

CRIMINAL SERVICES

Criminal Record Search (4 Ways)

Court Records. These are the best way to verify if a criminal action has been initiated against someone. The main problem with searching these records is the cost. New York has 98 District courts, several of which have multiple branches, located throughout the state. (These are municipal courts where misdemeanors are heard and where felony crimes are first entered into the system). This is where a felony case would go to be heard. These courts are not connected by computer and no database of cases is available, meaning a search would have to be done at each location and few, if any, will look up information over the telephone. This makes this the best source, but the most expensive and time consuming. We recommend that this be done where the person lives or lived for any length of time rather than on a statewide basis.

New York State Police. The State Police keep an archive of all criminal activity which is in the form of a searchable database. A search can be done immediately and is rarely off-line. The problem with this database is that the State Police rely on the courts and municipal police departments to submit this information to them. This costs money to compile and process and our experience would indicate that this is not being done as quickly or efficiently as it should be. In some cases, we have found capital crimes from years ago where the person is in prison in New York not being reported to. It is also very important to know that the information provided about the person being searched **MUST** be accurate or a false negative can be obtained. We at Craig Investigations feel that this is an excellent tool but should not be the only source we use when accuracy is essential.

New York Department of Corrections. This source has an excellent database of everyone who has served time in a prison or otherwise been remanded to their supervision. It gives good detail about the crime and sometime even pictures of the criminal. The only weaknesses with this source is that criminals who are not sentenced to prison time do not show up in this database and sometimes with more common names or limited information, confirmation cannot be made.

Arrests. Some data from New York arrest records at the county jail level can be obtained legally through a private source. This information is excellent for determining if someone was arrested and processed at one of the available county jails. This source does not have access to all New York county arrest records and some criminals are not processed at the county jail level, but it is an excellent source to assist us in where to look further.

