

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ATF eFORMS

### **Disclaimer:**

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### **What Forms do I Need to File to Get My NFA Item?**

If you are buying an NFA item, you must file an ATF eForm 4. If you are building your own suppressor or building an SBR, you must file an ATF eForm 1. Details about the electronic submission of the different ATF forms are covered below.

### **What is The Difference Between ATF Form 1 and 4?**

You may be wondering: what is a Form 1? If you're building your own NFA item (such as a silencer or short barrel rifle from a braced pistol), submit an ATF eForm 1.

The difference between an ATF Form 1 and ATF Form 4 is building the item on your own or purchasing an item that's been manufactured for that intended purpose. For example, a Form 4 is used when a consumer purchases an item (such as a suppressor), online, or through a dealer. If the suppressor was manufactured and shipped ready to use, you would use a Form 4. If you're building the suppressor yourself using pieces and parts, you would file a Form 1.

### **What is a Form 3?**

When a customer purchases a suppressor or other NFA item, it will be transferred to the customer's local dealer using the ATF Form 3. Form 3s initiate a transfer from one federal firearms licensee (FFL) to another FFL, usually for the purpose of facilitating a sale to a customer in another state.

Form 3s do not involve the making of a new suppressor or other NFA item.

### **What Is A Form 4?**

Unless you are a federal firearms licensee (FFL), you will need to file a Form 4 in order to purchase an NFA item such as a suppressor, short barrel rifle (SBR), short barrel shotgun (SBS), machine gun, or any other weapon (AOW).

*Example:* If you live in any of the 42 states where suppressors are legal and purchase a suppressor, the seller will prepare a Form 4, which you will need to certify, in order for the ATF to approve and register the transfer of the suppressor to you.

Prior to December 2021, this likely would have been a paper form, but can now be processed electronically as an ATF eForm 4.

### **What is a Form 4 Suppressor?**

If you are buying an NFA item that was manufactured for purchase (as opposed to you making the item), you'll file an ATF eForm 4.

### **Can You eFile a Form 4 as a Trust?**

Yes! eForms allows you to eFile as a Trust, Corporation, or Individual.

### **How Long Does it Take to Get a Form 4 Approved?**

ATF eForm 4 applications are being approved in as fast as one day. Typical turnarounds, as of the date of this letter are about two (2) weeks. These are historically fast approval times; not long ago, the average wait time for these forms was 8-12 months; now, it is just a few days.

### **How Long Does an NFA Tax Stamp Last?**

An NFA tax stamp is valid for the life of the item it is assigned to. Most suppressors will last a lifetime so they're commonly passed down through trusts. When an NFA item is registered through a trust and still in working order, the same tax stamp still applies. There is no predetermined expiration date for an NFA tax stamp.

### **Do I Need to Submit Fingerprints with My eForm?**

Yes, fingerprints are required for consumers when filing an eForm 1 or eForm 4. You can use one of the kiosks at your FFL to scan your fingerprints for your NFA application. The fingerprint scanned at the kiosk will be included in your application when you certify and submit your application at a dealer.

*Note:* if you mail a paper fingerprint card, your processing time will begin after that card is received and scanned by the ATF.

### **Things to Keep In Mind With Electronic Form 4 Submissions**

You must create an ATF eForms account in order to submit an eForm. To create an account, visit [eforms.atf.gov](https://eforms.atf.gov). When creating your ATF eForms login, you should use the same email address as your account at the FFL dealer and/or a Silencer Shop account.

In order to submit an eForm 4 successfully, it has to be done with an FFL dealer that has an SOT.

*Errors in the application:* The ATF has made it clear that with eForms, accuracy is extremely important. Applications with an error cannot be pulled for correction. The application will follow

the estimated 90 days for processing and then be rejected due to the error. It will need to be corrected and then resubmitted, with another estimated 90 days for approval.

Submitting an eForm can be done remotely if you file as a Trust or Corporation. If you file as an individual, you must certify in person with your FFL dealer.

Per the ATF, your eForms username, PIN, and password information are confidential and should not be shared with anyone.

When filing your eForm 4, the NFA item must already be assigned to you. You can't file your eForm while you're still deciding if/which item(s) you'll purchase.

### **What Is An Electronic Form 1?**

If you are building your own short-barreled rifle or shotgun or converting your brace weapon to an SBR/SBS, you will utilize the ATF eForm 1. The ATF eForm 1 allows you to create your own NFA item after approval.

Keep in mind that on the eForm 1 application, the serial number you will be engraving must be listed in box 4H. Your serial number must also include a letter and a number. No special characters are allowed.

### **What Is An Electronic Form 3?**

The purpose of a Form 3 is to transfer NFA items from one SOT to another SOT.

*Note:* This is not an aspect that involves the consumer.

*Example:* If you make a purchase on silencershop.com, that dealer will do an eForm 3 to transfer your item to your local FFL dealer that you selected. You will not have any direct involvement.

### **Changes That May Impact You**

An ATF eForm 3 is related to an eForm 4 because eForm 3 must be completed prior to an eForm 4 being filed. The receiving FFL/SOT must formally acquire the NFA item. Once acquired, the eForm 4 will be submitted.

### **Conclusion**

You can understand ATF eForms by taking your time to read and thoroughly review them and the instructions. Do this *before* you go to your FFL or the ATF website to complete or submit them. You may wish to print out several copies so that you can accurately fill them out before going to your FFL or the ATF website and completing them electronically.

### **ATF Forms**

The most common ATF forms you may use, including for NFA items, are: (a) ATF eForms 4473 (purchase of a firearm), (b) ATF eForm 4 (register/purchase an NFA firearm); and, (c) ATF eForm 1 (to make an NFA firearm).

Here are links to some of the ATF Forms as of October 2025:

1. Firearms Transaction Record (Form 4473)
2. Application to Make and Register a Firearm (Form 1)
3. Application for Tax Paid Transfer and Registration of Firearm (Form 4)
4. Application for Tax Exempt Transfer and Registration of Firearm (Form 5)
5. National Firearms Act (NFA) Responsible Person Questionnaire (Form 23)
6. Application to Transport Interstate or to Temporarily Export Certain National Firearms Act (NFA) Firearms (Form 20)

### **ATF Contact Information for Questions**

For questions relating to your eForms:

Hours: 8 AM to 5 PM EST Monday through Friday  
(except federal holidays)

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

Imports (voice): (304) 616-4550

National Firearms Act (NFA) (voice): (304) 616-4500

<https://www.atf.gov/contact>