



# INTERSTATE IDENTIFICATION INDEX (III) NATIONAL FINGERPRINT FILE (NFF) PROGRAM

The III/NFF Program is in its second decade of operation; however, questions still occur about the program and its operation. This publication is intended to answer those questions.

## WHAT RECORDS ARE IN III?

The criminal records of over 72 million people are available. These records represent:

- ❖ All persons born in 1956 or later with an FBI record.
- ❖ Persons born prior to 1956 whose **first** arrest fingerprint card was submitted to the FBI on July 1, 1974, or later.
- ❖ Numerous older records converted to the automated system in the CJIS Division's Manual Conversion Project, as well as certain fugitives and repeat offenders.

## WHAT RECORDS ARE NOT IN III?

- ❖ Records of individuals who have been arrested but whose fingerprints have not been sent to the FBI.
- ❖ Approximately 755,000 older records that are in the FBI's manual files only. The CJIS Division expects to have all manual files fully automated by the first quarter of 2014.

## HOW MANY STATES PARTICIPATE IN III?

Fifty-one State Identification Bureaus are responsible for providing their state's available criminal records. Agencies in all states have direct access to III information.

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## WHAT ABOUT FBI PARTICIPATION?

The FBI provides records of federal and foreign offenders, persons arrested in U.S. Territories, and criminal arrests that III participants are unable to provide.

## FOR WHAT PURPOSES MAY III BE USED?

III may be used for official criminal justice purposes, e.g., criminal investigation, risk assessment, bond setting, charging determination, sentencing, housing application, and criminal justice employment. For agencies in those states that must comply with the background check provisions of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, the Attorney General has designated III as part of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System for firearms-related background checks. Criminal justice agencies may also use III for screening applications for other firearms-related permits, but only when a local, state, or federal law/ordinance exists making the criminal justice agency responsible for issuing the licenses/permits. Civil and criminal courts have the ability to use III for inquiry and record request purposes relating to domestic violence cases.

## HOW MAY I USE III TO OBTAIN A CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD?

To request a criminal history record, the subject's assigned FBI Number or State Identification Number (SID) must be used. These numbers may be obtained from local files when previous fingerprint images were submitted. They may also be obtained by searching the Index. Criminal records are often received from the FBI and state files within 60 seconds of the request.

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## HOW DO I MAKE A III INQUIRY?

III inquiries may be made by using:

- ❖ FBI Number or SID. Use of either identifier limits the scope of the search and eliminates multiple record responses.
- ❖ Name, Sex, Race, and Date of Birth.
- ❖ Name, Sex, Race, Date of Birth, and Social Security Number.

Keep in mind that using these identifiers may result in multiple records with similar names and dates of birth.

**A positive identification may be made only by comparing fingerprints. Professional judgment must be used to associate records with individuals based solely on names and descriptors.**

## WHAT USES OF III ARE PROHIBITED?

Any noncriminal justice use of the records is generally prohibited. The only exception is when a fingerprint image from an applicant is identified with a record by the FBI or a State Bureau of Identification for an authorized purpose.

## WHY NOT JUST REQUEST AN FBI IDENTIFICATION RECORD?

III record responses contain as much or more information than the FBI Identification Records.

Also, getting information via III is quicker. The III Program is an on-line, real-time program, and records are constantly being updated; therefore, record information can change at any time. **CAUTION: USE ONLY CURRENT RECORDS**

## MAY I USE A FACSIMILE MACHINE TO TRANSMIT CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS?

Yes, providing that both agencies involved have a National Crime Information Center Originating Agency Identifier authorized to receive criminal history information. Not all facsimile machines are monitored continually, so it is important to notify the receiving agency by telephone prior to transmitting the information. This notification ensures proper retrieval of information and serves to verify the authenticity of the receiving agency.

## WHAT IS THE NFF CONCEPT OF III?

An NFF participant is a III participating state that has signed an agreement to provide its criminal history records for all authorized uses, including noncriminal justice licensing and employment purposes. An NFF state submits fingerprint images for each offender's first arrest to the FBI to identify the offender at the national level. Arrest fingerprint images for subsequent arrests are used by the state to update its own records. Thus, only those criminal fingerprint images that a state is unable to identify will be forwarded to the FBI. Final disposition reports and expungement orders will no longer be forwarded to the FBI for these records.

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## RECORD-PROVIDING PARTICIPANTS

Alabama	Illinois	Montana*	Rhode Island
Alaska	Indiana	Nebraska	South Carolina
Arizona	Iowa	Nevada	South Dakota
Arkansas	Kansas*	New Hampshire	Tennessee*
California	Kentucky	New Jersey*	Texas
Colorado*	Louisiana	New Mexico	Utah
Connecticut	Maine	New York	Vermont
Delaware	Maryland*	North Carolina*	Virginia
District of Columbia	Massachusetts	North Dakota	Washington
Florida*	Michigan	Ohio	West Virginia*
Georgia*	Minnesota*	Oklahoma*	Wisconsin
Hawaii*	Mississippi	Oregon*	Wyoming*
Idaho*	Missouri*	Pennsylvania	*III/NFF Participating States