



Illinois' Computerized Criminal History Information System: An Overview

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Criminal history record information (CHRI) plays a crucial role at every stage of the criminal justice process.

Because of this, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is beginning a series of publications that will advise readers of recent changes in the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of CHRI. This advisory—the first in the series—provides a brief overview of CHRI in Illinois. It outlines recent reporting modifications to the state's Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system, which maintains CHRI, and recent changes in the scope and content of responses to CHRI requests.

Future advisories in this CHRI series will address more specific issues relating to criminal history record information in Illinois.

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI)¹ consists of information reported by criminal justice agencies to the state central repository summarizing an individual's formal contacts with the criminal justice system. An individual's CHRI transcript, commonly known as a "rap sheet," consists of personal identification information (such as name, race, sex, date of birth, and various physical characteristics), fingerprint classification, and a cumulative record of arrests, state's attorneys' charges, court dispositions and sentence information. The transcript does not, however, include intelligence and investigative records, detailed records of court proceedings, or records of traffic offenses.²

CHRI is an important decision-making tool for law enforcement, prosecutorial, judicial, and correctional officials that affects how the system processes every accused person. The soundness of many criminal justice decisions depends on the integrity of CHRI—its accuracy, completeness, and timeliness. Deficiencies in any of these areas can compromise not only criminal justice decisions but ultimately public safety and the rights of accused individuals as well as convicted offenders. CHRI is also essential to authorized non-criminal justice agencies, such as school districts and local governmental units,

that use CHRI for employment or registration and licensing purposes.

Because CHRI is important in so many areas, ensuring its quality has become even more critical in recent years in light of other factors: an increasing volume of CHRI that is reported, maintained, and disseminated; improved technology permitting more efficient access to and more useful formats of the data; and legislative trends toward expanded disclosure of such information.

Specific responsibilities for the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of CHRI in Illinois are identified in the Criminal Identification and Investigation Act of 1931.³ This statute designates the Illinois State Police (ISP), formerly called the Illinois Department of State Police, as the central repository and custodian of the Uniform Crime Reporting statistics for the state. All policing bodies in Illinois are required to furnish daily to ISP charge information, fingerprints, and descriptions of individuals arrested for all felonies and Class A and B misdemeanors.⁴ Other criminal justice agencies are required to submit subsequent disposition information within 30 days of the disposition event for which they are responsible: state's attorneys must supply charge information and circuit court clerks must supply court disposition information. Correctional agencies must supply custodial information for all sentenced offenders.

How CHRI is used

Contributors of CHRI depend on the state-maintained Computerized Criminal History (CCH) information system to help make decisions in processing persons through each stage of the criminal justice system:

- Law enforcement officers use CHRI in conducting investigations and in charging suspects.
- State's attorneys rely on CHRI in deciding how to approach a case, in making bail recommendations, in negotiating pleas, and in filing charges that may be upgraded based upon a defendant's prior criminal history.
- Judges depend on CHRI both in setting bond for defendants and in deciding which defendants should not be released on bond prior to final disposition of a case. They also use CHRI in sentencing convicted offenders—in determining both the type of sentence and its duration.
- Probation and community correctional personnel use CHRI to determine appropriate levels of supervision and to develop individualized treatment programs for offenders.
- Correctional managers use the information in determining security classifications, housing, and work assignments for inmates.

CHRI maintained by ISP is available on request to all criminal justice agencies in Illinois.⁵ Only conviction information, however, may be furnished to authorized non-criminal justice agencies,⁶ including school districts and governmental units at the

local, county, and state levels. Such conviction information is generally used for decisions related to employment. The Department of Professional Regulation, formerly called the Department of Registration and Education, uses the information in satisfying various registration requirements (for example, private detectives and security officers). Other governmental agencies use conviction information in issuing various licenses (for example, liquor sales).

Thus, for both governmental and criminal justice agencies, CHRI is an essential tool of daily operations. For criminal justice agencies in particular, rap sheets are essential to decisions that affect public safety and the rights of suspects and offenders. The quality of the CHRI, however, depends on the consistency and timeliness with which the users of the information themselves accurately and completely report the criminal history events for which they are responsible. Reporting of incorrect or incomplete CHRI, or delays in reporting the information, can compromise all subsequent criminal justice decisions pertaining to the case at hand and future cases that may involve the individual.

Illinois' CCH system

ISP began collecting CHRI in 1931 in compliance with the state's Criminal Identification and Investigation Act. During the early years, all records were kept manually. In the mid-1970s, following advancements in automation technology and with the support of the federal government's Comprehensive Data System program, ISP began the state's CCH system. The CCH system stores CHRI reported by state and local criminal justice agencies and generates transcripts of the reported information.

ISP maintains the CCH system and disseminates CHRI to all criminal justice and authorized non-criminal justice agencies upon request. Because

the criminal justice system depends on CHRI for day-to-day operations, the integrity of the database must be maintained. To ensure that procedures are established to promptly identify and correct inaccuracies, and to ensure that the state repository complies with federal and state laws protecting the privacy and security of CHRI, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is mandated by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act of 1983⁷ to audit the CCH system. Specifically, the Authority is required to "act as the sole, official criminal justice body in the State of Illinois to conduct annual and periodic audits of the procedures, policies, and practices of the State central repositories for criminal history record information."

Additionally, the Authority is responsible for:

- Approving the form and manner by which law enforcement, prosecutorial, and correctional agencies report CHRI to ISP
- Prescribing fees and procedures for individuals to access, review, and challenge their CCH records
- Making final administrative determination in appeals of such challenges

How the CCH system works

While all reported CCH events are processed by ISP's Bureau of Identification, located in Joliet, specific processing procedures vary according to the type of event reported.

Arrest and custodial card submissions, which are accompanied by fingerprint cards, require multiple processing steps primarily because these criminal history events can initiate a new CCH record.⁸ Determining whether the submission can be positively linked to an existing CCH record or whether it requires the creation of a new CCH record adds

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complex identification procedures to the processing of these submissions. Legible and properly rolled fingerprints accompanying both arrest and custodial card submissions are essential to establishing positive identification of the subject.

Subsequent events related to an arrest (for example, prosecution, court disposition, incarceration) are reported by each criminal justice agency responsible for the action and are posted on the CCH system. These criminal justice agencies are required by the "uniform disposition reporting" law⁹ to report such events within 30 days of their occurrence. In turn, ISP must file all reported information within time frames specified by federal regulation.¹⁰ Source documentation of all reported CCH events is micro-filmed, with duplicates securely stored in off-site locations. This provides a means to re-create the contents of the CCH database in the event of a systemic or environmental catastrophe.

CHRI responses

CHRI in the CCH database is available to criminal justice agencies in various formats depending on how much detail is required and how quickly the information is needed. CHRI in the form of a CCH transcript, or rap sheet, is a cumulative record of an individual's formal contacts with the Illinois criminal justice system. While the transcript is quite detailed, reflecting all record information posted to the CCH system, the speed with which it can be obtained from ISP varies significantly because some records are not fully automated.

Most individuals' rap sheets are fully automated, that is, completely recorded on the CCH database. Consequently, these records can be accessed in a timely fashion. If, however, a transcript is requested for an individual whose CCH record does not contain all the information present in the corresponding manual file,

1986 CHRI Fingerprint Processing

One indication of the crucial role the CCH system plays in the Illinois criminal justice system is the volume of CHRI that is processed. The number of various types of fingerprint card submissions processed by ISP in 1986 is shown below.

Submission type	Yearly	Monthly average
Arrest Fingerprint Cards	187,285	15,607
Custodial Fingerprint Cards	16,332	1,361
Custodial Status Changes	11,921	993
Applicant Fingerprint Cards	27,313	2,276
Access and Review Fingerprint Cards	496	41
Post Mortem Print Cards	1,237	103
Palm Print Cards	2,968	247
Records Check Only	57,457	4,788

source documents must be retrieved and the CCH database must be updated before a transcript can be disseminated. While initially this process can be time consuming, it ensures that the record is made fully automated and that it will be readily generated in response to future requests.

Transcripts may be either electronically transmitted via telefacsimile equipment, printed out directly at the requestor's site (using compatible equipment), or mailed in response to a request.¹¹ In 1986, 193,542 CHRI responses were sent to users, or an average of more than 16,000 per month.¹² The volume of CHRI responses reaffirms the critical role of the CCH system in Illinois' criminal justice system.

CHRI is also available from ISP in summary form through the Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS) communications network. Responses to requests for CHRI through LEADS contain subject identification information as well as a summarized count of arrests and convictions by charge. Although not very detailed, an automated LEADS summary transcript is the most readily accessible form of CHRI.

The quality of CCH data

The magnitude of the CCH system, the complexities of record processing, and the number and diversity of reporting agencies all affect the quality of individual records. Local agencies must report the required information accurately, completely, and in a timely fashion to promote the most effective use of CHRI. Ultimately, the CCH system is only as sound as the source data submitted by reporting agencies.

Timeliness of records. Informed decisions about processing people through the criminal justice system require that CHRI be available when needed. Compliance with the uniform disposition reporting law, which governs the reporting of CCH events in a timely fashion, and compliance with federal regulations, which specify time frames within which ISP must file all reported events, ensures this critical information is available for criminal justice decisions.

Accuracy of records. At the local agency level, record accuracy rests solely with each agency's procedures for consistently reporting accurate and complete information in a timely manner and for submitting legible fingerprints. At the ISP level, record accuracy depends on the proper posting of that information to the correct CCH

record. If criminal history events were recorded on the wrong record during processing by ISP, one rap sheet would fail to reflect the criminal history event, and thus would appear less extensive and serious than it should. In addition, another rap sheet would erroneously contain the criminal history event and would appear more extensive and serious than it really was. Subsequent criminal justice decisions (charges filed, court dispositions, custody status) based on either rap sheet would be compromised. The inaccurate or incomplete information resulting from such an error could possibly jeopardize public safety or the safety of criminal justice officials or could result in unfair decisions against a subject whose record reflects someone else's criminal activity. The document control number (DCN), which links all disposition events to the related arrest, minimizes the possibility of such errors. Now the DCN is preprinted on all copies of the multi-purpose form to ensure the connection between arrest and disposition information.

In addition, if ISP does not link a CHRI submission to a subject's previous criminal history record, more than one record for a single offender will be created and maintained. Duplicate records misrepresent the extent of an offender's criminal history and can mislead criminal justice officials when they make processing decisions.

Both of these potential problems are minimized when fingerprints are used to identify record subjects. Positive identification established through clear, legible, and classifiable fingerprints can reduce the chances of creating duplicate records for an offender or of posting events to the wrong record.

Completeness of records. Ideally, all information about all reported events related to a specific arrest is reflected on a subject's record. Record incompleteness appears to be most severe in the area of disposition reporting. Past Authority audits of the CCH system estimated that 50 percent or more of the arrest events recorded

and posted to the CCH system lacked final court disposition information ("missing dispositions").¹² Historically, deficiencies in disposition reporting have reflected problems both at local agencies, where manual disposition reporting has not been done uniformly across the state, and at the ISP level, where constraints in the previous CCH system delayed timely processing and prevented some disposition information from being entered.

Deficiencies in the CCH system, which since has been redesigned, ranged from system programming constraints to reporting form inadequacies. Prior to the redesign, these deficiencies limited the most effective processing of CHRI and in some instances prevented efficient access to this information. The following problems contributed to these deficiencies:

- The system required that criminal history events be reported in chronological order; any unreported event precluded the posting of subsequent *reported* events that related to the case. This constraint forced rap sheets to appear incomplete when, in fact, additional information may have been available.
- The system previously could not accommodate more than eight charges per arrest. This limit forced arrest events with more than eight charges to be entered incompletely, and made the connection with related subsequent dispositions unclear.
- Prior to the redesign effort, the system could not update physical descriptors such as a subject's height and weight. Over time this information became outdated and increasingly less useful for identification and investigative purposes.
- Under the previous reporting form scheme, local agencies were required to report much of the same information, resulting in both a duplication of effort as well as greater opportunities for error.

- The previous state's attorney's disposition report was not designed to reflect decisions not to file charges, thus creating incomplete records.
- The system could not record multiple sentence dispositions resulting from a single charge or set of charges. Incarcerations resulting from probation or parole revocations appeared on a subject's record. However, because the actual revocation could not be entered on the record, the reason for the incarceration was not clearly established.
- Since the document control number, which links arrests to subsequent dispositions, was frequently omitted by local agencies in reported disposition information, the connection between arrest and subsequent dispositions was often difficult to establish.

CCH system redesign—reporting changes

In an effort to enhance the system and eliminate these and other problems, ISP undertook a major effort to redesign the CCH system. The redesign of the CCH system affects local criminal justice agencies primarily in two ways:

- Fundamental changes in the reporting forms used by local agencies
- Changes in the scope and content of responses to their CHRI inquiries

Changes that affect how local agencies report CHRI have occurred both in the general reporting process and in the reporting form itself.

The most significant change in the reporting process is the consolidation of the previous arrest card and disposition reporting forms. The new reporting

form, a five-copy multi-purpose form, serves law enforcement, prosecutorial, and court personnel. The face sheet (figure 1), which contains subject identification and arrest information (copy 1), and the fingerprint card (copy 5) are completed by the arresting agency and sent to ISP. Copy 2 is retained by the arresting agency for its records. Copies 3 and 4, which contain some carbon-copied face sheet information, are used by state's attorneys and circuit court clerks, respectively, to report subsequent charge and court disposition information to ISP.

Because some key information (for example, name, date of birth, sex, race, social security number) provided by the arresting agency is transferred through carbons onto subsequent copies of the form, each reporting agency is responsible for entering only a minimum amount of information related to its specific function, and each agency does not have to replicate data reported by the preceding agency. The carbon-copied information also ensures that important identification numbers are available at each reporting stage.

A unique process control number assigned to each agency's copy of the multi-purpose reporting form gives ISP a way to track its internal processing of the information and establishes an audit trail to identify missing disposition events.

In order to make sure the information that is reported and disseminated is as useful as possible, individual data elements on all reporting forms were reviewed for possible modification or deletion. Other new data elements were added. Nearly all of the information collected on the revised reporting forms now appears on the CCH transcript.

Improvements in the arrest report

Changes in the reporting of arrest events include modifications to the content and format of the arrest report: the face sheet and its duplicate (copies 1 and 2) as well as the fingerprint card (copy 5). The following changes represent significant improvements in arrest reporting:

- Certain key face sheet information (such as name, date of birth, sex, race, social security number) completed by the arresting agency is carbon-copied to each subsequent agency's form. For state's attorneys and circuit court clerks this eliminates the replication of basic information that has already been provided by the arresting agency.
- The unique DCN on the face sheet is now preprinted on all five copies of the multi-purpose form. This ensures a link between reported arrests and subsequent dispositions.
- The revised face sheet allows charges to be distinguished as having been either directly filed with the court or referred to the state's attorney's office. This indicates more specifically the action taken by the arresting agency and alerts the state's attorney to pending criminal charging decisions that must be reported to ISP.
- The collection of warrant-related arrest information (such as warrant type, issuing county, and warrant court case number) provides a more accurate picture of an offender's previous criminal history.
- It is now possible to search the CCH database using many of the unique identifiers recorded on the face sheet, including driver's license number, social security number, and warrant case number.
- An additional blank DCN field allows multiple arrest cards to be linked through the original DCN if the number of charges related to an arrest exceeds the capacity of the original card.
- The revised face sheet permits easier identification of juveniles who are being prosecuted as adults.
- Requests for record checks are more easily recorded and identified.

Improvements in the state's attorney's disposition report

The new form creates only a few reporting changes for state's attorneys, but their potential for improving the overall quality of the CCH system is significant. The following changes help establish accountability for each arrest charge:

- Because they use copy 3 of the multi-purpose reporting form, which retains carbon-copied subject identification and charge information from the arrest face sheet, state's attorneys must report only the following:
 - ◆ The state's attorney's disposition on each charge reported by the arresting agency (that is, whether charges were filed or not filed)
 - ◆ Charges added or modified by the state's attorney, including statute and offense descriptions
 - ◆ The date of each disposition action
- Documentation of prosecutorial actions is substantially clarified through the disposition categories that are now available on the form.

Improvements in the circuit court clerk disposition report

Changes in court disposition reporting can improve the integrity of the CCH system through more consistent and accurate court disposition reporting. Circuit court clerks are responsible for reporting both disposition and sentencing information for each charge. As with the state's attorney's disposition report, only subject identification information is transferred from the arrest face sheet onto this reporting form. However, unlike the state's attorney's disposition report, substantial data entry is required from the clerk. The following are significant changes in court disposition reporting:

Figure 1: New multi-purpose reporting form

Copy 1: Arrest face sheet

The Criminal Identification and Investigation Act requires that arresting agencies submit the Arrest Fingerprint Card to the Bureau of Identification for all felony, class A misdemeanor or class B misdemeanor arrests.

ARREST		STATE USE				ARRESTING AGENCY - DOI				State Use Only				Process Control Number 200505426							
Document Control Number 200505426		Department Name				Subject's Name LAST FIRST MIDDLE				Birthdate MONTH DAY YEAR											
Document Control Number		State Use Only				Also Known As AKA				Alias DOB MONTH DAY YEAR											
						Sex		Race		POB		Hair Color		Skin Tone		Height		Weight		Eyes	
						Photo Taken Yes / No				Scars Marks Tattoos				Mole/Scar Number							
						Social Security Number				Driver's License Number				State							
						SID Number				FBI Number											
						Agency's Offender Identification Number				Agency's Case Number											
Officer's Signature		I.D. Number				Subject's Signature - NOT TO BE FILLED IN BY SUBJECT				Date Fingerprinted MONTH DAY YEAR											

ARREST NUMBER	STATUTE CITATION	CLASS	OFFENSE DESCRIPTION	WARRANT ARRESTS			STATE USE ONLY	ARREST CHARGE DISPOSITION
				WARRANT TYPE	COUNTY ISSUING WARRANT	WARRANT COURT CASE NUMBER		
1								Direct Filed Referred to S.A.
2								Direct Filed Referred to S.A.
3								Direct Filed Referred to S.A.
4								Direct Filed Referred to S.A.
5								Direct Filed Referred to S.A.

Date of Arrest MONTH DAY YEAR		Date of Offense MONTH DAY YEAR		County of Prosecution		Custody Yes / No		Basis for Custody			
Locally Prosecuted As Adult				Post-Sentence & Fingerprinting				Inquiry Only Yes / No			
By Law		Court Order		Bond Amount		Cash Bond Deposited		Bond Type Posted		Cash (04) Bill (07)	
Date Bond Deposited MONTH DAY YEAR		Bond Receipt Number		No Bond (01) Drivers License (02) Recognizance (03) 10% Bond (06) Other (13)							
Send Copy of CHR to NDC				Agency				Number of Pages			
NDC				Agency				849-401 (20)			

COPY #1 BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION

Each sheet of the new multi-purpose reporting form is filled out by the agency responsible for that criminal justice function. Carbon-copied subject identification information is retained on all sheets. The arresting agency fills out copy 1 (left) and the fingerprint card (copy 5, not shown), which are both sent to ISP. The arresting agency retains copy 2 (not shown), which is identical to copy 1. Copy 3 (right) is used by the state's attorney's office and copy 4 (below) by the circuit court to report subsequent charge and court disposition information to ISP.

Copy 4: Circuit court clerk's disposition report

COURT DISPOSITION		STATE and ARRESTING AGENCY
Report Case Number 200505426		Department Name
INSTRUCTIONS Forward this report to the circuit clerk's office when charges are filed with the court.		
CIRCUIT CLERK		
SENTENCE SECTION		
BOND SECTION OPTIONAL		
Copy Case Number: _____ Arrest Agency: _____ Report Case Number: 200505426 Date Filed: _____		
COURT INITIATION INSTRUCTIONS 1. Complete this section when a court case number has been assigned. 2. Detach along the perforated edge. 3. Forward to the Bureau of Identification.		

Copy 3: State's attorney's disposition report

STATE'S ATTORNEY DISPOSITION		STATE and ARRESTING AGENCY	Case Line Only	Process Control Number 200505427
Report Case Number 200505426		Department Name	Offense Name	Case No.
INSTRUCTIONS 1. Complete the State's Attorney's section of this report. 2. Forward this report to the Bureau of Identification.		Defendant's Name: LAST FIRST MIDDLE Age: _____ Sex: _____ Race: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____ Eyes: _____ Hair: _____ Complexion: _____ Social Security Number: _____ Driver's License Number: _____ State: _____ Agency's Case Number: _____		
STATE'S ATTORNEY'S SECTION				
CHARGE DESCRIPTION	CHARGE TYPE	COUNTY (BY AND ADDRESS)	ARRESTING AGENCY / COURT CASE NUMBER	STATE'S ATTORNEY'S DISPOSITION
1				<input type="checkbox"/> Filed in Court <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed to Court <input type="checkbox"/> Added as
2				<input type="checkbox"/> Filed in Court <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed to Court <input type="checkbox"/> Added as
3				<input type="checkbox"/> Filed in Court <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed to Court <input type="checkbox"/> Added as
4				<input type="checkbox"/> Filed in Court <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed to Court <input type="checkbox"/> Added as
5				<input type="checkbox"/> Filed in Court <input type="checkbox"/> Returned to S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Mailed to Court <input type="checkbox"/> Added as
Forward the Court Disposition Report to the Circuit Clerk's Office only if the offender is prosecuted.				

- Expanded disposition codes and sentence codes make it possible to document court decisions more thoroughly, accurately, and easily.
- Circuit court clerks now report the initiation of court proceedings. A special tear-off portion of the disposition form is completed and forwarded to ISP when a court case number is assigned. For the CCH system this "court initiation" notice establishes the critical link between the court case number and the arrest DCN. This link can be used to monitor and identify delayed and missing dispositions and is a critical step toward improving disposition reporting and, ultimately, the integrity of the CCH database.

Improvements in the custodial receipt report

The custodial receipt report is independent of the five-copy multi-purpose reporting form. Consisting of a hard-copy fingerprint card and accompanying face sheet, the custodial receipt report presents no major changes in content, use, or distribution. Improvements in the report include the following:

- The custodial report is now similar in format to the arrest report.
- The subject's court case number(s) is reported so that custody receipts and status changes can be positively linked to court dispositions. This improves the completeness and clarity of related CCH events.

CCH system redesign—response changes

CHRI disseminated by ISP to authorized agencies has also been significantly modified as a result of the CCH system redesign. These modifications have changed both the content and the organization of the responses to requests for CHRI.

The most significant change affecting CHRI dissemination is the use of a *response order package*. Previously, CHRI responses consisted solely of the CCH transcript. Through a series of computer-generated reports, the response order package now supplies users with a variety of additional information including:

- Identification of the requesting agency and the name of the top agency official
- The reason for the response
- Expanded information about the record subject
- The basis of the offender identification (for example, fingerprints or name only)
- Notation of errors in the reporting agency's submission

The response order package is a substantial enhancement to the CCH transcript formerly disseminated. ISP now provides reporting agencies with feedback that identifies problematic data elements that either partially or entirely prevent the processing of the submission. This gives the reporting agency an opportunity to correct its submission and resubmit it, so that the corrected data can be posted to the CCH database. Ultimately, this procedure should improve the accuracy and completeness of both the subject's record and the CCH database.

A response order package is generated as a result of ISP receiving (1) a fingerprint submission (either an arrest or custodial card) for the purpose of reporting a CCH event or (2) an applicant fingerprint card or a non-fingerprint card inquiry for the purpose of inquiring as to the existence or content of a CCH record. Every response order package minimally consists of a cover sheet and may include an identification sheet, transaction sheet, error correction report, fatal error report, and/or a search report.

Cover sheet

The cover sheet is part of every CHRI response order package. It summarizes basic information regarding the generation of the response order. Specifically, it includes:

- An addressee section that identifies the requesting agency's address, phone number, and the name of the top agency official (for example, the chief of police or the sheriff)
- A response description section that explains why the response order package was generated (for example, submission of an arrest fingerprint card or a non-fingerprint card inquiry)
- A submission identifier section that lists the specific information as it was submitted by the reporting agency (for example, the subject's name, race, sex, date of birth, or case number), the submission type (for example, fingerprint card or stop order) and the related DCN

Identification sheet

The identification sheet summarizes the personal identifiers associated with all reported events in an offender's CCH record. It consists of:

- All names and dates of birth used by the offender; NCIC and Henry fingerprint classifications; and any Chicago Police Department, ISP, FBI, and local or miscellaneous offender identification numbers.
- Physical characteristics such as race, sex, skin color, hair color, height, weight, scars, marks, and tattoos. These elements can now be periodically updated on the CCH system, and the date of the last update is noted on the identification sheet.

Transaction sheet

The transaction sheet (also called the rap sheet) is a cumulative account of an offender's reported contacts with the criminal justice system. Significant changes in both the content and format of the rap sheet include the following:

- Arrest event data now reflects any accompanying "basis for caution" statements submitted by the arresting agency.

- The format for recording event data has been consolidated into four categories:
 - ◆ Agency information identifying the general type of CCH event (arrest, state's attorney's charges, court disposition, or custody), the reporting agency's name and ORI (originating agency identification), the DCN associated with the event, and other agency identification numbers
 - ◆ Subject information consisting of the subject's name and date of birth associated with an arrest event and general court or custodial activities (for example, whether the subject has been sentenced or whether the subject's status has been changed)
 - ◆ Date of transaction
 - ◆ Charge information describing the specifics of the criminal justice action, including the statute citation and the corresponding arrest and state's attorney's charge, the court disposition of each charge, the sentence (for a conviction), and various custodial actions (for example, received, transferred, revoked, or released)
- Death notices are recorded as CCH events.

Error correction report

This document advises the local agency of any reporting errors on its submission. Important implications of the error correction report include the following:

- The identification of submission errors early in the reporting process gives the submitting agency an opportunity to correct the data *before* it is permanently entered on the database. The error correction report establishes a standard procedure for ensuring that misleading or incorrect

information is not posted to the CCH system. The alternative—correcting the database after data entry—is less effective for identifying and correcting errors.

- Errors identified in the submission do not prevent the entire *event* from being posted to the CCH database. Specific erroneous *data fields*, however, *are not posted* until the reporting agency returns the corrected error report. While the error correction report can enhance the accuracy of CHRI, failure by local agencies to resubmit correct data could in turn adversely affect the completeness of CHRI.

Fatal error report

A fatal error report is generated when submission errors or dissemination restrictions entirely prevent ISP from processing and posting a submission. "Fatal errors" can include such problems as an unauthorized agency requesting CHRI, a submission without an arresting agency's ORI, or an applicant fingerprint card submission without a valid purpose.

The fatal error report is attached to the original submission and returned to the reporting agency for appropriate correction (if possible) and resubmission. This report informs the agency that the error(s) identified by ISP prevents any processing of the submission; no portion of the submission is added to the CCH database.

Search report

When non-fingerprint card inquiries result in a "hit" on the CCH database (indicating that a CCH record exists for the name inquired upon) a search report is generated. This document provides the local agency with information needed to assess whether the subject of the search actually has a CCH record.

- The specific identifier(s) that produced the CCH "hit" is listed, suggesting the appropriate amount of confidence in the link established between the submission and the CCH record in the absence of positive fingerprint identification.

- The specific identifier(s) associated with each CCH "hit" is distinguished if the submission produces multiple "hits."

This series of reports in a response order package provides local agencies with more information about the record subject and with information about the response itself—the reason it was generated and whether it is based on positive fingerprint identification. It also alerts local agencies to problems with their submissions that affect the quality of the data and whether the data can be posted to the CCH system. These improvements make the response order package more useful for criminal justice decisions.

Conclusion

Accurate, complete, and timely CHRI is essential to informed decision-making at every stage of the criminal justice system. Important changes and improvements have occurred in both the *reporting* of CHRI by local agencies and in the *responses* generated by requests for CHRI. These improvements in the quality of CHRI will enhance the usefulness of state rap sheets and promote more informed and effective decisions about processing suspects and offenders.

For more information about CHRI and the CCH system contact Jim Reed, assistant bureau chief at the Bureau of Identification, Illinois State Police, 260 North Chicago Street, Joliet, Illinois, 60431, 815-740-5160.

Additional criminal history forms processed by the Illinois State Police

While the core of CCH reporting and processing involves arrest events, state's attorney's charges, court dispositions, and custodial events, ISP also processes a variety of other related submissions. Here is a brief summary of those forms and their purposes.*

Form	Submitted by	Purpose	Submission content		Response
			Fingerprints	Other	
Applicant fingerprint card	Any criminal justice agency	To conduct criminal history record inquiries on prospective criminal justice employees	Yes	Personal identifiers	All CHRI on file
Fee applicant fingerprint card	Authorized non-criminal justice agencies	To conduct criminal history record inquiries on prospective employees of authorized non-criminal justice agencies with appropriate contractual agreements with the Illinois State Police	Yes	Personal identifiers	Conviction information for certain charges**
Non-fingerprint card record inquiry	Any criminal justice agency and authorized non-criminal justice agencies	To conduct criminal history record inquiries based on name search only	No	Contributor information and personal identifiers	For criminal justice agencies, all CHRI; for non-criminal justice agencies, conviction information only**
Stop order fingerprint card	Law enforcement agencies	To request notification of contact with a specific subject by another police agency	Yes	Personal identifiers	Notification of contact with subject
Stop order cancellation	Law enforcement agencies	To cancel a request for notification of contact with a specific subject by another police agency	No	Personal identifiers	Acknowledgment of cancellation
Palm print	Law enforcement agencies	When submitted with an arrest fingerprint card, to be compared with latent impressions taken from a crime scene—especially important for robbery, burglary, homicide, and sex-related offenses	Yes, and palm print	Personal identifiers	None
Death notice	Law enforcement agencies	To report the death of individuals with prior criminal histories and to make identity inquiries on unknown deceased persons	Preferred but not necessary	Personal identifiers	All CHRI, indicating presence/absence of print identification
Request for access and review	Law enforcement agencies at subject's request	To review one's own criminal history record	Yes	Personal identifiers	All CHRI on file

* In addition to the forms listed here, ISP processes expungement orders, record checks, teletype inquiries, telefacsimile submissions, and FBI fingerprint cards.

** Offenses for which conviction information is available are defined by law.

Notes

¹ Criminal history record information is defined by Ill.Rev.Stat. ch.38, par. 210.3.

² However, violations in two traffic offense areas are designated as reportable CHRI: anti-theft laws and abandoned vehicles (Illinois Vehicle Code, Chapter 4) and aggravated fleeing or attempt to elude a police officer (Illinois Vehicle Code, Chapter 95 1/2, Section 11-204.1).

³ Ill.Rev.Stat. ch. 38, par. 206 *et seq.*

⁴ However, Class B misdemeanor conservation offenses (see Ill.Rev.Stat. ch. 110A, par. 501(C)) as defined in Supreme Court Rule 501(c) need not be reported.

⁵ CHRI may also be used by authorized out-of-state, federal, and even foreign criminal justice agencies.

Public Act 85-922, certified on December 1, 1987, will expand public access to state conviction information. The law takes effect on July 1, 1990. For more information about the act, contact Paul D. Fields at the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, 312-793-8550.

⁶ Certain authorized non-criminal justice agencies may receive non-conviction criminal history information as specified by statute. For example, Ill.Rev.Stat. ch. 38, par. 206-3(B) specifies: "The Department shall furnish to the commanding officer of a military installation in Illinois having an arms storage facility, upon written request of such commanding officer or his designee, and in the form and manner required by the Department, all criminal history record information pertaining to any individual seeking access to such a storage facility, where such information is sought pursuant to a federally mandated security or criminal history check."

⁷ Ill.Rev.Stat. ch. 38, par. 210-7(i).

⁸ Under certain circumstances, such as a grand jury indictment, an arrest may never be reported. Therefore, since a fingerprint card would not be submitted prior to the case filing, special legislative provisions allow for "post-sentence fingerprinting." This topic will be the focus of a future bulletin in this CHRI series.

⁹ Ill.Rev.Stat. ch.38, par. 206-2.1.

¹⁰ 28 Code of Federal Regulations Section 20 *et seq.*

¹¹ Recent improvements in the Illinois facsimile network and its role in the identification and prosecution of serious and repeat offenders will be discussed in a forthcoming advisory in the CHRI series.

¹² These response figures do not include those requests for CHRI which resulted in no record being found.

¹³ Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, *Annual Audit Report for 1984-1985: Illinois' Computerized Criminal History System.*

Other publications of interest

In addition to future publications in this series, other Authority publications about criminal history record information in particular and the criminal justice system in general are available.

The Authority has performed several audits of the criminal history record information system in Illinois. The following reports on those audits are available:

- Annual Audit Report 1985-1986: Court Disposition Reporting and Processing (*December 1986, 51 pp.*)
- Annual Audit Report for 1984-1985: Illinois' Computerized Criminal History System (*August 1985, 62 pp.*)
- The 1984-85 Audit of Illinois' Computerized Criminal History System (*August 1985, 8 pp.*)
- Annual Audit Report for 1982-1983: Data Quality of Computerized Criminal Histories (*October 1983, 75 pp.*)

Additional Authority publications on the criminal justice system in general are also available:

- Trends and Issues: Criminal and Juvenile Justice in Illinois (*September 1987, 126 pp.*)
- How to Trace Crimes Through the Illinois Criminal Justice System (*July 1981, 75 pp.*)
- Introduction to Illinois Uniform Crime Reports (*May 1985, 16 pp.*)
- The Pretrial Process in Cook County: An Analysis of Bond Decisions Made in Felony Cases During 1982-83 (*August 1987, 93 pp.*)
- Repeat Offenders in Illinois: Recidivism Among Different Types of Prison Releasees (*June 1987, 16 pp.*)
- The Impact of Prior Criminal History on Recidivism in Illinois (*July 1986, 12 pp.*)
- The Pace of Recidivism in Illinois (*April 1986, 16 pp.*)
- Repeat Offenders in Illinois (*November 1985, 16 pp.*)

Future publications in this CHRI series will discuss:

- Uniform disposition reporting law
- Form and manner of CHRI reporting
- Telefacsimile network
- Post-sentence fingerprinting



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