

Frequently Asked Questions

- Why did I receive a "no records found" response for my search?
- What is the Criminal History System (CHS)?
- What is the Methamphetamine Offender Registry (MOR)?
- What is included in a Minnesota criminal history record?
- How complete is a criminal history record?
- What if I believe a record is inaccurate or incomplete?
- What if I see my name on a record that is not mine?
- Are fingerprints required for a criminal history record search?
- Can I obtain a criminal history record from another state?
- How do I request a federal criminal history record?
- What is considered public information?
- Who can view public records?
- What is considered private information?
- Who can view private records?
- How do I request someone's public criminal history (including my own)?
- How do I request someone's private criminal history (including my own)?
- How do I contact the BCA?

Cannabis Expungement Frequently Asked Questions

- What is the Adult-Use Cannabis Act?
- How many records are eligible for expungement under the Adult-Use Cannabis Act?
- How can I find out if my cannabis record qualifies for expungement?
- Why will it take so long to start removing cannabis records?
- If my cannabis-related record is expunged, can I possess a firearm?
- How do I access expunged records for immigration purposes?

Why did I receive a "no records found" response for my search?

A "no records found" response could mean one of the following:

- the subject does not have a criminal history record
- the subject's record is not public data
- the subject's name was entered incorrectly
- a nickname was entered, rather than the subject's actual name
- criminal data about the subject was not sent to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
- the subject's record is under a former name (e.g., a maiden name)
- the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) may not have access to all criminal history information maintained by other agencies (e.g., local police)

departments, courts, and federal agencies such as the FBI)

Criminal data is subject to change. The outcome of searches for the same subject can vary over time.

[Return to top of page](#)

What is the Criminal History System (CHS)?

The Criminal History System (CHS) is Minnesota's repository for data on subjects arrested for felony, gross misdemeanor, targeted misdemeanor, and some misdemeanor offenses.

The criminal justice community uses CHS data to inform decisions regarding investigations, arrests, bail/bond, criminal charges, plea bargains, convictions, probation, and placement in correctional facilities. CHS is also used during mandated background checks on individuals seeking employment or licensing for various positions. CHS also contains valuable information for researchers.

[Return to top of page](#)

What is the Methamphetamine Offender Registry (MOR)?

The Methamphetamine Offender Registry (MOR) is a subset of subjects in CHS with felony convictions for manufacture or intent to manufacture methamphetamine [Minnesota Statutes §152.0262, subd. 1 and §152.021, subd 2(a)]. The registry is intended for law enforcement and public searches via the Internet.

[Return to top of page](#)

What is included in a Minnesota criminal history record?

Minnesota criminal history records contain information on all arrests and convictions. State statutes require all law enforcement agencies in the state to report the following to the BCA:

- juvenile felony and gross misdemeanor arrests
- adult felony, gross misdemeanor, and targeted misdemeanor arrests

Other misdemeanor arrests do not have to be reported.

Law enforcement agencies send a copy of each arrest fingerprint electronically to the BCA. The information from each arrest is recorded in the CHS record. Courts and Corrections report information regarding convictions, court dispositions, probation, and custody actions. These are also recorded in CHS.

[Return to top of page](#)

How complete is a criminal history record?

A criminal history record is only as complete and accurate as the information provided to the BCA by law enforcement, courts, and corrections. If fingerprints

are not received for an offense or period of confinement, that information will not be part of a criminal history record.

[Return to top of page](#)

What if I believe a record is inaccurate or incomplete?

If the subject of criminal history data believes their information is inaccurate or incomplete, they can follow this process:

1. Sign a "Request for Review of Individual's Criminal History Record Information" form.
2. A search of the file will be made by name and date of birth.
3. If no record is found, no review can take place.
4. If a record is located by name and date of birth, fingerprints are taken to compare with those on file for that record.
5. If the fingerprints do not match, no review can take place. For more information, see the [Questioned Identity Information Sheet](#).
6. If the fingerprints match, the record is presented for review. A copy will be supplied if the subject pays the \$8 fee. The fee can be paid using cash, personal check, money order, certified check, or business check.
7. If the subject does not agree with the information maintained on the BCA file, they have the right to challenge it. The challenge must specify in writing the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or incomplete. ([Minnesota Statutes §13.04, subd. 4](#))
8. Upon receiving the challenge, the BCA immediately flags the record in dispute. While the challenge is reviewed, the data in dispute is only disclosed only if the individual's statement of disagreement is included with the disclosed data. ([Minnesota Statutes §13.04, subd. 4](#))
9. Within 30 days, BCA personnel will examine the record and trace the data back to the source documents and/or submitting agencies. This determines the data's accuracy and completeness.
10. If the BCA finds the record is in error, it is corrected immediately.
11. If the BCA finds the record is correct, the subject is notified that no change to the record will be made. The subject is also notified of their right to appeal along with the contested cases procedures. ([Minnesota Statutes §13.04, subd. 4](#) and [Chapter 14, Contested Cases Procedures](#))

If data is correct but still disputed, the subject may go to the source of the document (i.e., the reporting criminal justice agency) to dispute the data.

If you submit a dishonored check, you will be charged \$30, plus a civil penalty of \$100 or 100% of the value of the check (whichever is greater). ([Minnesota Statutes §604.113](#))

[Return to top of page](#)

What if I see my name on a record that is not mine?

See the [Questioned Identity Information Sheet](#) for additional information.

[Return to top of page](#)

Are fingerprints required for a criminal history record search?

Fingerprints are not required to conduct a criminal record search on this website or at the BCA.

In some instances, the BCA requests fingerprints of the subject of the record to ensure the correct record is provided. Since all CHS data is based on fingerprint identification, fingerprinting is the only method that guarantees a record belongs to a specific person.

[Return to top of page](#)

Can I obtain a criminal history record from another state?

The BCA does not maintain records of arrests and convictions that occur in other states. You can contact other state bureaus about their procedures for accessing criminal history records.

[Return to top of page](#)

How do I request a federal criminal history record?

Federal records are available for the subject of the record or when mandated or allowed by state statute. For information regarding your own federal criminal history record, contact the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) at (304) 625-5590 or <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks>.

[Return to top of page](#)

What is considered public information?

Data on criminal convictions is public for 15 years following the completion of the sentence. Public information includes:

- the offense
- date of the offense
- court of conviction
- date of the conviction
- any sentence
- the level of conviction
- probation agency or place of confinement

Public information does not include an individual's arrest history.

Juvenile criminal history information is private. It can only be released as described in [Minnesota Statutes §299C.095](#).

[Return to top of page](#)

Who can view public records?

Any person can view public records. They are available through this website and on the public computer terminals at the BCA's headquarters.

[Return to top of page](#)

What is considered private information?

Private data includes:

- all arrest information
- all juvenile records
- all court information
- convictions more than 15 years old

Juvenile criminal history can only be released as described in [Minnesota Statutes §299C.095](#).

[Return to top of page](#)

Who can view private records?

Private records can only be viewed by:

- the subject of the record
- criminal justice agencies for criminal justice purposes
- individuals and organizations mandated to conduct background checks
- any individual that has a notarized Informed Consent Form signed by the adult subject of the record

If accessing private records through informed consent, the BCA requires that you use its Informed Consent Form. You can obtain a sample form [here](#). You can also call the BCA at (651) 793-2400 to request a copy be mailed or faxed to you.

Juvenile criminal history information is private. It can only be released as described in [Minnesota Statutes §299C.095](#).

[Return to top of page](#)

How do I request someone's public criminal history (including my own)?

To request a public criminal history record:

1. **View it using this website.** This website allows access to public criminal history records. A first name, last name, and date of birth are required for this search. [Begin a search](#).
2. **Visit BCA headquarters.** You can view public criminal history records at a public terminal located in our lobby. The BCA headquarters is located on the southeast corner of Maryland Avenue and Phalen Boulevard in Saint Paul.

How do I request someone's private criminal history (including my own)?

To obtain a full (public and private) criminal history record:

1. **Request a copy via U.S. Mail.** Send a notarized Informed Consent form signed by the subject to the BCA, including the correct spelling of the subject's first and last names, middle name if available, and date of birth. Enclose a personal check, money order, cashier's check, certified check, or business check for \$15 made payable to the BCA. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Send the request to:

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
Minnesota Justice Information Services - CHA Unit
1430 Maryland Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55106

Response time for mail requests is approximately two weeks.

2. **Visit BCA headquarters.** Bring a notarized Informed Consent Form signed by the subject of the record. Provide a large manila envelope and \$15 (this can be cash, personal check, money order, certified check, or business check). You can pick up the requested criminal history record at the BCA in three business days. The BCA headquarters is located on the southeast corner of Maryland Avenue and Phalen Boulevard in Saint Paul.

If you are requesting your own criminal history for immigration purposes or for use outside of the United States, please indicate that in your request.

If you submit a dishonored check, you will be charged \$30, plus a civil penalty of \$100 or 100% of the value of the check (whichever is greater). ([Minnesota Statutes §604.113](#))

If you represent a charitable nonprofit organization, the \$15 fee referenced above can be reduced to \$8. To qualify for this fee reduction, send a copy of your organization's IRS 501(c)3 determination letter to:

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
Minnesota Justice Information Services - CHA Unit
Attn: Nonprofit Account
1430 Maryland Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55106

Once we receive your letter, we will assign your organization an account number. This indicates that your organization is eligible for the reduced fee. All subsequent criminal history record requests must contain the account number and "Nonprofit Organization" on the consent form.

[Return to top of page](#)

How do I contact the BCA?

Phone: (651) 793-2400

Business Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mailing Address:

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
Minnesota Justice Information Services - CHA Unit
1430 Maryland Ave E
St. Paul, MN 55106

The BCA headquarters is located on the southeast corner of Maryland Avenue and Phalen Boulevard in Saint Paul.

Lobby Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

[Return to top of page](#)

What is the Adult-Use Cannabis Act?

The Adult-Use Cannabis Act ([Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Chapter 63](#)) was signed into Minnesota law on May 30, 2023, and goes into effect on August 1, 2023. The law eliminates certain cannabis-related offenses and requires automatic expungement of certain prior cannabis-related records from the BCA's Criminal History System.

Eligible felony level cannabis-related convictions will be reviewed by a Cannabis Expungement Board to determine whether the records meet criteria identified in statute for expungement or resentencing.

[Return to top of page](#)

How many records are eligible for expungement under the Adult-Use Cannabis Act?

Based on our initial analysis, a total of 66,000 misdemeanor criminal history records are eligible for expungement

- 9,818 misdemeanor or petty misdemeanor convictions related to marijuana
- 49 stays of adjudication
- 56,929 dismissals

An additional 230,000 felony records are eligible for review by a Cannabis Expungement Board.

[Return to top of page](#)

How can I find out if my cannabis record qualifies for expungement?

All cannabis-related petty misdemeanor and misdemeanor records qualify for automatic expungement. Additional felony level cannabis records that were dismissed or otherwise resolved in the person's favor may also qualify. A Cannabis Expungement Board will review felony cannabis-related convictions to determine whether they qualify for expungement.

[Return to top of page](#)

Why will it take so long to start removing cannabis records?

Automating these expungements in a complex criminal history system requires extensive analysis, as well as technical and programmatic work, and significant testing. The BCA must analyze criminal history records and hire a vendor to help develop technical and programmatic changes to the Criminal History System so that the appropriate records can be expunged automatically.

[Return to top of page](#)

If my cannabis-related record is expunged, can I possess a firearm?

Under Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Chapter 63, Article 5, Section 3, Subd. 7(f) (6) , when considering record expungement or resentencing for felony cannabis-related offenses, the Cannabis Review Board will take into account whether there is good cause to restore the person's right to possess firearms and ammunition.

If the Board determines the record should be expunged and there is good cause to restore a person's right to possess firearms and ammunition, the Board will notify the judicial branch and the court will issue an order pursuant to section 609.165, subdivision 1d.

However, since cannabis use is still considered illegal drug use under federal law, a current user of cannabis remains federally prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition.

[Return to top of page](#)

How do I access expunged records for immigration purposes?

- For immigration related benefits (such as obtaining visas, naturalization, international travel, and work authorization), expunged (sealed) records may need to be reported to immigration agencies.
- Keeping a copy of your criminal history record may be important.
- Please consult with an immigration attorney if you are a non-citizen with record that will be expunged under this provision.
- Individuals who may need copies of criminal history records that are eligible for expungement should request copies of those records.
- Individuals who may be subject to immigration proceedings are strongly encouraged to consult with an immigration attorney.
- Copies of expunged (sealed) criminal history records will be provided to the subject of the record upon request.
- Requests may be made at any time, including before or after the records are sealed.
- To obtain copies of Minnesota criminal history records for immigration purposes, complete and submit the request form on the [BCA's Background Check page](#).

[Return to top of page](#)

Methamphetamine Information

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Minnesota Justice Information Services

1430 Maryland Ave E

St. Paul, MN 55106

P: (651) 793-2400

Map to the BCA



Version REPLACE-TOKEN-VERSION