

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

Certification of Qualifying State Relief from Disabilities Program

This form is to be used by a State official to certify to the United States' Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) that it has established a qualifying mental health relief from firearms disabilities program that satisfies certain minimum criteria (*identified below*) under the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (NIAA), Public Law (P.L.) 110-180, Section § 105, enacted January 8, 2008. This certification is required for States to be eligible for the grants authorized by the NIAA.¹ The certifying State official should attach all relevant materials demonstrating compliance with its certification and criteria, which may include statutes, administrative regulations, executive orders, written policies and/or procedures, program brochures, or other items pertinent to the certification.

Certification

As the authorized State official, I hereby certify that my State has satisfied each of the following minimum criteria to establish a Relief From Disabilities Program under the NIAA:

Check
Appropriate Box

Met Not Met

1. **State Law:** The relief program has been established by State statute, or administrative regulation, or order pursuant to State law.

List the legal citation(s) for the relief program:

2. **Application:** The relief program allows a person who has been formally adjudicated as a mental defective² or committed involuntarily to a mental institution³ to apply or petition for relief from Federal firearms prohibitions (*disabilities*) imposed under 18 United States Code (U.S.C.) §§ 922(d)(4) and (g)(4).

3. **Lawful Authority:** A State court, board, commission or other lawful authority (*per State law*) considers the applicant's petition for relief. The lawful authority may only consider applications for relief due to mental health adjudications or commitments that occurred in the applicant State.

4. **Due Process:** The petition for relief is considered by the lawful authority in accordance with principles of due process, as follows:

- The applicant has the opportunity to submit his or her own evidence to the lawful authority considering the relief application;
- An independent decision maker—someone other than the individual who gathered the evidence for the lawful authority acting on the application—reviews the evidence; and
- A record of the matter is created and maintained for review.

5. **Proper Record:** In determining whether to grant relief, the lawful authority receives evidence concerning and considers the:

- Circumstances regarding the firearms disabilities imposed by 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(4);
- Applicant's record, which must include, at a minimum, the applicant's mental health and criminal history records; and
- Applicant's reputation, developed, at a minimum, through character witness statements, testimony, or other character evidence.

6. **Proper Findings:** In granting relief, the lawful authority issues findings that:

- The applicant will not be likely to act in a manner dangerous to public safety; and
- Granting the relief will not be contrary to the public interest.

7. **De Novo Judicial Review of a Denial:** The State provides for *de novo* judicial review of relief application denials that includes the following principles:

- If relief is denied, the applicant may petition the State court of appropriate jurisdiction to review the denial, including the record of the denying court, board, commission or other lawful authority;
- In cases of denial by a lawful authority other than a State court, the reviewing court has discretion to receive additional evidence necessary to conduct an adequate review; and
- Judicial review is *de novo* in that the reviewing court may, but is not required to, give deference to the decision of the lawful authority that denied the application for relief.

8. **Required Updates to State and Federal Records:** Pursuant to Section 102(c) of the NIAA, the State official, on being made aware that the basis under which the record was made available does not apply, or no longer applies:

- Updates, corrects, modifies, or removes the record from any database that the Federal or State government maintains and makes available to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (*NICS*), consistent with the rules pertaining to the database; and
- Notifies the Attorney General that such basis no longer applies so that the system in which the record is maintained is kept up to date.

9. **Recommended Procedure:** It is recommended (*not required*) that the State has written procedure (*e.g., State law, regulation, or administrative order*) to address the updated requirements.

¹ For information regarding the availability of funding for such grants see: <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=49#contents>

² Federal regulations at 27 Code of Federal Regulations (*CFR*) § 478.11 define the term "adjudicated as a mental defective" as: A determination by a court, board, commission, or other lawful authority that a person, as a result of marked subnormal intelligence, or mental illness, incompetency, condition, or disease: (1) Is a danger to himself or others; or (2) Lacks the mental capacity to contract or manage his own affairs. The term shall include (1) A finding of insanity by a court in a criminal case; and (2) Those persons found incompetent to stand trial or found not guilty by reason of lack of mental responsibility pursuant to articles 50a and 72b of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, 10 U.S.C. §§ 850(a) and 876(b).

³ Federal regulations at 27 CFR § 478.11 define the term "committed to a mental institution" as: A formal commitment of a person to a mental institution by a court, board, commission, or other lawful authority. The term includes a commitment to a mental institution involuntarily. The term includes commitment for mental defectiveness or mental illness. It also includes commitments for other reasons, such as drug use. The term does not include a person in a mental institution for observation or a voluntary admission to a mental institution.

Authorized State Official's Information/Certification

Authorized State Official's Signature	State and Office	Certification Date
Printed Name and Title	Phone	E-mail Address

(For ATF Use Only)

The Relief Program Application is: ☐ Approved

☐ Denied

(Note: Denial of the relief program application is noted in the comments section below.)

ATF Official's Signature	ATF Office	Decision Date
Printed Name and Title	Phone	E-mail Address

Comments:

Please Mail the Form to:

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)
Firearms and Explosives Industry Division Mailstop:
6.N-518
99 New York Avenue, NE Washington,
DC 20226
Contact Number: (202) 648-7190

Important Notice

Approval of a relief from disabilities program is valid only if the certifying official above has authority under State law to execute this certification, and only to the extent there have been no amendments or changes to the State's relief from disabilities program laws, regulations, directives, or procedures that were submitted in support of an initial certification. If there have been any changes to applicable State laws or procedures, a new certification form must be submitted to ATF for approval.

Privacy Act Information: Solicitation of this information is authorized by the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (NIAA), Public Law (P.L.) 110-180.

Paperwork Reduction Act Notice

The information required on this form is in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The purpose of the information is to determine whether a State has certified, to the satisfaction of the Attorney General, that it has established a relief from disabilities program in accordance with the requirements of the NIAA of 2007, P.L. 110-180.

The estimated average burden associated with this collection is 15 minutes per certification, depending on individual circumstances. Comments about the accuracy of this burden estimate and suggestions for reducing it should be directed to the Reports Management Officer, Resource Management Staff, Contracts and Forms office, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, 99 New York Ave, NE, Washington, DC 20226.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.