2020 Survey of State Criminal History Information Systems – An Overview of Findings

Dennis DeBacco
Justice Information Services Specialist
SEARCH Law and Policy Program

Seattle, Washington
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Background

• 16th survey conducted by SEARCH for BJS, since 1989
  – Published December 2022
• Data was collected May-July 2021 for calendar year ending December 2020
• Responses were received from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam
• The report consists of a front-end summary of information collected and some 40 data tables
  – https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/list/research
  – https://www.search.org/resources/surveys/
Number of Subjects in State Criminal History Files (Millions)


Number of Subjects:
- Total
- Automated
- Manual

Data Points:
- 2006: Total 80.7, Automated 73.6, Manual 7.1
- 2008: Total 92.3, Automated 85.8, Manual 6.5
- 2010: Total 97.9, Automated 90.4, Manual 6.0
- 2012: Total 100.6, Automated 94.4, Manual 6.2
- 2014: Total 105.6, Automated 100, Manual 5.5
- 2016: Total 110.2, Automated 105.9, Manual 4.3
- 2018: Total 112.5, Automated 109.4, Manual 3.1
- 2020: Total 114.4, Automated 109.1, Manual 5.2
Noncriminal Justice Queries Continues to Expand

Volume of Fingerprints Process for Criminal Justice and Noncriminal Justice Purposes
(Millions)

Year


Volume - Total Fingertips Processed

- 2006: 19.8
- 2008: 22.2
- 2010: 21.8
- 2012: 23.0
- 2014: 23.9
- 2016: 25.9
- 2018: 25.8
- 2020: 20.3

Volume - Total - Criminal Justice Purposes

- 2006: 12.1
- 2008: 12.1
- 2010: 11.8
- 2012: 12.7
- 2014: 11.7
- 2016: 11.3
- 2018: 10.5
- 2020: 7.5

Volume - Total - Non Criminal Justice Purposes

- 2006: 7.7
- 2008: 10.1
- 2010: 10.0
- 2012: 10.5
- 2014: 12.2
- 2016: 14.6
- 2018: 15.3
- 2020: 12.8
• **Arrest Fingerprint Cards**
  - 10 states reported 6,500 arrest fingerprint records in backlog representing a significant *decrease* from 2018 where 7 states reported a backlog of over 828,000 records.

• **Dispositions**
  - 26 states reported 7 million disposition records in backlog representing a significant *increase* over 2018 where 24 states reported having over 2 million dispositions in backlog.
New for 2020

• Removing CCH records upon receiving a “death notification” from an authorized source, or upon a subject reaching a predetermined age
  
  – 11 states remove a decedents record from file upon receiving a death certificate from an authorized source. 2,013 records were removed in 2020
  
  – West Virginia adds a deceased notation to the record and keeps it on file
  
  – 41 states do not remove a deceased person’s record from state repository files
  
  – 13 states require fingerprints of the decedent
16 states purge records when the subject of the record reaches a certain age.
  • 2,323 age-qualified records were removed in 2020
10 states purge records at age 100 or above
The District of Columbia and 3 states (Arizona, North Dakota, and Oregon) purge records when the subject reaches age 80 or above
The District of Columbia and 3 states (Michigan, Ohio, and Oregon) check for new entries to a subject’s record before deciding whether to keep the record on file, regardless of the subject’s age
• Record sealing and expungement practices
  – 46 states, the District of Columbia and Guam . . . Have statutes and/or policies that define procedures for sealing and/or expunging records
  – 5 states (Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, Nevada, and Utah) have them for sealing records only
  – 13 states and Guam have them for expunging records only
  – 28 states and the District of Columbia have them for both sealing and expunging criminal history records
New for 2020 (cont.)

- **21 states** . . . Make sealed records available for research, while **17** states and the **District of Columbia** do not make sealed records available for research purposes.

- In 2020, **2.8 million** sealing requests and over **298,000** expungement requests were received by state repositories.
• Use of CCH record metrics and performance reporting tools (e.g., dashboards, reports, etc.)
  
  – **31 states** - Report having them while **21 states** do not. The types of reports vary between agencies
  
  – **29 states** - Send reports of missing arrests and/or dispositions to contributing agencies
    
    • **20** send to law enforcement
    • **12** to prosecutors
    • **17** to courts
  
  – **17 states** - Make data quality metrics available to show missing arrests and dispositions, number of records submitted and rejected, etc.
    
    • **14** make the metrics available to law enforcement
    • **6** to prosecutors
    • **10** to courts

New for 2020 (cont.)
SEARCH will be following up with 31 states based on 2021 survey responses

Telephone interviews

Request of states
  - Standard and ad hoc reports related to CCH information quality – e.g., missing data and agencies that fail to report
  - Samples of reports and reporting tools

Please let us know if you have CCH analytic dashboards you are willing to share
# Low Disposition Reporting

## Percentage of All Arrests in State CCH Databases Having Final Dispositions

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# High Disposition Reporting

## Percentage of All Arrests in State CCH Databases Having Final Dispositions

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• **10 states with lowest disposition reporting rates**
  – Site visits to document challenges
  – Technical assistance from SEARCH and National Center for State Courts

• **10 states with highest disposition reporting rates**
  – Outreach to identify strategies for success
  – White paper series highlighting promising practices
New for 2022

• Abbreviated survey

• Continue time series
  – Number of arrests in state criminal history files
  – Percent missing final dispositions

• New topic
  – Number of arrests missing final dispositions
  – Cite and release estimates
    • Statewide citation files
    • Rejected dispositions (i.e., missing arrests)
    • Non-fingerprint-based records (where applicable)

• 2022 Surveys will be distributed soon
Questions