



## Criminal Records

### What's in my criminal record?

Minnesota criminal records can include information on all arrests, charges, and convictions. See our fact sheet [Public vs. Private Information: Criminal Records](#).

### Why is arrest information reported?

State law says that law enforcement agencies in the state have to report felony and gross misdemeanor arrests for juveniles and adults. They also have to report targeted misdemeanor arrests of adults.

**Note:** Targeted misdemeanors include:

- driving while impaired
- fifth-degree assault
- domestic assault
- interference with privacy
- indecent exposure, and
- violating a domestic abuse no contact order, order for protection, harassment order, or restraining order.



These arrests have to be reported to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). The BCA keeps statewide criminal history records.

### What does not have to be reported?

Not all misdemeanor arrests have to be reported to the BCA, but local police departments can report them if they choose.

Common types of misdemeanors that don't always get reported include:

- disorderly conduct
- misdemeanor theft and
- traffic violations that are not about impaired driving

### Where are my criminal records kept?

Your criminal records are kept at the courts, the BCA, and other law enforcement agencies like the local police department. They are sometimes also collected and kept by private companies.

## How to find them

- Search the court's website using a database called Minnesota Court Records Online (MCRO) at: <https://publicaccess.courts.state.mn.us/CaseSearch>.

You search by name and other identifying information. The MCRO database lets you access a document called a "Register of Actions." This document gives an overview of everything that happened with your case in court.

You can search any criminal case that has been filed with the court, unless it has been expunged or it is pending. You can find pending cases without a conviction, but you need to know the case number, citation number, lawyer name, or lawyer bar number. A pending case includes a case that is dismissed or pending dismissal. You can't search arrest history for arrests that did not end in court action.

- You can do a full search at any Minnesota district courthouse through the public access terminals. That includes dismissed and pending cases. Go to a courthouse and ask a court clerk to print your list of criminal cases. Most courthouses charge a printing fee of \$8.00 to \$10.00. **You don't need to print each record.** Ask the clerk for the CASE RECORDS SEARCH RESULTS PAGE. This lists all of your cases and case numbers. You could also take a photo of the results page on the computer and not pay a printing fee.
- The BCA's website <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/criminal-justice-information-services/background-checks/public> has records of cases that ended in a conviction and for which your sentenced was discharged within the last 15 years. To get a full copy of your BCA record, including information about arrests that did not lead to a conviction, you have to ask in person or by mail. (see "How can I get a copy of my full criminal history record from the BCA?" below)
- Your records with private companies may be available online depending on the company. You need to check with them.

If you are looking for a record of a case from another state, contact the court where the case happened.

## Does a criminal history record from the BCA have all my criminal information?

A criminal history record at the BCA has information from law enforcement, courts, and corrections from the whole state.

But, if an offense doesn't have fingerprints in the record, the information related to that offense won't be part of the BCA's criminal history record even if it resulted in a conviction.



## How can I get a copy of my full criminal history record from the BCA?

You can ask for a printed copy of your own criminal history record from the BCA. The copy has public and private data. You can get your BCA records by mail or in person.

**By Mail:** Fill out a [Mail-In Personal Request Consent Form](#). Get the form from the BCA or use the one attached to this fact sheet. Fill it out completely and have it notarized.

You don't have to use the form. You can write a letter asking for copies of your record. It still has to be notarized. Make sure the letter has your name and date of birth, and any other names used.

Mail your completed form or letter in with a personal check or money order for \$8.00 made payable to the BCA. Also include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

**In Person:** You can also go to the BCA office and ask for a copy of your record. **The BCA takes your fingerprints.** You need to pay \$8.00. You need to show them identification, like a driver's license.

The BCA is located at 1430 Maryland Ave. E., St. Paul, MN 55106.  
The phone number for the BCA is [\(651\) 793-7000](tel:6517937000).

## What if I think what's in my BCA record is wrong or there is missing information?

If you don't agree with the information in your BCA file, you have the right to challenge that information. You need to explain what parts of the record you think are wrong or incomplete.

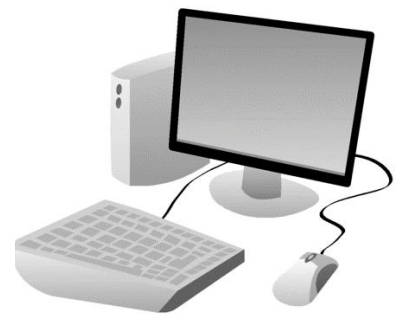
You have to do this in writing. Send your written explanation to the BCA at:

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension  
1430 Maryland Ave. East  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55106

The BCA has 30 days to review the challenge and will let you know what they decide. For more info about the BCA's records, [visit their website at:](#)

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/>

- Click on Public Services on the left
- Click on Criminal History



Talk to a lawyer if you want to challenge a record.

- The Legal Rights Center (Hennepin County)  
Go to: [www.legalrightscenter.org](http://www.legalrightscenter.org) or call 612-337-0030.
- The Neighborhood Justice Center (Ramsey County)  
Go to: [www.njcinc.org](http://www.njcinc.org) or call 651-222-4703.
- The Indian Legal Assistance Program (for St. Louis, Carlton, Lake, Cook, Aitkin, Mille Lacs, Pine, Crow Wing and Morrison counties)  
Go to: <http://ilap-duluth.com> or call 218-727-2881 or (888) 249-3205.
- The Regional Native Public Defense Corporation (If you are a member of the White Earth or Leech Lake Reservations and live in Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard, Itasca, and Mahnommen counties)  
Go to: <http://rnpdc.org> or call 218-339-5680 (Leech Lake) or (218) 983-3285 (White Earth).

### **Can I do anything about my criminal record showing up in other places online?**

There are companies that make money by spreading criminal records information online. These are also sometimes called “aggregators.” Each aggregator is a little different in how they handle removing your personal information. If you find records online that are wrong, contact the aggregator directly.

### **Can I get things removed from my criminal record?**

Sometimes. It’s called Expungement. Expungement is when you go to court to ask a judge to seal a court record. Getting an expungement can be helpful if you have trouble getting a job, finding housing, or getting a professional license because of your criminal background.

An expunged record is NOT destroyed. The police, FBI, immigration officers, and other public officials can still see sealed court files for certain reasons.

There are different kinds of expungements. The court has good information about expungements on its website: [www.mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Criminal-Expungement.aspx](http://www.mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Criminal-Expungement.aspx).

Expungements are complicated. Talk to a lawyer if you are thinking about getting your records expunged.

## For help with a criminal expungement

- Some counties and the Attorney General’s Office have programs to help with expungements. Go to <https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Expungement.asp>
- The Volunteer Lawyers Network (VLN). VLN can provide free help in some cases in different parts of the state. Go to: [www.vlnmn.org](http://www.vlnmn.org) or call 612-752-6677.
- The Legal Rights Center (Hennepin County)  
Go to: [www.legalrightscenter.org](http://www.legalrightscenter.org) or call 612-337-0030.
- The Neighborhood Justice Center (Ramsey County)  
Go to: [www.njcinc.org](http://www.njcinc.org) or call 651-222-4703.



You can also call your local Legal Aid office at 1-(877) 696-6529 to see if they help with criminal expungements.

**Fact Sheets are legal information NOT legal advice. See a lawyer for advice.**

*Don't use this fact sheet if it is more than 1 year old. Ask us for updates, a fact sheet list, or alternate formats.*

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Notarize and mail this request with \$8.00 and a Self-Addressed Stamped envelope to this address:

CJIS Criminal History Access Unit  
Bureau of Criminal Apprehension 1430  
Maryland Avenue East  
St. Paul, MN 55106

## Request for Copy of Criminal Record From the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

*\*\*Note: if you are seeking expungement of a predatory offense (for example, criminal sexual conduct), please contact an attorney first\*\**

Please mail me copies of both my public and private BCA Criminal Records, both juvenile and adult, to the address listed below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip

I understand that the BCA needs the following information to release my records:

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Names - Maiden Name, Former Married Name, Alias, etc:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature (You must sign in the presence of a Notary Public):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that even if I am on public assistance or reside in a shelter the BCA will still not waive the \$8.00 cost associated with sending me my criminal record. Enclosed as the payment of the \$8.00 fee is: (circle one of the following)

**a personal check / a money order / cash (not recommended)**

### Notarization:

Sworn/affirmed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public / Deputy Court

Administrator \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_