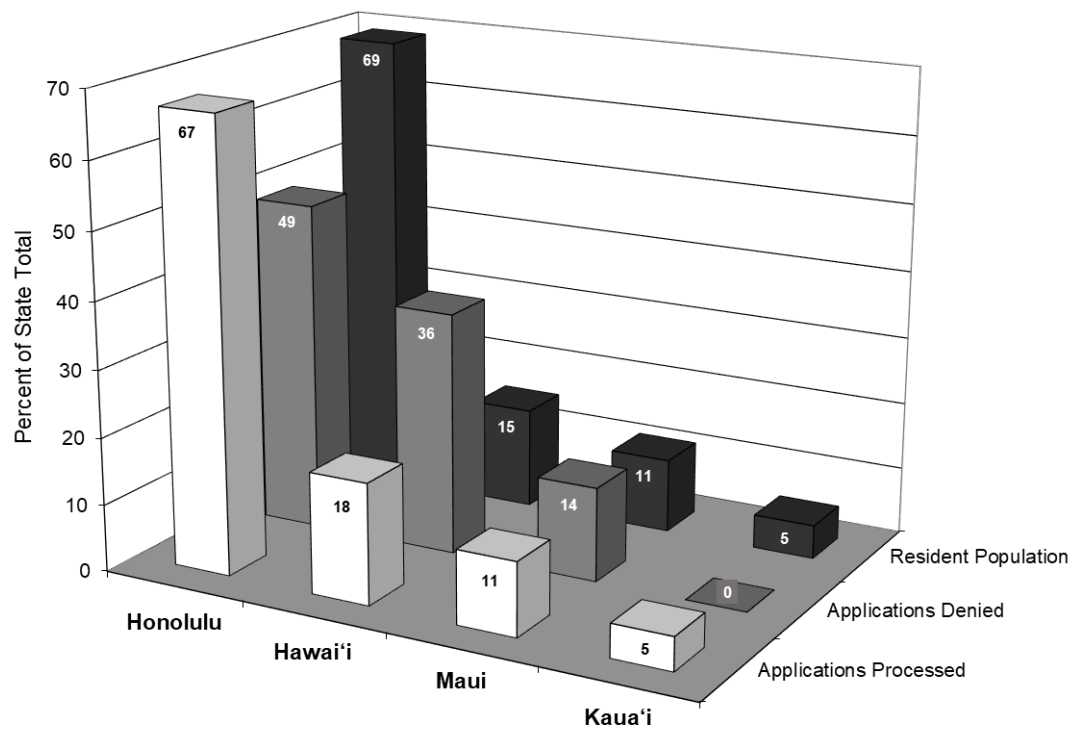
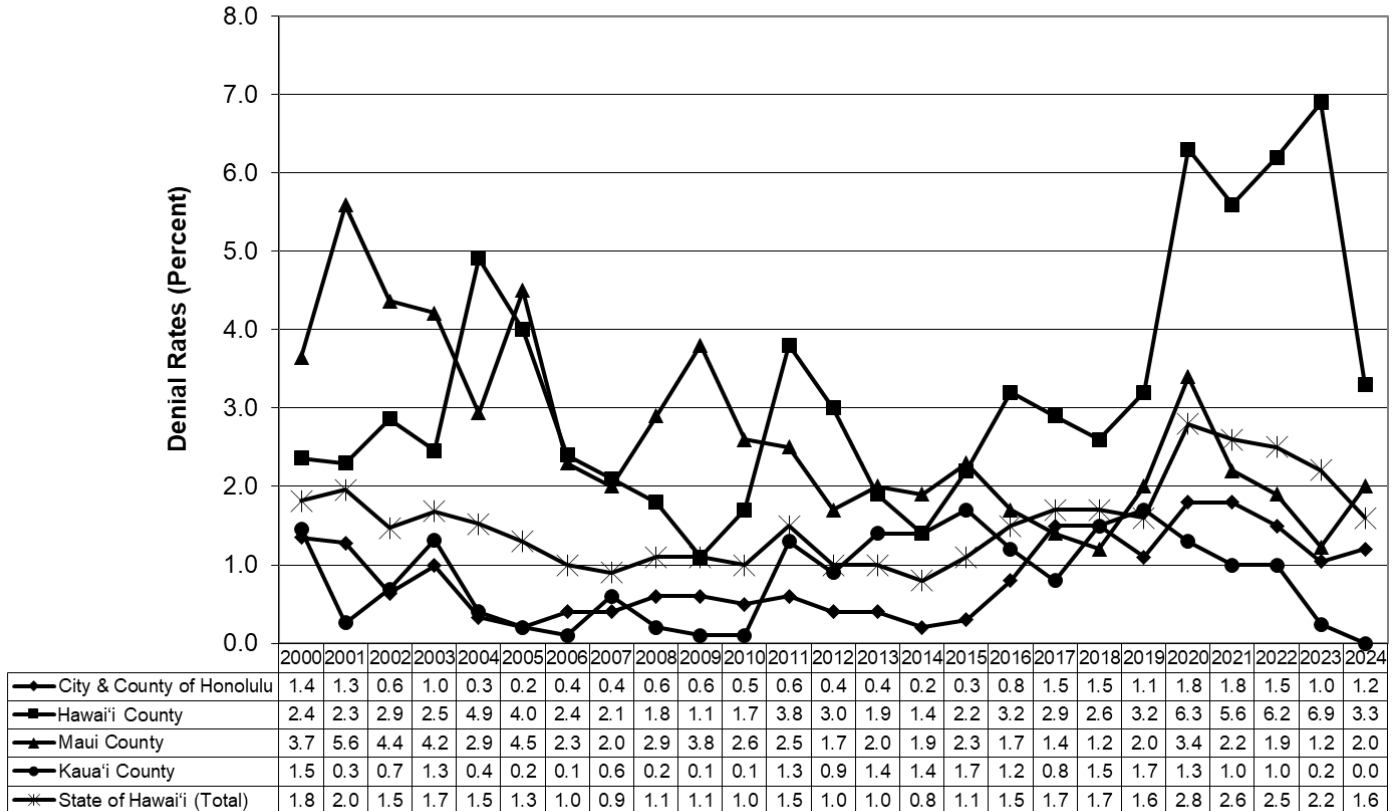


Figure 3 presents historical data on permit application denial rates for the State of Hawai'i and each of the four counties. Hawai'i County's denial rate was the highest in the state for each year since 2016 (as well as for several of the prior years).

**Figure 3: Firearm Permit Application Denial Rates,
State of Hawai'i and Counties, 2000-2024**



Firearm registration activity increased dramatically over the course of the 25 years for which these data have been systematically compiled and reported (see Figure 4). From 2000 through 2024, the number of statewide permit applications annually processed increased by 160.1%, the number of firearms annually registered leapt by 227.7%, and the number of firearms annually imported climbed 215.6%.

**Figure 4: Firearm Registration Trends,
State of Hawai'i, 2000-2024**

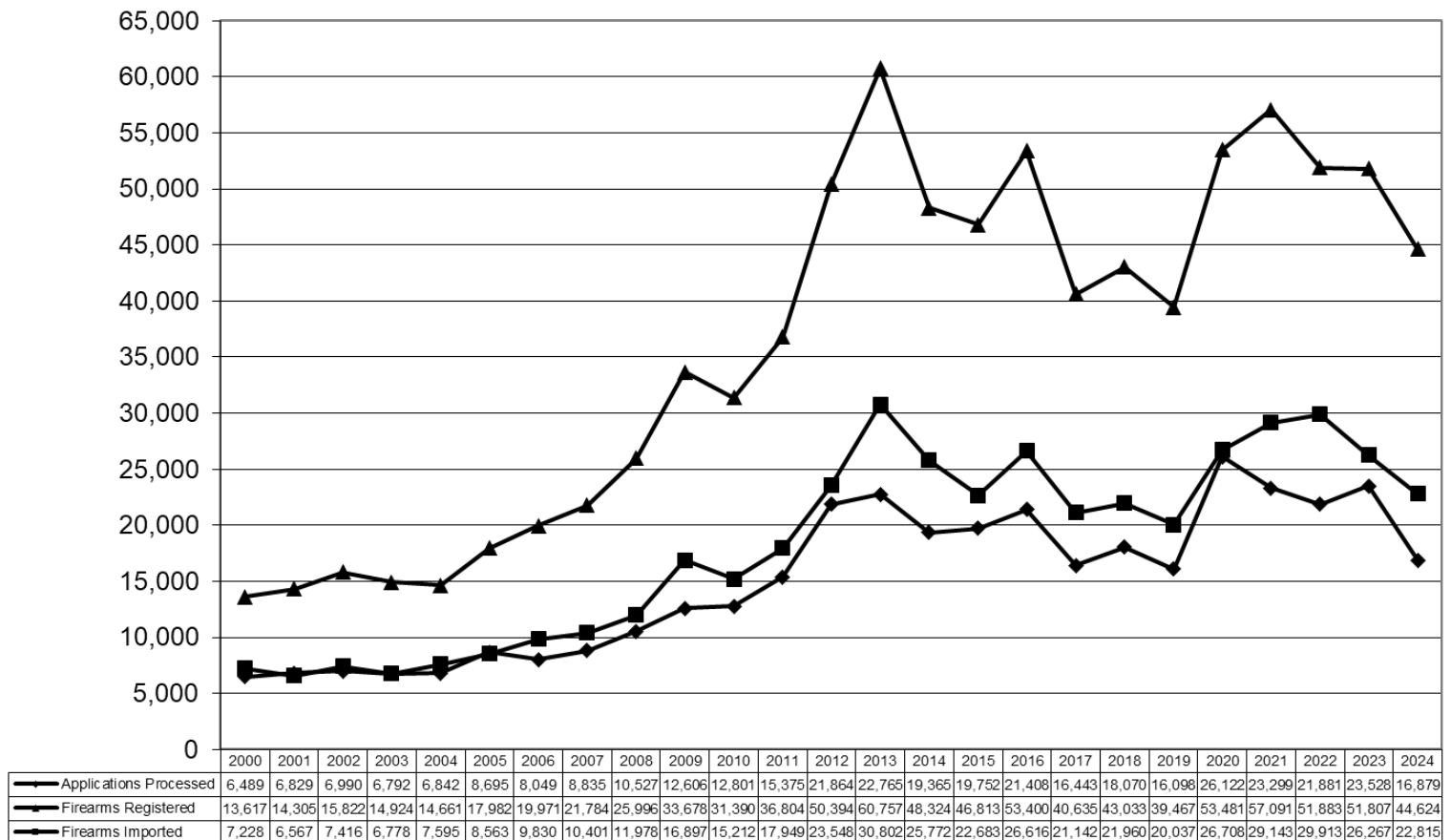
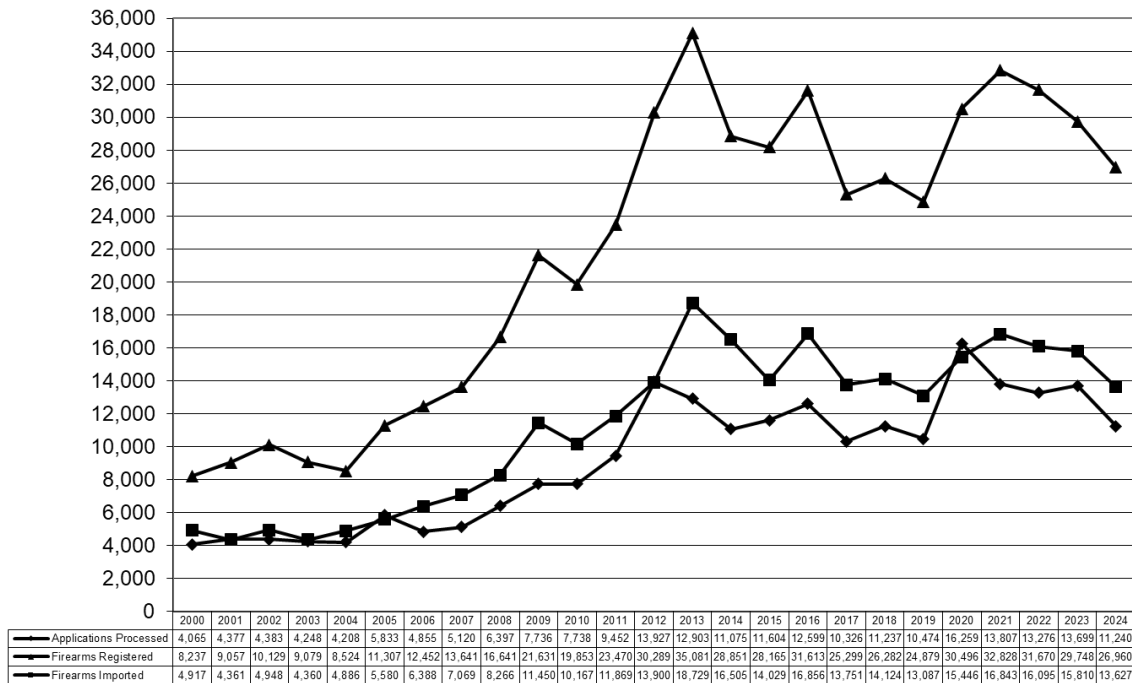


Figure 5 shows that, between 2000 and 2024 in the City & County of Honolulu, the annual tally of permits processed increased by 176.5%, the number of firearms annually registered rose by 227.3%, and the number of firearms annually imported climbed 177.1%.

**Figure 5: Firearm Registration Trends,
City & County of Honolulu, 2000-2024**



As shown in Figure 6, the number of permits processed annually in Hawai'i County during the 2000-2024 period increased by 158.1%, the number of firearms annually registered leapt by 194.5%, and the number of firearms annually imported surged by 287.3%.

**Figure 6: Firearm Registration Trends,
Hawai'i County, 2000-2024**

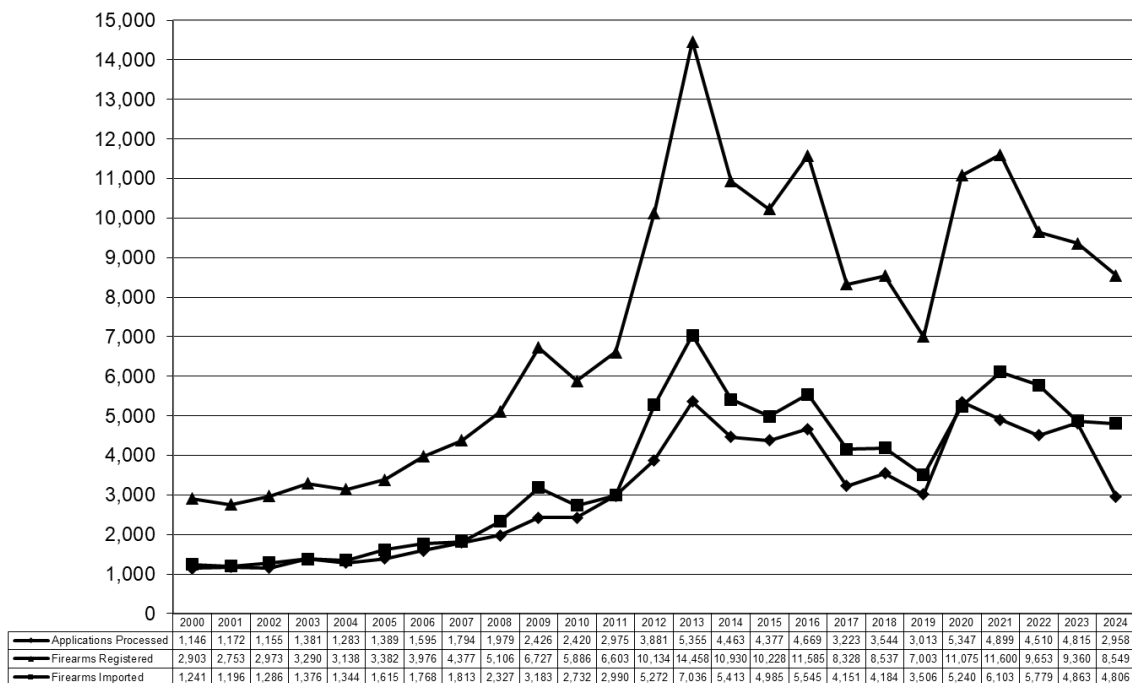
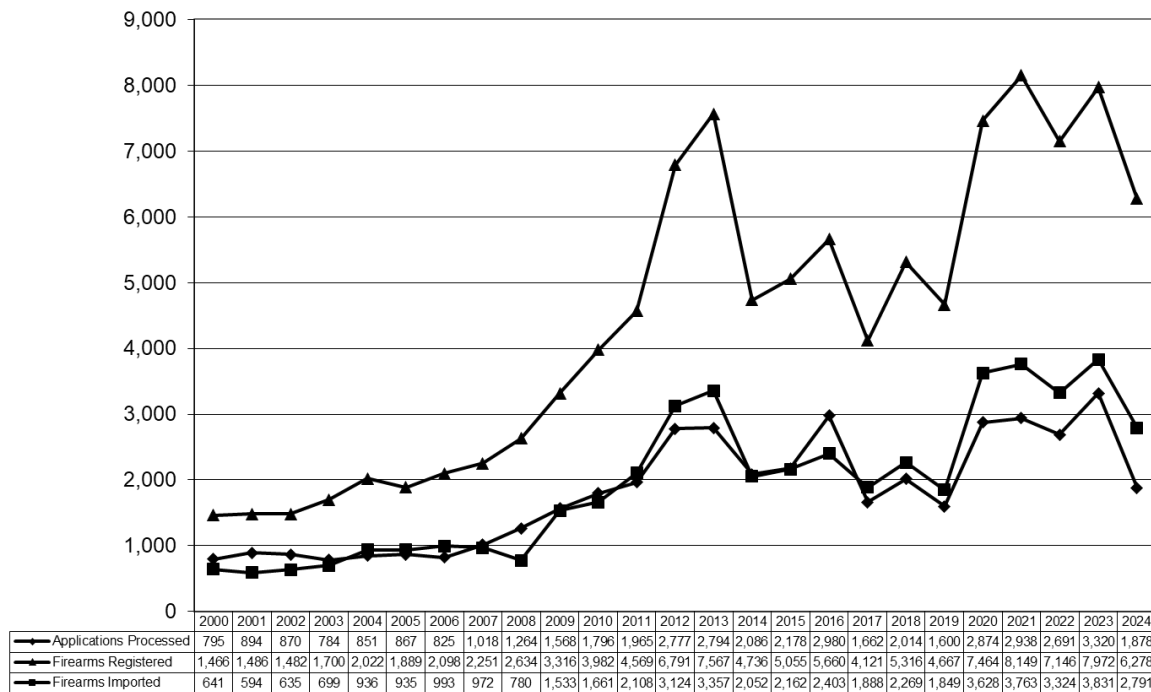


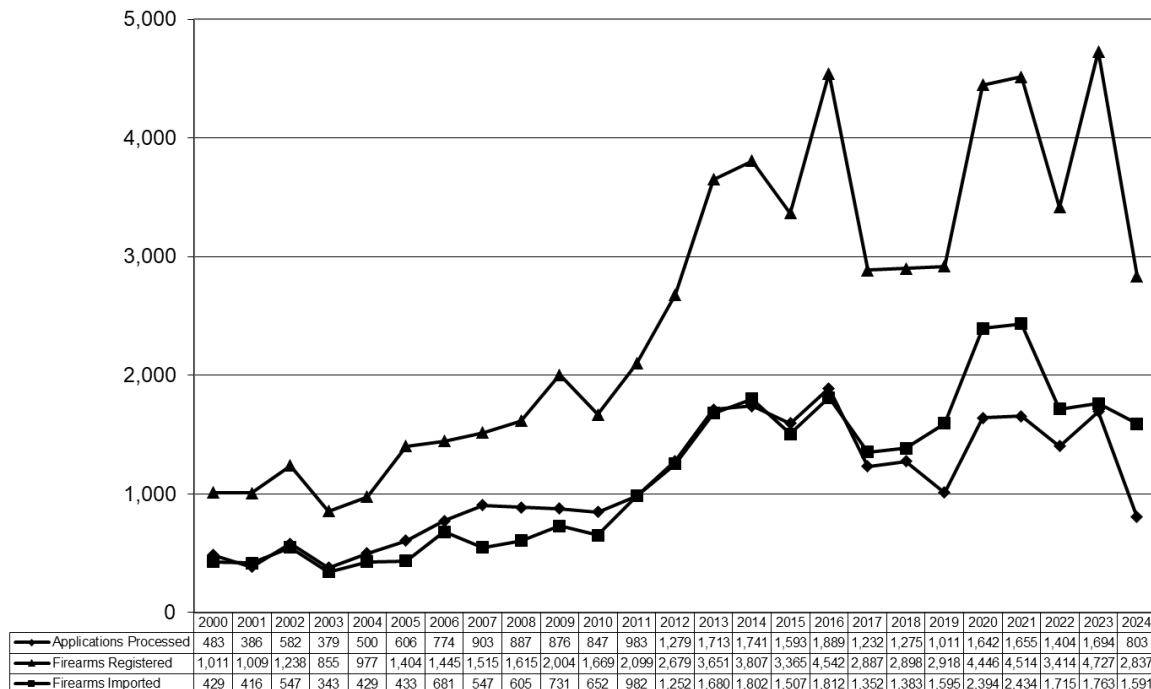
Figure 7 reveals that, between 2000 and 2024 in Maui County, the annual number of permits processed increased by 136.2%, the number of firearms annually registered soared 334.2%, and the tally of firearms annually imported skyrocketed 335.4%.

**Figure 7: Firearm Registration Trends,
Maui County, 2000-2024**



As shown in Figure 8, the number of permits processed annually in Kaua'i County from 2000 through 2024 increased by 66.3%, the number of firearms registered rose 180.6%, and the number of firearms imported climbed 270.9%.

**Figure 8: Firearm Registration Trends,
Kaua'i County, 2000-2024**



Permit Application Denials

As noted earlier, 1.6% (265) of the permit applications were denied statewide in 2024. The majority (157, or 59.2%) of the denials were for longarm permit applications rather than handgun permit applications (108, or 40.8%). Following a trend since this annual report was first published, longarm permit applications in 2024 were denied at a rate (2.2%) that is at least double the denial rate for handgun permit applications (1.1%).

Nearly one-quarter (63, or 23.8%) of the denials in 2024 were due to the applicants' prior criminal convictions, while 6.0% (16) were due to pending cases.

It is a misdemeanor in the State of Hawai'i 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 2024, falsified criminal or mental health information, or both, were provided in 48.7% (129) of the 265 denial cases; falsified information pertaining to anything other than criminal or mental health histories was provided in 12.1% (32) of the cases; falsified criminal/mental health information in addition to other falsified information was provided in 1.1% (3) of the cases; and no falsified information was provided in 38.1% (101) of the cases.

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

Table 2: Categorized Reasons for Denied Firearm Permit Applications, State of Hawai'i, 2024

	#	%*
Mental Health-Related Issue**	85	32.1
Medical Marijuana***	65	24.5
Other Criminal Offense	62	23.4
Drug Offense	21	7.9
Other Reason (e.g., citizenship issue, dishonorable discharge)	14	5.3
Domestic Violence****	10	3.8
Restraining/Protective Order	8	3.0
Disqualifying Juvenile Adjudication	2	0.8

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

** 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 current and some 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 domestic violence-related offenses and counseling/treatment.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of information entered in a description field for each denial in 2024.

Table 3: Specified Reasons for Denied Firearm Permit Applications, State of Hawai'i, 2024

265 Denials	#	%*
abuse of family/household member	8	3.0
assault	16	6.0
assault of a police officer	1	0.4
battery	3	1.1
burglary	1	0.4
citizenship/residency issue	10	3.8
corporal injury on spouse	2	0.8
crime of violence (unspecified)	5	1.9
dishonorable discharge	3	1.1
disorderly conduct	1	0.4
disqualifying juvenile adjudication	2	0.8
drug offense	19	7.2
felonies (unspecified)	1	0.4
felony (unspecified)	13	4.9
fighting in public	2	0.8
harassment	6	2.3
mayhem	1	0.4
medical marijuana patient	65	24.5
mental health issue	71	26.8
motor vehicle theft	3	1.1
restraining order	8	3.0
robbery + malicious mischief	1	0.4
spousal abuse + animal abuse	2	0.8
substance abuse treatment	14	5.3
terroristic threatening	2	0.8
theft	4	1.5
warrant outstanding	1	0.4

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

Revocations of Permits to Acquire Firearms

In August 2024, this reporting program began tracking revocations of permits to acquire firearms, which occur after permittees become legally disqualified to possess firearms. Statewide during the final five months of 2024, one revocation of a permit to acquire longarms was reported by the Maui Police Department. Permits to acquire longarms are valid for 12 months from the date of issue, so it is possible that the revoked permit was issued in either 2023 or 2024.

Confiscations of Prohibited Weapons

A total of six prohibited firearms were confiscated by police firearm registration personnel statewide in 2024, including two "assault pistols," two short-barrel shotguns, and two short-barrel rifles, as defined and prohibited by state law. All six confiscations were reported by the Honolulu Police Department.

Licenses to Carry Firearms (Private Security Personnel)

Hawai'i's county police departments also process license applications for private citizens and private security company employees (e.g., armored car personnel) to carry handguns in public for the purpose of self-defense. Statewide in 2024, 117 employees of private security firms were issued a carry license and four (3.3%) were denied due to disqualifying factors (e.g., restraining order, habitual DUI conviction). As of earlier this year, statistics on carry licenses for private citizens are published by the Department of the Attorney General in a new annual report series entitled *Licenses To Carry Handguns in Hawai'i* (see References, below).

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.

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Kerrine Akiona, Police Records Supervisor (Fmr. Senior Firearms Registration Clerk)
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