



GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA

**800 N. 3rd St., Suite 402 | Harrisburg, PA 17102
(717) 220-3380 | pennsylvania.gunowners.org**

Val W. Finnell, MD, MPH
Pennsylvania Director

June 30th, 2022

Sheriff Kerry Welsh
Pike County Sheriff
412 Broad Street, Suite 5
Milford, Pennsylvania 18337
sheriff@pikepa.org

VIA ELECTRONIC– AND FIRST CLASS– MAIL

Dear Sheriff Welsh:

We are writing regarding our concerns with your office’s administration of Pennsylvania’s License to Carry Firearms (LTCF) applications within Pike County, mainly that your office has an additional supplemental page that is required to be completed, and to further advise you that it is our position that no Sheriff’s Office may contact references pursuant to Pennsylvania State Law.

First, Pike County is not permitted to supplement or change the LTCF application. See 18 Pa. C.S. § 6109 (c) (application “shall be uniform throughout this Commonwealth and shall be on a form prescribed by the Pennsylvania State Police”), compare to, Pike County LTCF Application, available at, <https://cms7files.revize.com/pikecountypa/Document%20Center/Courts%20&%20Law/Sheriffs%20Office/LTCApp.pdf>. The additional signature page you have placed after Form SP 4-127 is unauthorized and illegal under Pennsylvania state law.

Next, we wanted to take the opportunity to advise you that it is a violation of the authorizing statute for Pike County to contact references. See 18 Pa. C.S. § 6111 (i) (Confidentiality). Section 6111 prohibits the Sheriff’s Office from disclosing any information to any third-party provided by an LTCF applicant including their name or identity. *Id.* Contacting a reference would be a disclosure of information regarding an LTCF applicant, which would subject Pike County to civil damages of no less than \$1,000 per occurrence, which previously resulted in the City of Philadelphia paying a \$1.4 million dollar settlement in 2014. See *Doe v. Philadelphia*, Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas (Feb '12) No. 0375.

We have no doubt that you recognize the importance of the Second Amendment and Article I Section 21 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, particularly given the Supreme Court's recent affirmation of our right to defend ourselves outside the home. *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. ____ (2022). Therefore, we expect that you will promptly act to revise your process to comport itself with Pennsylvania law. We would be happy to work with you to address these issues, but Pike County should make these changes within 30 days, otherwise our organization will seek to make the necessary changes via the legal– and electoral– processes available to us.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Val W. Finnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Val W. Finnell, MD, MPH
Pennsylvania Director, GOA
val.finnell@gunowners.org