

# GUN CRIMES REPORT

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2024



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# Introduction

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The Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi

The Honorable Dominick J. Ruggiero

Re: Annual Gun Crimes Report for 2024

Dear Speaker Shekarchi and President Ruggiero:

The data provided in this year's report supports what we know to be true: Rhode Island has a gun problem. Our communities continue to be inundated with firearms, and as you are aware, more guns in the hands of criminals means more gun violence and death. With that said, I believe our effective prosecution, criminal justice investments, and proactive approach to combatting violent crime is making a significant difference.

Our Office works tirelessly to address this problem head on. Through our successful enforcement of existing laws (ghost guns, large capacity magazines, straw purchasing), advocacy for new laws (safe storage), and our proactive collaboration with state and local law enforcement, we continue to use every tool at our disposal.

Consistent with my statutory duties under R.I.G.L. § 42-9-12.1, I submit this year's report to provide certain statistics involving firearms offenses in 2024. As in years past, this report provides additional details beyond what is required to illustrate our commitment to fighting violent crime in our communities.

Combatting gun violence is, and will always be, a top priority for my Office. Rhode Islanders deserve to live long, happy lives free from the threat of gun violence, and we intend to continue doing everything we can to keep them safe.

Sincerely,



Peter F. Neronha





# 2024 By the Numbers

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**751**

cases charged  
& disposed

**246**

cases involving magazines  
with capacity 11-30+

**486**

cases disposed  
statewide

**173**

cases involving  
multiple firearms

**415**

cases charged  
statewide

**100**

cases involving  
ghost guns\*

**358**

cases charged  
in Providence County

**58**

cases involving magazines  
with capacity 30+

**265**

cases charged in 2024  
that remain pending

**6**

cases involving straw purchasing  
or "lying & buying"

\*Polymer80 guns made up the majority of ghost guns in cases charged



# Data Comparison

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	2023	2024	
Cases charged & disposed	833	751	↓
Cases charged statewide	444	415	↓
Cases charged in Providence County	370	358	↓
Cases involving magazines with capacity 11-30+	293	246	↓
Cases involving multiple firearms	172	173	↑
Cases involving ghost guns	99	100	↑
Cases involving magazines with capacity 30+	55	58	↑



# Combating Violent Crime

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Keeping our communities safe and holding accountable those that endanger Rhode Islanders are among the highest priorities for the Office. We support these priorities through effective prosecution, criminal justice investments, and a proactive approach to gun crimes. Here are some 2024 highlights.

## **URBAN VIOLENT CRIME INITIATIVE**

The Urban Violent Crime Initiative is a prosecutor-led partnership with the Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls Police Departments, the Department of Corrections, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. Working together, prosecutors, investigators, and analysts are gathering data and intelligence, analyzing the information, and setting violent crime enforcement priorities.

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## **COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION**

In 2024, the Office established a new role - the Director of Community Violence Intervention and Prevention (CVI) - to take a proactive approach to violence intervention. Since then, CVI has engaged with local municipalities and organizations to bridge the gap between state agencies and the local community. Additionally, the Director has used grant funding to help educate law enforcement and community organizations about the negative impacts of hate crimes on communities.

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## **COLD CASE UNIT**

In 2023, the Office established a Cold Case Unit in the Attorney General's Office that would provide for statewide management and advancement of cold cases. Since then, the unit has focused on supporting state and local police departments in their investigations of unsolved cold cases and one member received a certification in forensic genealogy. The Unit now has in-house expertise for a service that would normally cost the state between \$10,000 to \$30,000 per case.



# Combating Violent Crime

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## NATIONAL INTEGRATED BALLISTIC INFORMATION NETWORK (NIBIN)

In 2022, the Office’s National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) machine was connected to the NIBIN network and became fully operational, a most significant development in the Office’s violent crime initiative. NIBIN machines allow the Office to analyze a shell casing from one shooting and identify connections between that shooting and any other shooting in the Northeast. This investment has allowed our Office to make crucial connections and help crack cases faster, getting guns and violent offenders off the street quicker than ever before.

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## SAFE STORAGE

In 2024, the Office successfully advocated for and testified in support of legislation requiring the safe storage of firearms in Rhode Island, which was passed by the General Assembly and later signed into law. The law strengthens requirements around the safe storage of firearms, specifically mandating that firearms be stored in a locked container or equipped with a tamper resistant mechanical lock or device “properly engaged in order to render such firearm inoperable by any person other than the lawful owner.” Additionally, the law increases penalties for those who do not safely store a firearm which results in a child injuring themselves or another person.

Along with community stakeholders, advocates, and legislative leaders, the Office recognizes that the proper handling and storage of firearms greatly decreases the risk of accidental or intentional harm by those not meant to operate the stored firearm.





# Gun Laws in Action

Attorney General Neronha has repeatedly advocated for common-sense measures aimed at preventing gun violence in Rhode Island. This year, the Office’s advocacy efforts have translated into laws on the books that are making Rhode Islanders safer. Meanwhile, we have continued our aggressive enforcement of existing laws. Below are some examples of gun laws and relevant 2024 cases resulting from those laws.

## ➔ STRAW PURCHASING

In 2021, the General Assembly strengthened laws against straw purchasing, which occurs when a purchaser purchases or obtains a gun for another person, knowing that the other person is prohibited from possessing a firearm. These laws go right to the heart of ensuring that firearms don’t fall into the wrong hands in Rhode Island.

On April 17, 2024, the Office of the Attorney General charged **Devin Barbosa** (age 29) and **Shardaisa Joi Reid** (age 29), by way of criminal information, each with three counts of straw purchasing a firearm and one count of conspiracy to straw purchase firearms. As alleged, Reid purchased a firearm on behalf of Barbosa, who is prohibited from possessing firearms as someone previously convicted of a violent crime.

## ➔ GHOST GUNS

Ghost guns continue to be sought out more frequently by those who are otherwise prohibited from lawfully purchasing or possessing guns in Rhode Island. In 2024, our Office charged and disposed of 100 cases involving ghost guns.

On February 8, 2024, **Ferdinando Lombardi** (age 56) was sentenced to serve nine years at the ACI for possessing 20 ghost guns and drug trafficking offenses following an investigation by the Rhode Island State Police into drug trafficking in the greater Providence area.





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## → FIREARMS APPLICATIONS

As previously mentioned, the General Assembly strengthened laws against straw purchasing, and in doing so, reaffirmed laws against lying on a firearm application.

On July 2, 2024, the Office of the Attorney General charged **Richard Osoria** (age 23), with one count of providing false information while attempting to secure a firearm. As alleged, the defendant lied twice on his federal application by denying that he was not currently subject to a court-issued restraining order, and that he had not been convicted of domestic violence.

## → LARGE-CAPACITY MAGAZINES

In 2022, the General Assembly passed a bill banning large capacity feeding devices, and since then, our Office has begun charging cases under the new ban. In 2024, there were 246 cases involving magazines with a capacity between 11-30+.

On April 10, 2024, the Office of the Attorney General charged **Martin McLintock** (age 31) with carrying a firearm in a vehicle without a license, possession of large capacity magazines, and possession of 10 grams or less of oxycodone. As alleged, state police troopers seized 11 large capacity magazines, including four 31-round and four 17-round magazines from the defendant's vehicle after he was stopped for driving an unregistered vehicle with a suspended license.



