



Pennsylvania Department of the

**AUDITOR GENERAL**

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## News for Immediate Release

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### **Auditor General DePasquale Launches Audit of PA State Police Firearms Instant Background Check System**

**HARRISBURG** – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today announced he will audit the Pennsylvania Instant Check System (PICS) operated by Pennsylvania State Police.

PICS provides quick access to background records to determine if an individual is eligible to buy a firearm or obtain a license to carry a firearm.

“The purpose of my audit is to make sure the PICS system is working as intended and has kept up with changing technology,” DePasquale said. “I want to ensure there are no gaps in the system that could result in a tragic loss of life.”

PICS was first implemented in 1998. Today, State Police say approximately 60 percent of the individuals seeking to purchase a firearm are approved within a matter of minutes.

State Police conducted more than 266,000 individual PICS checks during the first quarter of 2019. A total of 3,260 individuals were denied based on those checks.

DePasquale’s audit, which is being performed at the request of a bipartisan group of state legislators, will explore a number of issues, including:

- Examine whether State Police promptly, accurately and consistently issued decisions and processed challenges to denials in accordance with federal and state laws;
- Investigate whether all state and out-of-state criminal, civil, mental health, and other necessary records are incorporated into the PICS and the National Instant Criminal Background Check System; and
- Evaluate the process used to identify and address firearm owners who have lost the right to own a firearm and whether PSP’s role in this process is operating effectively.

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