

or procedure is substantially equivalent to that specifically prescribed method or procedure; and

(3) The alternate method or procedure will not be contrary to any provision of law and will not result in an increase in cost to the Government or hinder the effective administration of this part. Where the licensee desires to employ an alternate method or procedure, a written application shall be submitted to the appropriate Director of Industry Operations, for transmittal to the Director. The application shall specifically describe the proposed alternate method or procedure and shall set forth the reasons for it. Alternate methods or procedures may not be employed until the application is approved by the Director. The licensee shall, during the period of authorization of an alternate method or procedure, comply with the terms of the approved application. Authorization of any alternate method or procedure may be withdrawn whenever, in the judgment of the Director, the effective administration of this part is hindered by the continuation of the authorization.

(b) *Emergency variations from requirements.* The Director may approve a method of operation other than as specified in this part, where it is found that an emergency exists and the proposed variation from the specified requirements are necessary and the proposed variations (1) will not hinder the effective administration of this part, and (2) will not be contrary to any provisions of law. Variations from requirements granted under this paragraph are conditioned on compliance with the procedures, conditions, and limitations set forth in the approval of the application. Failure to comply in good faith with the procedures, conditions, and limitations shall automatically terminate the authority for the variations, and the licensee shall fully comply with the prescribed requirements of regulations from which the variations were authorized. Authority for any variation may be withdrawn whenever, in the judgment of the Director, the effective administration of this part is hindered by the continuation of the variation. Where the licensee desires to employ an emergency variation, a writ-

ten application shall be submitted to the appropriate Director of Industry Operations for transmittal to the Director. The application shall describe the proposed variation and set forth the reasons for it. Variations may not be employed until the application is approved.

(c) *Retention of approved variations.* The licensee shall retain, as part of the licensee's records, available for examination by ATF officers, any application approved by the Director under this section.

[T.D. ATF-270, 53 FR 10492, Mar. 31, 1988]

**§ 478.23 Right of entry and examination.**

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), any ATF officer, when there is reasonable cause to believe a violation of the Act has occurred and that evidence of the violation may be found on the premises of any licensed manufacturer, licensed importer, licensed dealer, or licensed collector, may, upon demonstrating such cause before a Federal magistrate and obtaining from the magistrate a warrant authorizing entry, enter during business hours (or, in the case of a licensed collector, the hours of operation) the premises, including places of storage, of any such licensee for the purpose of inspecting or examining:

(1) Any records or documents required to be kept by such licensee under this part and

(2) Any inventory of firearms or ammunition kept or stored by any licensed manufacturer, licensed importer, or licensed dealer at such premises or any firearms curios or relics or ammunition kept or stored by any licensed collector at such premises.

(b) Any ATF officer, without having reasonable cause to believe a violation of the Act has occurred or that evidence of the violation may be found and without demonstrating such cause before a Federal magistrate or obtaining from the magistrate a warrant authorizing entry, may enter during business hours the premises, including

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places of storage, of any licensed manufacturer, licensed importer, or licensed dealer for the purpose of inspecting or examining the records, documents, ammunition and firearms referred to in paragraph (a) of this section:

(1) In the course of a reasonable inquiry during the course of a criminal investigation of a person or persons other than the licensee,

(2) For insuring compliance with the recordkeeping requirements of this part:

(i) Not more than once during any 12-month period, or

(ii) At any time with respect to records relating to a firearm involved in a criminal investigation that is traced to the licensee, or

(3) When such inspection or examination may be required for determining the disposition of one or more particular firearms in the course of a bona fide criminal investigation.

(c) Any ATF officer, without having reasonable cause to believe a violation of the Act has occurred or that evidence of the violation may be found and without demonstrating such cause before a Federal magistrate or obtaining from the magistrate a warrant authorizing entry, may enter during hours of operation the premises, including places of storage, of any licensed collector for the purpose of inspecting or examining the records, documents, firearms, and ammunition referred to in paragraph (a) of this section (1) for ensuring compliance with the recordkeeping requirements of this part not more than once during any 12-month period or (2) when such inspection or examination may be required for determining the disposition of one or more particular firearms in the course of a bona fide criminal investigation. At the election of the licensed collector, the annual inspection permitted by this paragraph shall be performed at the ATF office responsible for conducting such inspection in closest proximity to the collectors premises.

(d) The inspections and examinations provided by this section do not authorize an ATF officer to seize any records or documents other than those records or documents constituting material

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evidence of a violation of law. If an ATF officer seizes such records or documents, copies shall be provided the licensee within a reasonable time.

[T.D. ATF-270, 53 FR 10492, Mar. 31, 1988; as amended by T.D. ATF-363, 60 FR 17450, Apr. 6, 1995]

### § 478.24 Compilation of State laws and published ordinances.

(a) The Director shall annually revise and furnish Federal firearms licensees with a compilation of State laws and published ordinances which are relevant to the enforcement of this part. The Director annually revises the compilation and publishes it as “State Laws and Published Ordinances—Firearms” which is furnished free of charge to licensees under this part. Where the compilation has previously been furnished to licensees, the Director need only furnish amendments of the relevant laws and ordinances to such licensees.

(b) “State Laws and Published Ordinances—Firearms” is incorporated by reference in this part. It is ATF Publication 5300.5, revised yearly. The current edition is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. It is also available for inspection at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: [http://www.archives.gov/federal\\_register/code\\_of\\_federal\\_regulations/ibr\\_locations.html](http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html). This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register.

[T.D. ATF-270, 53 FR 10493, Mar. 31, 1988, as amended at 69 FR 18803, Apr. 9, 2004]

### § 478.25 Disclosure of information.

The Director of Industry Operations may make available to any Federal, State or local law enforcement agency any information which is obtained by reason of the provisions of the Act with respect to the identification of persons prohibited from purchasing or receiving firearms or ammunition who have purchased or received firearms or ammunition, together with a description of such firearms or ammunition. Upon the request of any Federal, State or