

APPLICATION PACK GUIDANCE NOTES

APPLYING FOR A FIREARM CERTIFICATE OR VARIATION OF A CERTIFICATE

This application pack covers the various types of applications to Firearms and Explosives Branch and it may contain some documents and envelopes that are not applicable to your specific application.

YOU SHOULD READ THESE NOTES BEFORE STARTING TO COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION.

INITIAL GRANT OR FURTHER GRANT (of an existing Firearm Certificate)

- The introduction of the Firearms (NI) Order 2004 abolished automatic renewals of existing firearm certificates. PSNI is required to examine all applications for further grants as if they were first-time applications. Initial grants and further grants follow the same process, and the law requires you to submit the same documentation whether this is your first application, or you are applying for a further certificate.
- You should identify the following forms and envelopes in this pack. The forms are numbered at the bottom left corner.



- **Form 30/1** - The main application form for the grant of a firearm certificate (4 pages).



- **Form 30/1(a)** - Continuation sheet for Part B of Form 30/1.
- **Form 30/40** - Authority to Shoot Over Land.
- **Form 30/40(a)** - Confirmation of Target Club Membership.

Also Identify the Following Envelopes



- **1 Large (A4 size)** - Pre-addressed manilla envelope with 'A' in bottom left-hand corner to return your application Form 30/1 and authorities to shoot over land/club membership.



- **1 Small** - Pre-printed envelope marked 'P' in bottom left-hand corner for your two photographs.

Completing Forms

- To assist the processing of your application, all forms must be completed fully, accurately, legibly in **BLOCK CAPITALS** and using **black ink**.
- Form 30/1 Parts A, B, C, D and F must be completed by the applicant.
Part E - The applicant should complete details of referees, **but the referees must sign and date the Referees' Declarations**.

ABOUT LANDS/CLUB MEMBERSHIP

- This pack contains the following forms that when completed relate to your 'opportunity to shoot' and 'good reason for possessing a firearm'.
- **Form 30/40 Authority to Shoot Over Land**. Three copies of this form are included to cover applications involving more than one type of firearm. You do not require this form if you are shooting only on your own lands.
- **Airguns and Shotguns** - You only need to supply **one** authority to shoot over land.
- **Rifles (all calibres)**. You only need to supply **one** authority to shoot over land.
- **Maps**. You may be asked to supply the FEO with a map at time of land confirmation, scale 1:50,000 or 1:25,000 delineating the specified land boundaries.
- **Form 30/40(a) Confirmation of target club membership and authorisation form**. This form should be completed for all applications relating to target firearms.
- Members of Wildfowl clubs, clay pigeon clubs or shooting syndicates who have voluntarily registered lands/shooting grounds with PSNI Firearms and Explosives Branch should provide a copy of a valid membership card or written confirmation from a club or syndicate that you are a current member by completing Form 30/40. This is for shotguns only.

VARIATION (of an existing Firearm Certificate)

- **Shotguns.** A one-on/one-off variation, *in relation only to a shotgun*, can be completed by a firearms dealer. There is no fee and you need not apply to Firearms and Explosives Branch in advance, but you must notify them of the transaction within 72 hours. Pump action/semi-automatic shotguns must be restricted to 2 shot magazine capacity. The conditions applicable to the shotgun being taken off the certificate will apply to the shotgun being added to the certificate.
- **A one-on/one-off transaction for any other type of firearm** can only be processed by Firearms and Explosives Branch and you need to apply in advance using Form 30/1 and the large A4 size envelope marked 'A'. Referees or photographs are not required UNLESS the variation is being done at the time of FURTHER GRANT.
- **Variations to increase holding of firearms** (eg if you are adding a different type of firearm), then you will need to submit one Form 30/40 for each land or Form 30/40(a) for authorised target club membership.
- Applications to purchase, take on loan, or otherwise acquire a firearm must also be accompanied by a dealer's note or written authority from the owner of the firearm. Your entire firearm certificate must be submitted for all variations processed at Firearms and Explosives Branch.

GENERAL GUIDANCE ABOUT THE APPLICATION FORM - FORM 30/1

- **Question A19 - General Practitioner.** You must sign the authority for the police to obtain factual medical information from your GP/Medical authority. Failure to sign this authority will result in your application being returned to you. It is a legal requirement. If you are not registered with a GP please write 'None'.
- **Questions B1-B4 - details of firearms already in your possession or to be acquired or given up and reasons for possession.**
 - If there is insufficient space in questions B1-B4, use the separate continuation Form 30/1(a) which is ruled in a similar fashion to questions B1-B4 and write in - 'SEE SEPARATE Form 30/1(a) ATTACHED'.
 - **Firearms not actually in your possession or on loan to another certificate holder.** If you have firearms listed on your current certificate that are not actually in your possession and not listed as on loan to another certificate holder, the circumstances must be fully explained at question B4. Use the reference number at question B1 to identify the firearm in the box at B4.
 - **Questions B1-B4.** Please ensure that you complete these sections accurately and legibly. Where applicable you should write 'None'. **Care should be taken when entering serial numbers.**
 - **Question B4 - reasons for possession.** Use the reference number or letter from questions B1 and B2 to identify the relevant firearm and explain your reasons for possession. Good reason must be demonstrated for each firearm sought and for each firearm you wish to retain.
- **Question C1 - storage of your firearm.** The *minimum* acceptable storage within Northern Ireland for all firearms held on firearm certificates must equate to Gun Cabinet Specification BS7558. Gun cabinets must be secured to the fabric of the building. Further detailed information is available in Appendix 10 of the Northern Ireland Office document 'Guidance on Northern Ireland Firearms Controls', available from the NIO website www.nio.gov.uk.
- **Question D1 - criminal and other convictions.** ALL previous convictions must be declared. The application process includes a full criminal record check. If you cannot remember the exact dates, you should give your best approximation as well as the nature of the offence or you may apply to the PSNI for a copy of your criminal record.

GENERAL GUIDANCE ABOUT THE APPLICATION FORM - FORM 30/1 (continued)

Part E - Referees

- Article 4(2)(c) of the Firearms (NI) Order 2004 requires anyone applying for a firearm certificate to provide two suitable referees. (This includes further grants).
- You do not need referees for the **variation of an existing certificate** unless the variation is being done at the same time as a further grant.
- Referees must be UK residents and they must be of good character and have known you for at least two years, with the exception of authorised target club members - see below.
- The following persons **cannot act** as referees for a firearm application:
 - Members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (Police Officers and Support Staff).
 - Firearms Dealers.
 - A relative of the applicant or their spouse or former spouse.
 - **'Relative', in relation to an applicant, means:**
 - (a) The father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, grandmother, grandfather, grandson or granddaughter of that person or of that person's spouse or former spouse, or
 - (b) the brother, sister, uncle, aunt, niece or nephew (whether of the full blood or of the half blood or by affinity) of that person or of that person's spouse or former spouse and includes, in relation to a person who is living or has lived with another person as husband and wife, any person who would fall within paragraph (a) or (b) if the parties were married to each other.
- A landowner who has given you permission to shoot over their land may act as a referee, but this is not essential.
- **Authorised target club members.** Applicants applying for firearms for target use as a member of an authorised target club must have one club official act as a referee, providing they have known you for at least **one** year. If a firearms dealer is also a club official they may act as a referee for an application for a target firearm by a member

PHOTOGRAPHS

For initial and further grants you must supply two recent photographs which must be:

'I verify this is a true likeness of (full name of applicant)'

A Referee
1/2/05

- Full face - without a hat.
- 45mm by 35mm in size.
- On normal photographic paper - unglazed on the back and unmounted.
- Each photograph must bear the following statement 'I verify this is a true likeness of (full name of applicant)' and this statement must be signed and dated by a referee (ie each referee should sign one photograph).
- Please note that digital photographs printed on ordinary card or paper are not acceptable and will lead to the return of your application.

FEES AND METHOD OF PAYMENT

- **CASH CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- The fee for a first application for a firearm certificate or a further grant is £50.00 for a 5-year certificate.
- The fee for a one-on-one-off variation for the same calibre/type of firearm is £10.
- All other variations - £26.
- Only cheques or postal orders made payable to the Police Service of Northern Ireland are acceptable.
- Please write your PID number (if known) and surname on the reverse side of your cheque or postal order.

PROCESSING YOUR APPLICATION

- Processing times vary, depending on each individual application and the overall number of applications being processed. PSNI Firearms and Explosives Branch will endeavour to process your application as quickly as possible. Within 15 working days of posting the application to us you should receive a letter confirming receipt of your fee.
- **Further Grants and Variations.** On receipt of your application, a number of routine checks are conducted centrally before the application is passed electronically to your local Firearms Enquiry Officer (FEO), who will contact you to arrange an appointment to visit you to discuss your application. The FEO will want to inspect your existing security arrangements.
- **Initial Grant.** In the case of an initial application, if the grant of a firearm certificate is approved, you will receive a letter stating that your application has been 'approved in principle' subject to satisfactory storage arrangements being in place. At this point you should contact the local FEO and arrange for them to inspect your storage arrangements. Once this is done, the FEO will confirm with Firearms and Explosives Branch that all is in order and you will receive your firearm certificate in the post.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

- Further information may be obtained from the PSNI website at: www.psnipolice.uk/firearms and from the Northern Ireland Office website at: www.nio.gov.uk.
- Assistance and advice on completing your application may be obtained from your local Firearms Enquiry Officer or the Enquiry Desk at any PSNI station.
- If you have any doubts or difficulties with your application or any aspect of firearms licensing, you can telephone the Firearms and Explosives Branch on 0845 600 8000 between 9 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday. At busy periods you may experience difficulty in getting through, however, you should be able to leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

- When completed, Form 30/1, photographs (if applicable) and the relevant authority to shoot over land/confirmation of club membership on Form 30/40 or Form 30/40(a) and wildfowl/clay pigeon club or syndicate documentation should be forwarded to Firearms and Explosives Branch using the large (A4) envelope marked 'A'.
- **Applications for a further grant of an existing certificate should be returned to PSNI 12 weeks before the expiry of the existing firearm certificate, it is necessary to return your existing certificate.**
- If you are sending a full application with an existing certificate by Royal Mail, you should check with the Post Office about postage costs. **Standard 1st and 2nd class postage rates may not be sufficient.**
- You can deliver the envelope to PSNI Lisnasharragh by hand. Security or reception staff will take the envelope from you and it will be delivered to Firearms and Explosives Branch. **Please do not seal the envelope until it has been inspected by the security or reception staff for security reasons.**
- Alternatively, you can hand your application into any PSNI station and ask that it be put in the internal post. If you do this, **do not seal the envelope until the counter staff inspect it for security reasons.** You should then seal the envelope, making sure that all documents are enclosed.

Data Protection Act 1998 - Personal data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information is processed by the PSNI for a policing purpose namely firearms licensing and may be used in accordance with the prevention and detection of crime. Information shall not be disclosed unless we are required to do so by law, or it is in the overriding public interest to do so.