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DELAYS IN PROCESSING FIREARMS LICENSING APPLICATIONS

A NUMBER OF FACTORS HAVE LED TO THESE DELAYS

- The Covid pandemic had an impact on staffing and the ability to visit certificate holders.
- The critical incident in Plymouth has had an impact on the firearms licensing department.
- Legislative changes Crucially, the revised firearms licensing statutory guidance requires much more of both applicants and police services – such as provision of doctors` letters by the applicant, enhanced checks for the police and more robust guidance generally. The understandable need for GPs to focus on Covid booster jabs for 2 months before Christmas also led to further delays for the consideration of GP reports for applicants.



HOW CAN YOU HELP US?

[HOME OFFICE FIREARMS LICENSING STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR CHIEF OFFICERS/NON-STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON FIREARMS LICENSING LAW 2021](#)

- Home Office Firearms Licensing Statutory Guidance for Chief Officers/Non-Statutory Guidance on Firearms Licensing Law 2021.

- Changes to firearms licensing legislation happened in Autumn 2021. The legislation requires stringent checks for anyone that holds or is applying for a firearms certificate. A significant change is the requirement for a doctors' letter on application or renewal.

- We send renewal forms out 4 months prior to renewal. PLEASE ensure you fill in your renewal and return, with doctors letter, **more than 8** weeks prior to renewal.

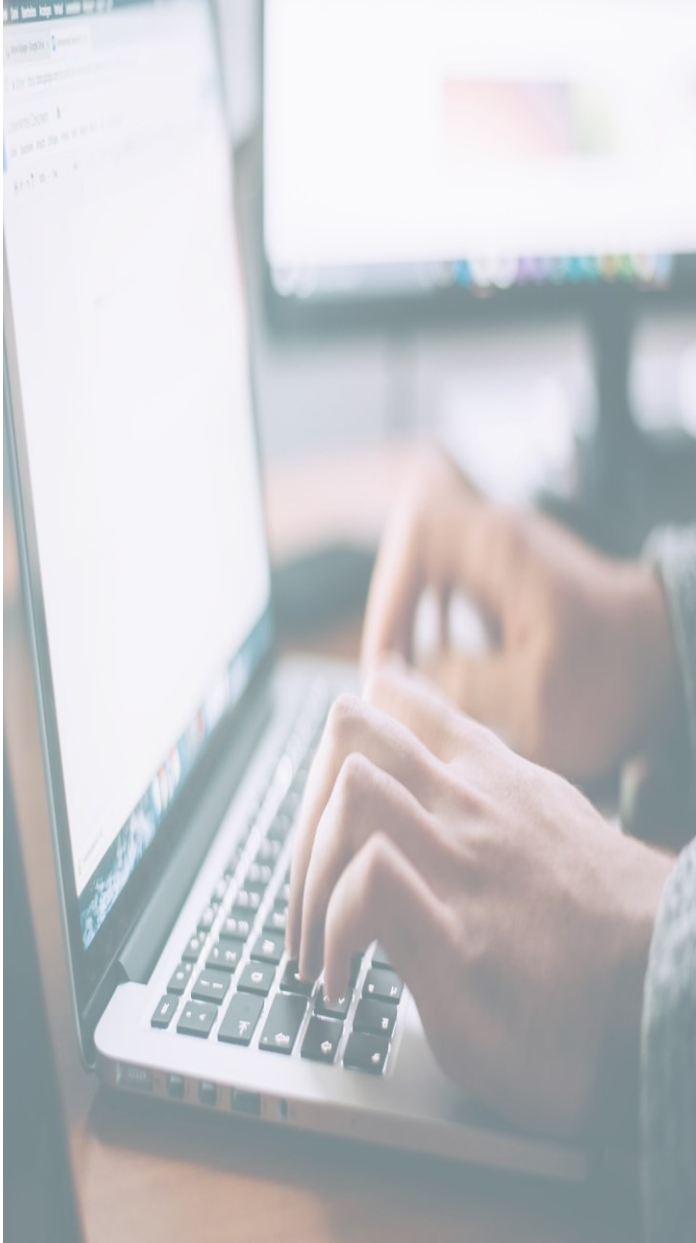
- As long as you do this, should it be necessary, you will receive an 8 week extension.

- Temporary permit (Section 7) . If at the end of the extension letter the firearms licensing department are still unable to grant your renewal application you will be issued with a temporary permit. This means you can continue to possess the firearms/shotguns/section 1 ammunition currently held on certificate without having to put them into storage with another authorised person. The permit will be valid for a period of time and this will clearly be shown on the permit. A temporary permit does not allow you to possess a Section 5 firearm and/or section 5 ammunition. Nor does it allow you to purchase any additional guns/ammunition.

- Currently the delays for renewal applications are usually between 4 months and 7 months. There are some exceptions in complex cases. For grant applications, we prioritise applications related to livelihood and usually process these within 3 to 6 months. However, we did suspend granting licences during Covid and we are going through a process of reviewing some dated applications which we know go well over 6 months. We are sorry that on occasions the service we provide in this area is not what we would want. We are taking steps to improve the situation.

The above changes have significantly impacted our service delivery for which we sincerely apologise. The delays are clearly frustrating for all concerned however please be reassured that we have received an increase of resources in order to assist us to reduce the waiting times. If you have been waiting over 56 days for your application to be processed you will be contacted individually in order to update you on the next steps to processing your application/s.

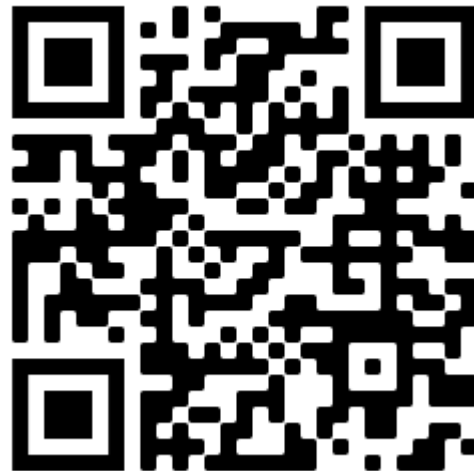




ONLINE APPLICATION SERVICES

We have digitalised our application process which is now on- line. We have also posted some frequently asked questions which should answer any queries you may have.

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We thank you for your continued patience and understanding.