



# National Crime Information Center NCIC



## The NCIC File Reference

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The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) is a computerized information system available to law enforcement and criminal justice agencies. The System includes records of wanted persons, missing persons, and persons who pose a threat to officer and public safety, as well as records for stolen property items. Records of persons are generally indexed and accessed using identifiers such as names and dates of birth, Social Security numbers, and operator's license numbers. Records of property are generally indexed and accessed using identifiers such as serial numbers, license plate numbers, vehicle identification numbers, and owner applied numbers.

### **NCIC files, the year of implementation, and the records the files contain**

A discussion of each NCIC file, the year the file became part of the NCIC System, the type of information contained in the file, and how long a record remains in the file follows. The files are grouped by type and are in chronological order by the year each was implemented.

### **PERSON FILES**

#### **Wanted Person File (1967)**

The Wanted Person File contains records of individuals who have an outstanding warrant(s). This file also contains records of juveniles who have been judged delinquent and who have escaped from custody or supervision or who have absconded while on probation or parole. The file also contains records of juveniles who were charged with committing an act of delinquency that would be a crime if committed by an adult and who have fled from the state in which the act was committed. Agencies may also enter

temporary felony want records into this file. Temporary felony want records allow a law enforcement agency to take prompt action to apprehend a person suspected of committing a felony when circumstances prevent the agency from immediately obtaining a warrant. Except for temporary felony want records, which are active for 48 hours, Wanted Person File records remain in this file indefinitely.

### **Missing Person File (1975)**

The Missing Person File contains records of missing persons of any age who have a proven physical or mental disability; records of persons who are missing under circumstances indicating that they may be in physical danger or abducted; records of persons missing after a catastrophe; records of persons under the age of 21 who are missing but who do not meet any of the above criteria; and records of persons aged 21 and older who are missing but who do not meet any of the above criteria but for whom there is a reasonable concern for their safety. Records remain in this file indefinitely.

### **Unidentified Person File (1983)**

The Unidentified Person File contains records of unidentified deceased persons, living persons who are unable to verify their identities, unidentified catastrophe victims, and recovered body parts. Records remain in this file indefinitely.

### **Foreign Fugitive File (1987)**

Only the staff of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) can enter records into this file, which is available to all criminal justice agencies. INTERPOL records contain information on persons wanted in other countries for crimes that would be felonies if committed in the United States. The wanting country must have signed an extradition treaty or convention with the United States, or the subject must be wanted for a violent crime or otherwise must be known

to be violent, armed, or dangerous. The RCMP records contain information on persons who are wanted for violations of the Criminal Code of Canada and for whom there is an outstanding Canada-wide warrant. Records remain in this file indefinitely.

### **Immigration Violator File (1996)**

Only the staff of the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement can enter records into this file, which is available to all criminal justice agencies. This file contains records of criminal aliens whom immigration authorities deported for drug or firearms trafficking, serious violent crimes, or both; information on aliens who have outstanding administrative warrants for removal from and who have unlawfully remained in the United States; and records of aliens who have outstanding administrative warrants for failure to comply with national security registration requirements. Records remain in this file indefinitely.

### **Protection Order File (1997)**

The Protection Order File contains records of individuals who are subject to court-issued orders to prevent violent or threatening acts, harassment against, contact or communication with, or physical proximity to another person(s). The NCIC System retains records in this file until the record reaches the date in the Date of Expiration Field. Nonexpiring records remain in the NCIC System indefinitely. The System retains expired and cleared records in an inactive status for the remainder of the year in which the record was cleared or expired plus 5 years.

### **National Sex Offender Registry (1999)**

Records of sex offenders or other persons required to register under a jurisdiction's sex offender registry program are contained within this file. Records stay in the file until the record reaches the date in the Ending

Registration Date Field. Nonexpiring records remain in the file indefinitely. The NCIC System retains expired or cleared records in an inactive status indefinitely.

### **Supervised Release File (1999)**

The Supervised Release File contains records of individuals who are under specific restrictions during their probation, parole, supervised release, pre-trial sentencing, or released on their own recognizance. The System retains records until the date in the Date of Probation Expiration Field is reached. Nonexpiring records remain in the System indefinitely.

### **Identity Theft File (2005)**

The Identity Theft File contains records of victims of identity theft with descriptive and other information that law enforcement personnel can use to determine if an individual is a victim of identity theft or if the individual might be using a false identity. The NCIC System retains records in this file until the record reaches the date in the Date of Purge (DOP) Field. The maximum retention period is 5 years.

### **Gang File (2009)**

This file was originally part of the Violent Gang and Terrorist Organization (VGTOF) File created in 1995. The Gang File contains records of violent gangs and their members. Records of gangs remain in the file indefinitely. Records of gang members are retained until the record reaches the date in the DOP Field. Records with a nonexpiring DOP are retained indefinitely.

### **Known or Appropriately Suspected Terrorist (KST) File (2009)**

This file was originally part of the VGTOF created in 1995. The FBI's Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) is the only entity that can enter records into this file, which is available to

all criminal justice agencies. KST records contain information on persons who have been nominated as a known or suspected terrorist to the TSC. These records remain in the file indefinitely or until the TSC staff removes them.

### **Protective Interest File (2011)**

The Protective Interest File contains records for individuals for whom an authorized agency reasonably believes, based on its law enforcement investigation, might pose a threat to the physical safety of protectees or their immediate families. Only law enforcement agencies with a protective mission as specified within municipal, state, or federal statutes, regulations, or other appropriate legal authority may enter records into this file. The Protective Interest File expands upon the U.S. Secret Service Protective File, which was originally created in 1983. Records remain in this file indefinitely.

## **PROPERTY FILES**

### **Article File (1967)**

The Article File contains records of any stolen item valued at \$500 or more; records of all property taken, regardless of value, if the aggregate value taken in one theft exceeds 5,000; records of property taken, regardless of value, if the investigation indicates interstate movement of the property; records of property taken in which the seriousness of the crime indicates that the investigating agency should enter a record for investigative purposes; or records of lost Public Safety, Homeland Security, or Critical Infrastructure items of identification. The Article File records remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 1 year, with the exception of lost Public Safety, Homeland Security, or Critical Infrastructure (Category Q) items of identification, which stay active indefinitely.

### **Gun File (1967)**

The Gun File contains records of stolen weapons; recovered (abandoned, seized, or found) weapons; lost or missing weapons; or weapons that have been used in the commission of a felony. Records of stolen, lost, or felony guns remain in the file indefinitely. Recovered gun records remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 2 years.

### **License Plate File (1967)**

The License Plate File contains records of stolen license plates. The License Plate File records remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 4 years.

### **Vehicle File (1967)**

The Vehicle File contains records of stolen vehicles, vehicles used in the commission of a felony, or vehicles that a law enforcement agency seizes based on a federally issued court order. Records of felony vehicles and vehicles subject to seizure remain active for 90 days from the date of entry; records of stolen vehicles remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 4 years.

### **Securities File (1968)**

The Securities File contains records of securities that were stolen, embezzled, used for ransom, or counterfeited. Securities are identified as currency and documents or certificates that are evidence of debt or ownership of property or documents that represent subscription rights. Examples of securities include Federal Reserve notes, warehouse receipts, traveler's checks, money orders, stocks, and bonds. Securities File records of ransom securities remain active indefinitely. Records of stolen traveler's checks and money orders remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 2 years; records of all other stolen, embezzled, or counterfeited securities remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 4 years.

### **Boat File (1969)**

The Boat File contains records of stolen boats. The Boat File records remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 4 years.

### **Vehicle/Boat Part File (1999)**

The Vehicle/Boat Part File contains records of stolen component parts from a vehicle or boat or ownership documentation. The Vehicle/Boat Part File records remain active for the balance of the year of entry plus 4 years.

## **OTHER FILES**

### **Interstate Identification Index (III) (1983)**

The III is not an NCIC file but is an index accessible through the NCIC System. The III contains personal descriptor information that an authorized agency can use to determine if a subject has a state or federal criminal history record on file. A positive response from the III will include instructions on how the agency can retrieve the corresponding history record.

### **Originating Agency Identifier (ORI) File (1985)**

Agencies must have an ORI in order to access the NCIC System. The ORI File contains contact information (such as an agency's address and telephone number) of agencies that have an ORI. Records remain in this file indefinitely.

### **Image File (1999)**

Images can be associated with NCIC records to assist agencies in identifying people and property items. In addition to identifying images, the file contains generic images that can be used as references for particular makes and models of vehicles and boats. If there is an identifying image associated with a record in this file, the image remains in the file until the record is canceled or expires. Generic images remain in the file indefinitely.

# RETRIEVABILITY

Mandatory descriptors for NCIC inquiries are listed below:

## Wanted Person File

A Wanted Person File inquiry will also search the Foreign Fugitive, Gang, Identity Theft, Immigration Violator, KST, Missing Person, National Sexual Offender Registry, Protection Order, Supervised Release, and the Protective Interest Files. Inquiries containing vehicle identifiers will also search the License Plate, Vehicle/Boat Part, and Vehicle Files. Inquiries that contain a Miscellaneous Number, Social Security number, or Operator's License Number will also search the Article File. A Wanted Person File inquiry must include:

- ◆ Name (NAM) and one or more of the following identifiers: Date of Birth (DOB), Operator's License Number (OLN), Social Security Number (SOC), FBI Number (FBI), Miscellaneous Number (MNU), Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), and License Plate Number (LIC). The License State (LIS), Sex (SEX), and Race (RAC) Fields are not required, but agencies should include information in those fields to limit the scope of the search.
- ◆ LIC, VIN, or both.
- ◆ Name (NAM) and Originating Agency Case Number (OCA) only.

## Missing Person File

Agencies must use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Missing Person File with name and unique identifiers. Agencies must use a Missing Person File inquiry to search nonunique identifiers. The Missing Person File inquiry must include: Approximate Age (AGE), Sex (SEX), Race (RAC), Height (HGT), Weight (WGT), Eye Color (EYE), and Hair Color (HAI).

## Unidentified Person File

- An Unidentified Person File Body Part Status (BPS) inquiry must include: the BPS Field. Sex (SEX), Race (RAC), and Area (ARE) are not required, but agencies should include information in these fields to limit the scope of the search.

- ◆ An Unidentified Person File nonunique inquiry must include: Approximate Age (AGE), Sex (SEX), Race (RAC), Eye Color (EYE), Hair Color (HAI), Height (HGT), and Weight (WGT).

## Foreign Fugitive File

Agencies must use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Foreign Fugitive File.

## Immigration Violator File

Agencies must use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Immigration Violator File.

## Protection Order File

Agencies may use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Protection Order File. Information in the Name, Date of Birth, and Social Security Number Fields will also search the Protected Person Name, Protected Person Date of Birth, and the Protected Person Social Security Number Fields. To limit the search to the Protection Order File (active, expired, and cleared records), agencies must conduct a Protection Order File (QPO) inquiry using the same descriptors as in a Wanted Person File inquiry, except a QPO can be made using: Name (NAM) and Protection Order Number (PNO) only.

## National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)

Agencies may use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the NSOR. To limit the search to the National Sex Offender Registry, agencies must conduct a sex offender inquiry (QXS) using the same descriptors as in a Wanted Person File inquiry, except a QXS can be made using: Zip Code (ZIP) only.

## Supervised Release File

Agencies must use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Supervised Release File.

## Identity Theft File

Agencies may use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Identity Theft File. To limit the search to the Identity Theft File, agencies must conduct an Identity Theft File

inquiry (QID) using the same descriptors as in a Wanted Person File inquiry.

### **Gang File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Gang File:

- ◆ **Group Reference Capability**  
Group Name (GNG), Subgroup Name (SGP), or both.
- ◆ **Group Member Capability**  
Agencies may use a Wanted Person File inquiry. To limit the search to the Gang and KST Files, agencies must conduct a Group Member inquiry (QGM) using the same descriptors as in a Wanted Person File inquiry.

### **Known or Appropriately Suspected Terrorist (KST) File**

Agencies may use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the KST File. Agencies may also conduct a QGM inquiry using the same descriptors as a Wanted Person File inquiry.

### **Protective Interest File**

Agencies must use a Wanted Person File inquiry to search the Protective Interest File.

### **Article File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Article File: Serial Number (SER), which will also search the Owner Applied Number Field, and Type (TYP).

### **Gun File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Gun File: Serial Number (SER).

### **License Plate File**

Agencies must use the following to search the License Plate File: License Plate Number (LIC). License State (LIS) is not required, but agencies should include information in the LIS Field to limit the scope of the search.

### **Vehicle File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Vehicle File: License Plate Number (LIC), Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), which will also search the Owner Applied Number Field,

or both. License State (LIS) is not required, but agencies should include information in the LIS Field to limit the scope of the search.

### **Securities File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Securities File:

- ◆ Type (TYP), Denomination (DEN), and Serial Number (SER).
- ◆ Owner (OWN), Social Security Number (SOC), or both. Type (TYP) is not required, but agencies should include information in the TYP Field to limit the scope of the search.

### **Boat File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Boat File: Registration Number (REG), which will also search the Coast Guard Document Number Field; Boat Hull Number (BHN), which will also search the Owner Applied Number Field; or both.

### **Vehicle/Boat Part File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Vehicle/Boat Part File: Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), which will search the Serial Number and Owner Applied Number Fields.

### **Originating Agency Identifier (ORI) File**

Agencies must use the following to search the ORI File: ORI.

### **Image File**

Agencies must use the following to search the Image File:

- ◆ NCIC Number (NIC) to retrieve all images associated with a particular record.
- ◆ Image Number (IMN) to retrieve a specified image.
- ◆ Vehicle Make (VMA), Vehicle Model (VMO), Vehicle Style (VST), and Vehicle Year (VYR) to retrieve a generic vehicle image.
- ◆ Boat Make (BMA), Boat Type (BTY), and Boat Length (BLE) to retrieve a generic boat image.