

# Firearm Precursor Part Identification Guidebook

As mandated by Penal Code section 16531, subdivision (b).



California Department of Justice

Division of Law Enforcement

Bureau of Firearms

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## Introduction and Background

In 2019, the California Legislature passed Assembly Bill (“AB”) 879 (Ch. 730, Stats. 2019) to extend the laws governing the sale and purchase of firearms and ammunition to firearm precursor parts. Pursuant to Penal Code section 16531, a section added through the passage of AB 879, the Department of Justice (“Department”) is required to provide “written guidance and pictorial diagrams demonstrating each category of firearm precursor part.” (Pen. Code, § 16531, subd. (b).) In accordance with this mandate, the Department has developed this Firearm Precursor Part Identification Guidebook.

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide definitions of key terms and images that will allow an individual to properly identify a firearm precursor part as it is defined under California law. Commencing July 1, 2022, the purchase or transfer of a firearm precursor part must be performed through a licensed firearm precursor part vendor. (Pen. Code, § 30485.) Furthermore, commencing July 1, 2022, the purchaser or transferee of a firearm precursor part must undergo an eligibility check—or verify their exemption to an eligibility check—prior to receipt of the firearm precursor part. (Pen. Code, § 30452.)

In an effort to ensure compliance with California law, this guidebook will aid vendors, prospective purchasers or transferees, and law enforcement agencies with the identification of firearm precursor parts.

**Please note that this guidebook is subject to change pending the implementation of related federal regulations.**

**[\(Definition of “Frame or Receiver” and Identification of Firearms, 86 Fed. Reg. 27720 \(proposed May 21, 2021\) \(to be codified at 27 C.F.R. parts 447, 478, 479\).\)](#)**

## Written Guidance and Key Definitions

In accordance with Penal Code section 16531, subdivision (b), the Department has determined that the following written guidance—and subsequent pictorial diagrams—are essential to the identification of firearm precursor parts and are consistent with the definitions outlined in Penal Code section 16531, subdivision (a) and California Code of Regulations, title 11, section 4302. An individual may use the below terms and definitions in conjunction with the diagrams on pages 4 through 11 to properly identify firearm precursor parts.

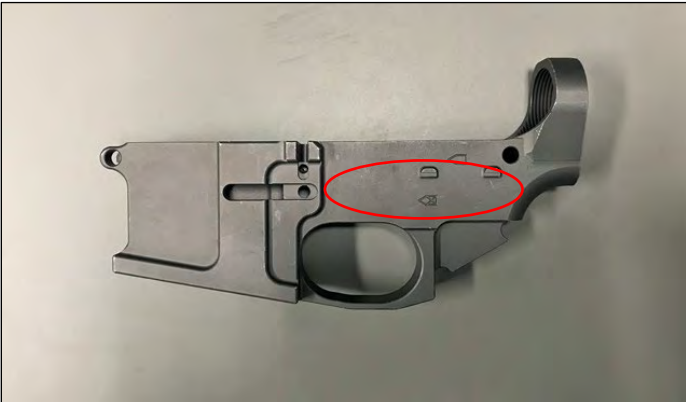
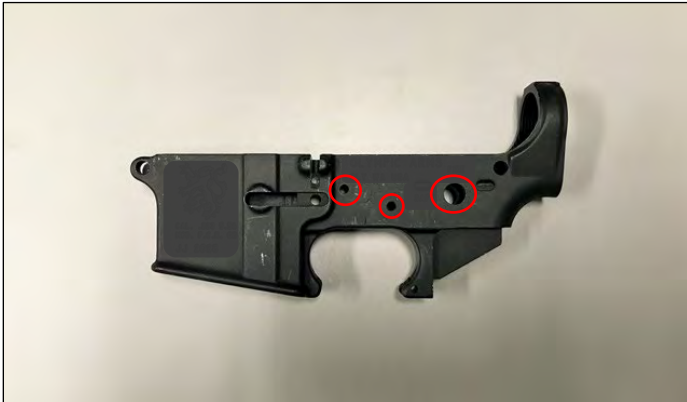
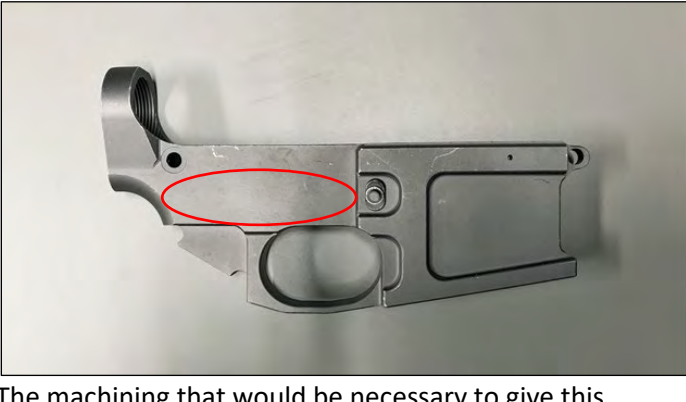



Term	Definition
Firearm	“Firearm” has the same meaning as the term is defined in Penal Code section 16520.
Firearm Precursor Part	“Firearm precursor part” means a component of a firearm that is necessary to build or assemble a firearm and is described in either of the following categories:  (1) An unfinished receiver, including both a single part receiver and a multiple part receiver, such as a receiver in an AR-10- or AR-15-style firearm. An unfinished receiver includes a receiver tube, a molded or shaped polymer frame or receiver, a metallic casting, a metallic forging, and a receiver flat, such as a Kalashnikov-style weapons system, Kalashnikov-style receiver channel, or a Browning-style receiver side plate. (Pen. Code, § 16531, subd. (a)(1).)  (2) An unfinished handgun frame. (Pen. Code, § 16531, subd. (a)(2).)  “Firearm precursor part” does not include: (1) firearm parts that can only be used on antique firearms, as defined in Penal Code section 16170, subdivision (c) (Pen. Code, § 16531, subd. (c)); or (2) a firearm or the frame or receiver thereof (Pen. Code, § 16531, subd. (d)).
Fire Control Component	“Fire control component” means a component necessary for the firearm to initiate, complete, or continue the firing sequence, including but not limited to any of the following: hammer, bolt, bolt carrier, breechblock, cylinder, trigger mechanism, firing pin, striker, or slide rails. (Definition of “Frame or Receiver” and Identification of Firearms, 86 Fed. Reg. 27720 (proposed May 21, 2021) (to be codified at 27 C.F.R. parts 447, 478, 479).)
Handgun	“Handgun” has the same meaning as the term is defined in Penal Code section 16640.
Long Gun	“Long gun” has the same meaning as the term is defined in Penal Code section 16865.

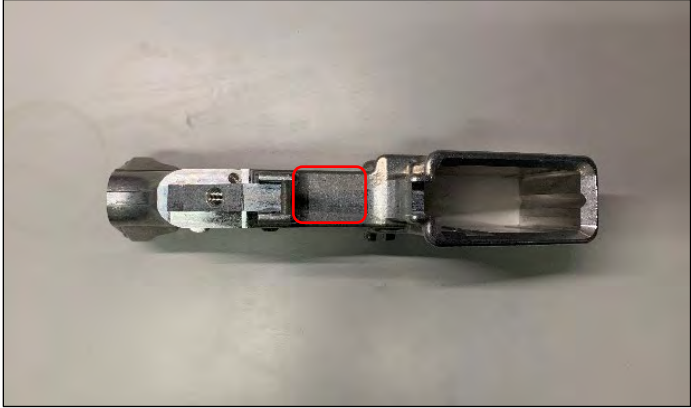
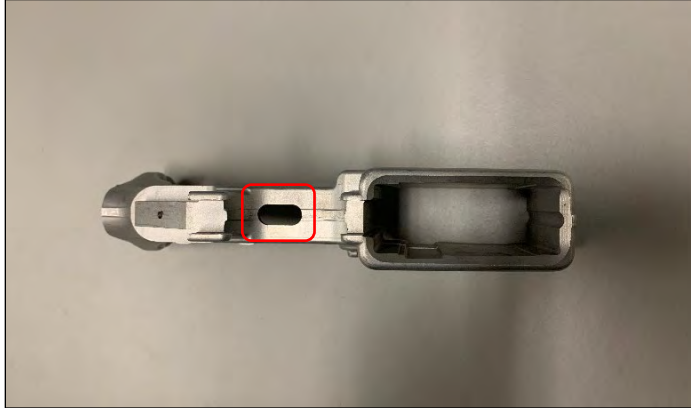
Term	Definition
Machining	"Machining" means the process of cutting, drilling, shaping, or removing material from a firearm precursor part or firearm using a tool. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 11, § 4302, subd. (a)(4).) (Definition of "Frame or Receiver" and Identification of Firearms, 86 Fed. Reg. 27720 (proposed May 21, 2021) (to be codified at 27 C.F.R. parts 447, 478, 479).)
Pistol	"Pistol" has the same meaning as the term is defined in Penal Code section 16530.
Readily	<p>"Readily" means a process that is fairly or reasonably efficient, quick, and easy, but not necessarily the most efficient, speedy, or easy process. Factors relevant in making this determination, with no single one controlling, include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Time, i.e., how long it takes to finish the process;</li> <li>(b) Ease, i.e., how difficult it is to do so;</li> <li>(c) Expertise, i.e., what knowledge and skills are required;</li> <li>(d) Equipment, i.e., what tools are required;</li> <li>(e) Availability, i.e., whether additional parts are required, and how easily they can be obtained;</li> <li>(f) Expense, i.e., how much it costs;</li> <li>(g) Scope, i.e., the extent to which the subject of the process must be changed to finish it; and</li> <li>(h) Feasibility, i.e., whether the process would damage or destroy the subject of the process, or cause it to malfunction.</li> </ul> <p>In determining whether a forging, casting, printing, extrusion, machined body or similar article may readily be completed, assembled, converted, or restored to hold or integrate the fire control components of a handgun or a long gun, the Department may consider any available instructions, guides, templates, jigs, equipment, tools, or marketing materials. (Cal Code Regs., tit. 11, § 4302, subd. (a)(5).) (Definition of "Frame or Receiver" and Identification of Firearms, 86 Fed. Reg. 27720 (proposed May 21, 2021) (to be codified at 27 C.F.R. parts 447, 478, 479).)</p>
Unfinished Handgun Frame	<p>"Unfinished handgun frame" means a forging, casting, printing, extrusion, machined body or similar article that has reached a stage in manufacture where it may readily be completed, assembled, converted, or restored to hold or integrate the fire control components of a handgun. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 11, § 4302, subd. (a)(6).) (Definition of "Frame or Receiver" and Identification of Firearms, 86 Fed. Reg. 27720 (proposed May 21, 2021) (to be codified at 27 C.F.R. parts 447, 478, 479).)</p> <p>For additional guidance regarding unfinished handgun frames, please see the pictorial diagrams below.</p>
Unfinished Receiver	<p>"Unfinished receiver" means a forging, casting, printing, extrusion, machined body or similar article that has reached a stage in manufacture where it may readily be completed, assembled, converted, or restored to hold or integrate the fire control components of a long gun. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 11, § 4302, subd. (a)(7).) (Definition of "Frame or Receiver" and Identification of Firearms, 86 Fed. Reg. 27720 (proposed May 21, 2021) (to be codified at 27 C.F.R. parts 447, 478, 479).)</p> <p>This includes both a single part receiver and a multiple part receiver (such as a receiver in an AR-10- or AR-15-style firearm), a receiver tube, a molded or shaped polymer receiver, a metallic casting, a metallic forging, and a receiver flat (such as a Kalashnikov-style weapons system, Kalashnikov-style receiver channel, or a Browning-style receiver side plate). (Pen. Code, § 16531, subd. (a)(1).)</p> <p>For additional guidance regarding unfinished receivers please see the pictorial diagrams below.</p>

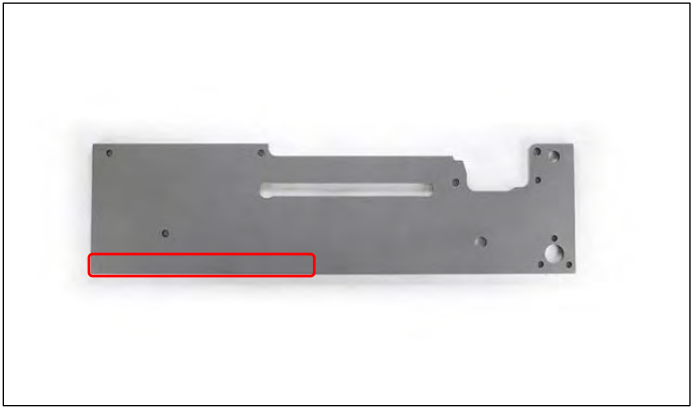
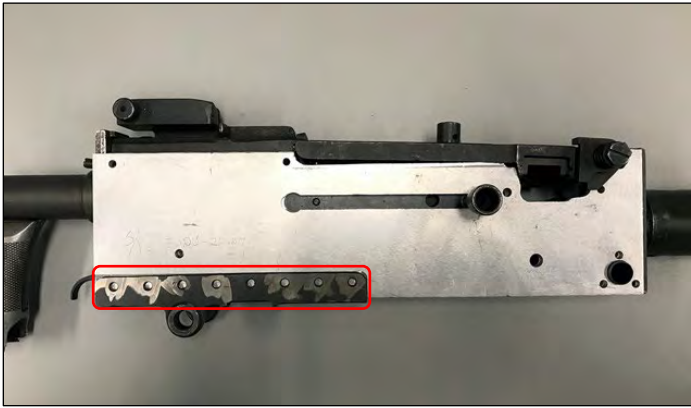
## Pictorial Diagrams of Firearm Precursor Parts and Completed Firearms

These pictorial diagrams, required under Penal Code section 16531, subdivision (b), serve as a visual reference for the identification of firearm precursor parts and firearms.

**Note:** These pictorial diagrams represent some of the most commonly manufactured firearm precursor parts and firearms. However, they do not represent all makes, models, or configurations of firearm precursor parts or firearms.

Armalite (AR-15) Style Receiver	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
 <p>The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Armalite (AR-15) style receiver a <b>Safety Selector Lever Hole, Hammer Pin Hole, or Trigger Pin Hole</b> has not been completed.</p>	 <p>The machining of the <b>Safety Selector Lever Hole, Hammer Pin Hole</b> and the <b>Trigger Pin Hole</b> on this Armalite (AR-15) style firearm receiver has been completed.</p>
 <p>The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Armalite (AR-15) style receiver a <b>Safety Selector Lever Hole, Hammer Pin Hole, or Trigger Pin Hole</b> has not been completed.</p>	 <p>The machining of the <b>Safety Selector Lever Hole, Hammer Pin Hole</b> and the <b>Trigger Pin Hole</b> on this Armalite (AR-15) style firearm receiver has been completed.</p>
 <p>The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Armalite (AR-15) style receiver a <b>Fire Control Cavity</b> has not been completed.</p>	 <p>The machining of the <b>Fire Control Cavity</b> on this Armalite (AR-15) style firearm receiver has been completed.</p>

Armalite (AR-15) Style Receiver	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
 <p>The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Armalite (AR-15) style receiver a <b>Trigger Slot</b> has not been completed.</p>	 <p>The machining of the <b>Trigger Slot</b> on this Armalite (AR-15) style firearm receiver has been completed.</p>
<p><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Armalite (AR-15) style receiver the characteristics listed above has not been completed. Therefore the part would be considered an <b>unfinished receiver</b>, and a <b>firearm precursor part</b>.</p>	<p><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The machining necessary to give this Armalite (AR-15) style firearm receiver the characteristics listed above has been completed. Therefore, the part is considered a <b>firearm receiver</b>.</p>

Browning-Style Receiver Right Side Plate	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
 <p>The machining of the 8 <b>rivet holes</b> that would be necessary to allow this unfinished Browning style receiver right side plate to be attached to the bottom plate has not been completed.</p>	 <p>The machining of the 8 <b>rivet holes</b> which allow this Browning style firearm receiver right side plate to be attached to the bottom plate has been completed.</p>
<p><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The machining of the 8 <b>rivet holes</b>, which are used to connect the unfinished Browning style right side plate to the bottom plate, has not been completed. Therefore, this part would be considered an <b>unfinished receiver</b>, and a <b>firearm precursor part</b>.</p>	<p><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The machining of the 8 <b>rivet holes</b>, which are used to connect the Browning style right side plate to the bottom plate, has been completed. Therefore, the part is considered a <b>firearm receiver</b>.</p>

Kalashnikov (AK-47) Style Receiver Channel and Flat

Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)

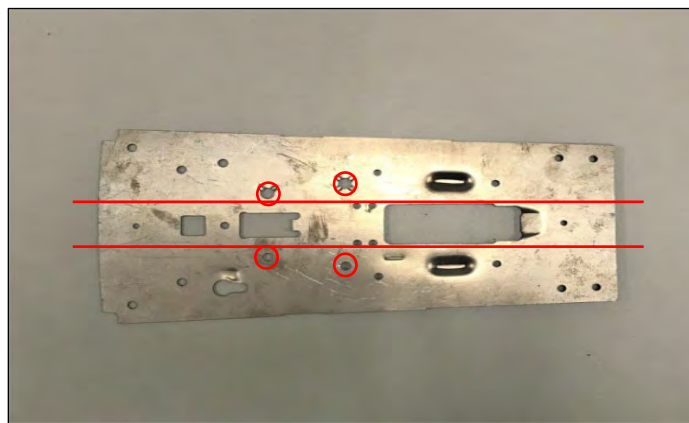


The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Kalashnikov (AK-47) style receiver **channel** a **Trigger Pin Hole** or a **Hammer Pin Hole** has not been completed.

Firearm Receiver



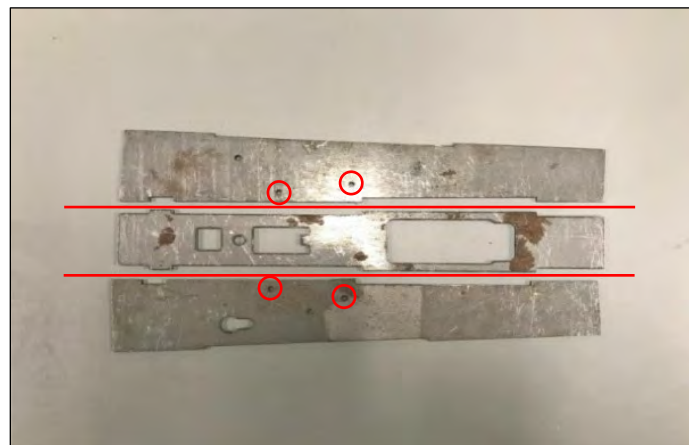
The machining of the **Trigger Pin Hole** and **Hammer Pin Hole** on this Kalashnikov (AK-47) style firearm receiver has been completed.



The machining necessary to give this unfinished Kalashnikov (AK-47) style receiver **flat** a **Trigger Pin Hole** and a **Hammer Pin Hole** has been completed. However, this receiver **flat** has not yet been folded, or cut and welded, into a firearm receiver **channel** configuration.


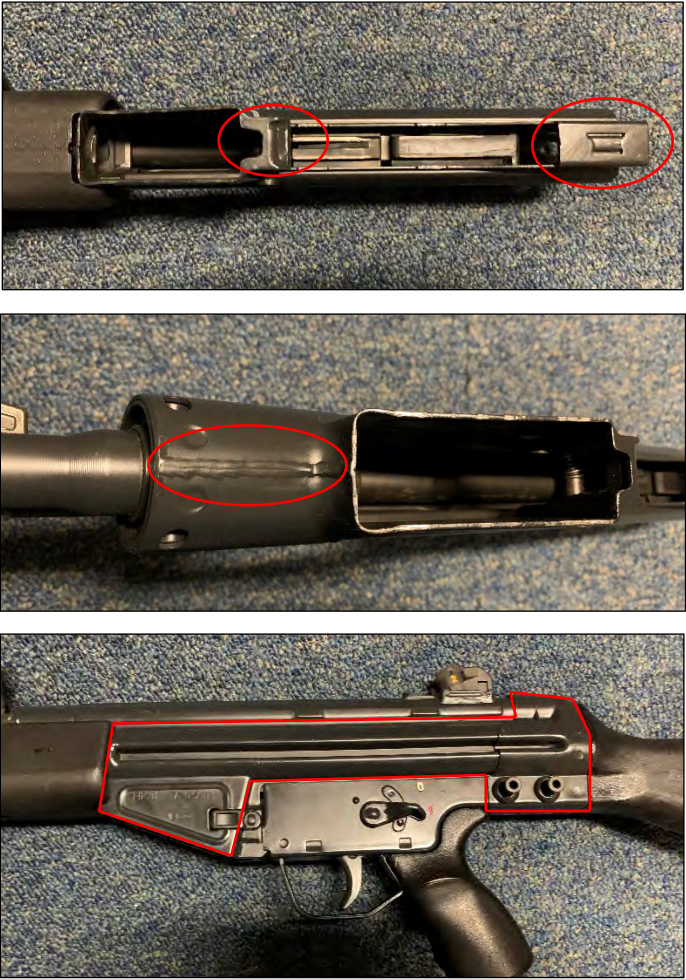


This Kalashnikov (AK-47) style firearm receiver has been folded and/or welded into a receiver **channel** configuration. The machining of the **Trigger Pin Hole** and **Hammer Pin Hole** has been completed, allowing for the integration of the fire control components on this Kalashnikov (AK-47) style **firearm receiver**.



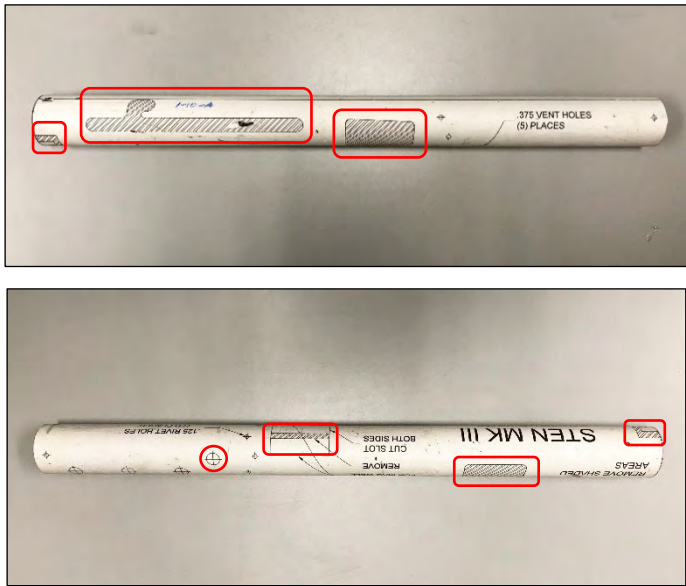

This unfinished Kalashnikov (AK-47) style receiver **flat** has been machined to have a **Trigger Pin Hole** and a **Hammer Pin Hole**, and has been cut. However, the unfinished receiver flat has not yet been welded into a firearm receiver **channel** configuration.

Kalashnikov (AK-47) Style Receiver Channel and Flat	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
Summary of Determination	Summary of Determination
<p>None of the unfinished Kalashnikov (AK-47) style receivers shown above meet <u>both</u> of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receiver is in a <b>channel</b> configuration (bent or welded); and</li> <li>2. The machining that is necessary to give this receiver both a <b>Trigger Pin Hole</b> <u>and</u> a <b>Hammer Pin Hole</b> has been completed.</li> </ol> <p>If a receiver of this style does not meet <u>both</u> of these criteria, the part would be classified as an <b>unfinished receiver</b>, and therefore a <b>firearm precursor part</b>.</p>	<p>The Kalashnikov (AK-47) style firearm receivers shown above meet <u>both</u> of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receiver is in a <b>channel</b> configuration (bent or welded); and</li> <li>2. The machining that is necessary to give this receiver both a <b>Trigger Pin Hole</b> <u>and</u> a <b>Hammer Pin Hole</b> has been completed.</li> </ol> <p>In this configuration the part would be considered a <b>firearm receiver</b>.</p>

Heckler & Koch (HK) Style Receiver Flat	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
 <p>This unfinished Heckler &amp; Koch (HK) style receiver <b>flat</b> has not yet been folded or rolled into a receiver <b>channel</b> configuration. The <b>welds</b> that would be necessary to integrate the fire control components of a firearm receiver have not been completed.</p>	 <p>This Heckler &amp; Koch (HK) style firearm receiver has been folded or rolled into a receiver <b>channel</b> configuration. The <b>welds</b> necessary to attach the part to the fire control components of a firearm have been completed.</p>



Heckler & Koch (HK) Style Receiver Flat	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
<p align="center"><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The unfinished Heckler &amp; Koch (HK) style receiver shown above does not meet <u>both</u> of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The receiver is in a <b>channel</b> configuration (bent/rolled); and</li> <li>2. The <b>welds</b> that are necessary to integrate the fire control components of a firearm receiver have been completed.</li> </ol> <p>If a receiver of this style does not meet <u>both</u> of these criteria, the part would be classified as an <b>unfinished receiver</b>, and therefore a <b>firearm precursor part</b>.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The Heckler &amp; Koch (HK) style firearm receivers shown above meet <u>both</u> of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The receiver is in a <b>channel</b> configuration (bent/rolled); and</li> <li>2. The <b>welds</b> that are necessary to integrate the fire control components of a firearm receiver have been completed.</li> </ol> <p>In this configuration the part would be considered a <b>firearm receiver</b>.</p>

STEN MK III Style Receiver Tube	
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Receiver)	Firearm Receiver
 <p>This unfinished STEN style receiver tube has been stenciled or overlaid with a blueprint identifying the machining which would be necessary to give this receiver a <b>Cocking/Charging Handle Slot</b>, <b>Ejection Port</b>, <b>Sear Hole</b>, or a <b>Magazine Well</b>. However, the machining of these characteristics has not been completed.</p>	 <p>The machining necessary to give this STEN style firearm receiver a <b>Cocking/Charging Handle Slot</b>, <b>Ejection Port</b>, <b>Sear Hole</b>, and <b>Magazine Well</b> has been completed.</p>
<p align="center"><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>The unfinished STEN style receiver tube shown above has been stenciled, or overlaid with a blueprint that would identify the machining necessary to give the receiver characteristics mentioned above. However, if the machining that would be necessary to give the unfinished receiver the characteristics mentioned above has not been completed, then the part is considered an <b>unfinished receiver</b>, and therefore a <b>firearm precursor part</b>.</p>	<p align="center"><b>Summary of Determination</b></p> <p>Whether it be through the use of a stencil, blueprint, or freehand, the machining necessary to give the receiver the characteristics mentioned above has been completed. Therefore, the part would be considered a <b>firearm receiver</b>.</p>

Glock Style Handgun Frame

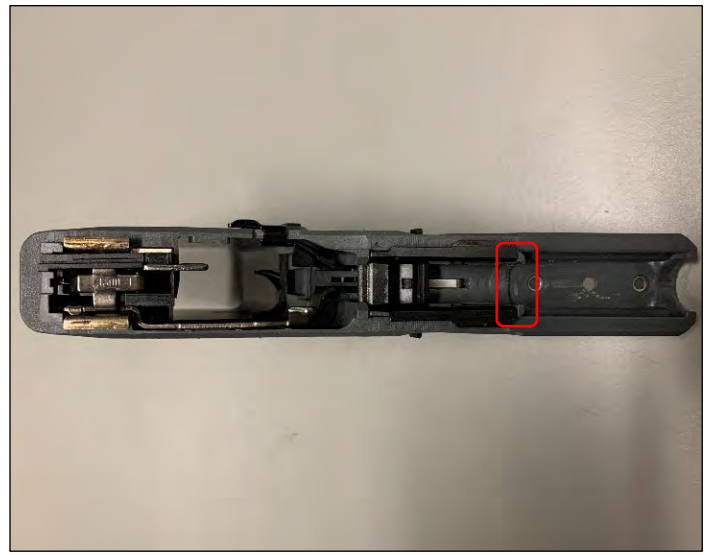
Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Handgun Frame)

Firearm Frame



The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Glock style handgun frame a **Trigger Housing Pin Hole**, **Trigger Pin Hole** or **Locking Block Pin Hole** has not been completed. Additionally, the machining necessary to remove the **Slide Rail Tabs**, which would be necessary to fit the **Slide Rails**, has not been completed.

The machining of the **Trigger Housing Pin Hole**, **Trigger Pin Hole** and **Locking Block Pin Hole** on this Glock style handgun frame has been completed. The machining of the **Slide Rail Tabs** has also been completed to fit the **Slide Rails**.



The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Glock style handgun frame a **Barrel Seat** has not been completed.

The machining of the **Barrel Seat** on this Glock style handgun frame has been completed.

Summary of Determination

Summary of Determination

The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished Glock style handgun frame the characteristics listed above has not been completed. Therefore, the part would be considered an **unfinished handgun frame**, and a **firearm precursor part**.

The machining necessary to give this Glock style handgun frame the characteristics listed above has been completed. Therefore the part is considered a **firearm frame**.

**1911 Style Handgun Frame**

**Firearm Precursor Part (Unfinished Handgun Frame)**

**Firearm Frame**



The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished 1911 style handgun frame a **Hammer Pivot Pin Hole, Sear Pivot Pin Hole, or Slide Rails** has not been completed.



The machining of the **Hammer Pivot Pin Hole, Sear Pivot Pin Hole, and Slide Rails** on this 1911 style handgun frame has been completed.



The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished 1911 style handgun frame a **Barrel Seat or Barrel Lug** area has not been completed.



The machining of the **Barrel Seat and Barrel Lug** areas on this 1911 style handgun frame has been completed.

**Summary of Determination**

**Summary of Determination**

The machining that would be necessary to give this unfinished 1911 style handgun frame the characteristics listed above has not been completed. Therefore, the part would be considered an **unfinished handgun frame**, and a **firearm precursor part**.

The machining necessary to give this 1911 style handgun frame the characteristics listed above has been completed. Therefore, the part is considered a **firearm frame**.