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More than 13,000 concealed carry applications get early OK

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The Illinois State Police said Tuesday that it had completed the initial approval of more than 13,000 concealed carry applications, moving residents a step closer to being able to carry loaded firearms in public. advertisement

Meanwhile, applications continued to pour in via the State Police's online registration site. The State Police received 1,089 applications Tuesday, for a total of 15,539.

Police officials said 1,749 applications were approved Tuesday, for a total of 13,064. Those applications must now be reviewed by local sheriff's departments, state's attorneys, local police and the attorney general's office, all of which have the power to object to a permit being issued. They have 30 days to complete the process.

On Sunday, the first day most people could apply electronically, 4,525 applications were filed. The bulk of the applications reviewed, nearly 7,000, were from people who were allowed to apply in advance during mid-December. They include firearms instructors and applicants who submitted electronic fingerprints along with their applications.

State Police spokeswoman Monique Bond said the early-application window allowed the department to beta-test its system prior to the large influx of applications this week.

"We have not had any issues and will be closely monitoring the process," said Bond. "We also hope to establish a steady baseline to help determine how the numbers will fluctuate on a daily basis.

Bond said that at least 105 applications were classified as incomplete and were rejected. The incomplete applications included missing information, insufficient training, invalid or missing photo and failure to provide 10 years of residence information.

To ensure that the applications are not denied unjustly, Gov. Pat Quinn has appointed a seven-member panel of federal prosecutors, FBI agents and judges to review objections raised by law enforcement. The board has another 30 days to review the rejected applications.

All told, the State Police has 120 days from the time they receive applications to issue licenses. Those who have been fingerprinted will receive their licenses within 90 days.

But Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart raised concerns last month that the approval process was "fraught with problems and holes" that could lead to permits being issued to people who have been arrested in the last seven years for domestic violence, gun possession or gang crimes. Since law enforcement agencies are banned from searching a comprehensive national database, Dart said, law enforcement agencies have to pour through

their own databases to look for arrests and jail records.

Currently, the state only accepts applications filed online through the State Police website. The agency will start accepting paper applications on July 1.

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