



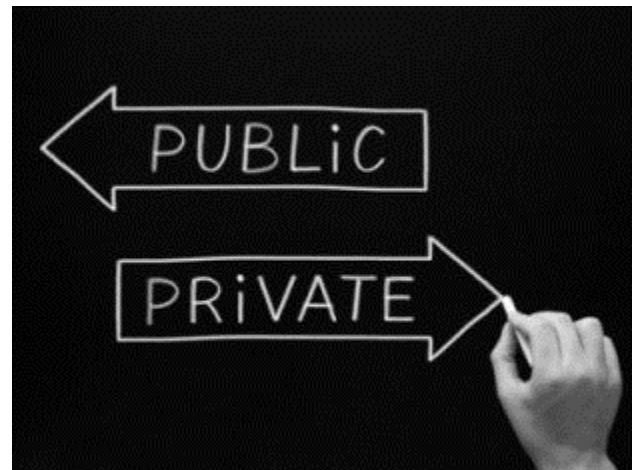
## Public vs. Private Information: Criminal Records

### What information in my criminal history is public?

Information on criminal convictions is available through both the Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS), and the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). Records of criminal convictions at the BCA are public for 15 years after the sentence is completed. But, records of criminal convictions are permanently available through MNCIS.

Public information includes:

- Charged Offense
- Date of the charged offense
- Court of conviction
- Outcome (also called Disposition)
- Probation agency or place of confinement
- Anything filed to the court



### Are my arrests public information?

That's a little complicated. Arrest history is often publicly available at local police departments and county sheriffs. But not always. Some departments make the information easy to access and others don't. There aren't really any rules about it, so it depends on where you go.

It is true that arrest history is not public at the BCA, BUT the BCA can give your arrest information to employers or landlords who got your permission to do a background check.

### What is private information?

Convictions more than 15 years old are private information.

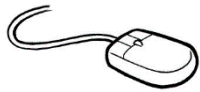
Most juvenile records are considered private information. There is an exception when a youth is 16 or older and is involved in a felony offense. In these cases, there is a public hearing and record. You can see these records at the courthouse. They are **not** available online.

## Who can look at public records?

Anyone can get public information on anyone. You can look at records at the BCA office using the public computer terminal in the lobby.

Public court records are also available online through the MNCIS database.

Access the MNCIS database here: <http://pa.courts.state.mn.us>. Or go to [www.mncourts.gov](http://www.mncourts.gov).



- Click on *Access Case Records*
- Click on *Minnesota District (Trial) Court Case Search*
- Read the information and follow the instructions

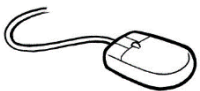
## Who can look at private records?

Private information on someone can only be seen in certain situations, by certain people. The only people who can get private information are:

- The person the private information is about. Also called subject of the record.
- Criminal justice agencies for criminal justice purposes.
- Individuals and organizations mandated to conduct background checks.
- Anyone who has a notarized [Informed Consent Form](#) signed by the person the information is about.



You can call the BCA at 651-793-2400 and ask them to mail you a copy of the form. Or get it online at <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca>.



- Click on *Public Services*
- Click on *Criminal History*
- Click on *Public and Private Data*
- Click on *Informed Consent Form*

See our fact sheet [Criminal Records](#) for more information

Find more fact sheets at [www.lawhelpmn.org/LASMfactsheets](http://www.lawhelpmn.org/LASMfactsheets)  
Find your local legal aid office at [www.lawhelpmn.org/resource/legal-aid-offices](http://www.lawhelpmn.org/resource/legal-aid-offices)

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