



Washington State Auditor's Office

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Improving the Completeness of Washington's Criminal History Records Database

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee

July 29, 2015

Chuck Pfeil, Director of State and Performance Audit

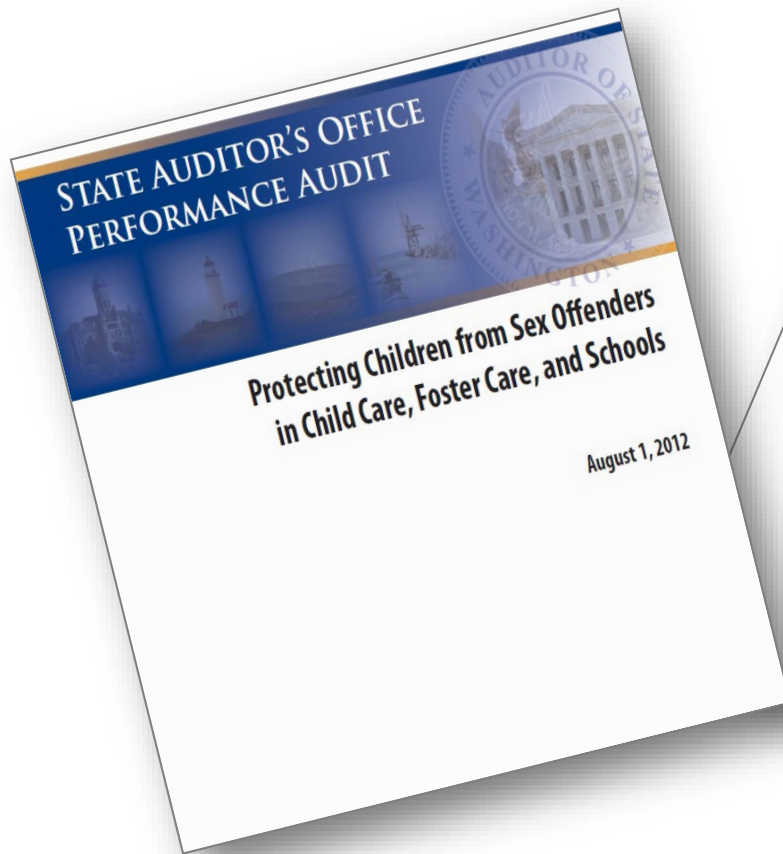
Michael Huynh, Performance Auditor

Patrick Anderson, Performance Auditor

Audit question



Are Washington criminal history records complete, and if not, why not?



Why do we care?



What make a record complete?



A complete record must include both an arrest record and the disposition of that arrest.



The criminal history database, called the Washington State Identification System (WASIS), must include arrests and dispositions for all gross misdemeanor and felony offenses.



The State Patrol is responsible for maintaining WASIS, but it relies on local entities to submit arrest and disposition information.

In 2012, **172** law enforcement agencies and **193** courts provided information on **hundreds of thousands of arrests and dispositions** to the State Patrol

Creating a criminal record

Arrest reporting

Arrested and booked → Fingerprinted (creation of PCN)



Arrest report sent



Disposition reporting

No charges filed → Law Enforcement



No charges filed → Prosecuting Attorney



Judgment → Court



Judgment entered into JIS.

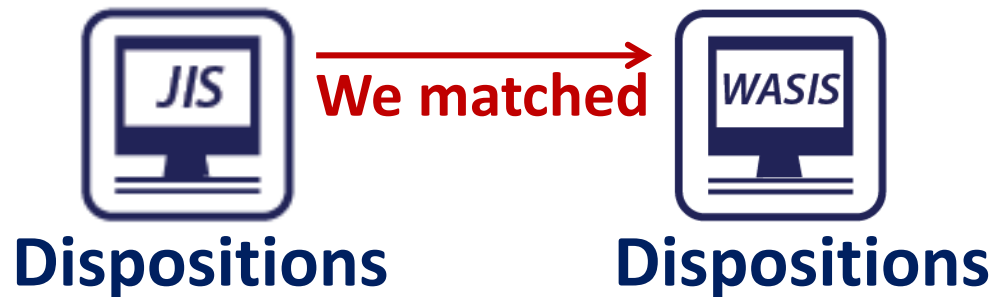
PCN triggers transfer to database

Process Control Number (PCN)

Judicial Information System (JIS)

Methodology

- We matched disposition records found in the Judicial Information System to disposition records in WASIS.

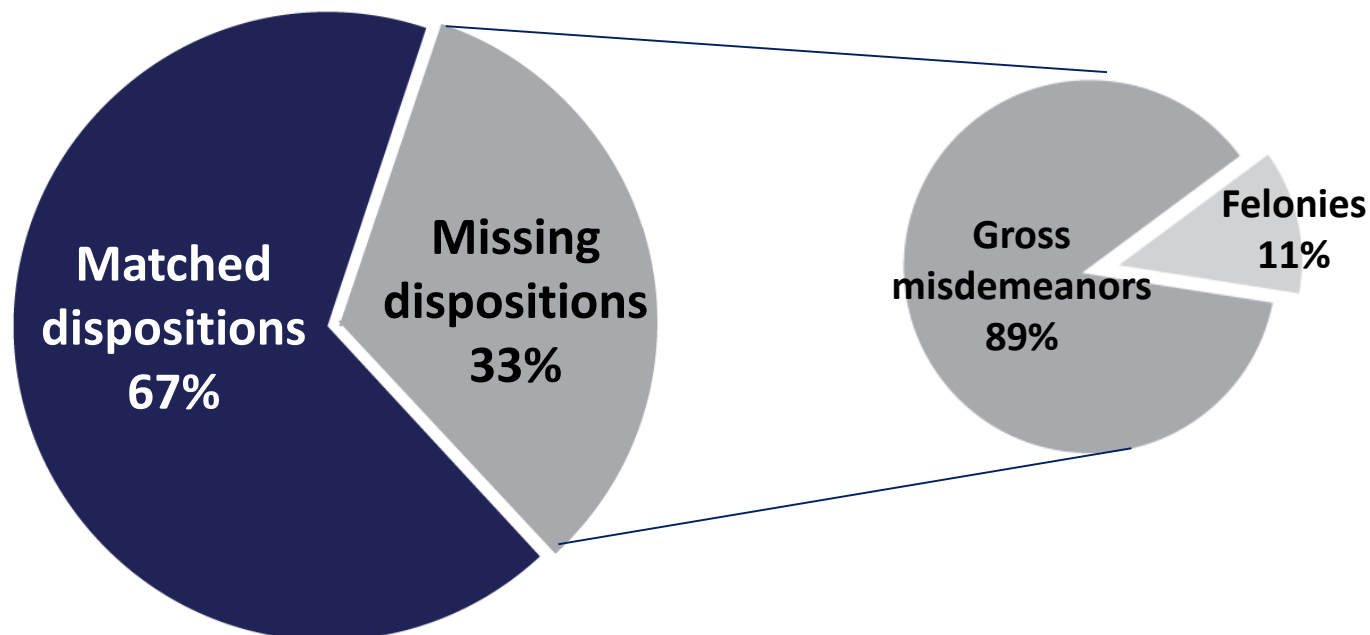


- We also contacted several jurisdictions to learn about their processes for creating and updating criminal records.

We found a third of the dispositions in JIS were missing from WASIS

- **89%** of the missing dispositions were for gross misdemeanors
- **11%** were for felonies
- The most common missing dispositions were for **driving under the influence, third degree theft, and fourth degree assault charges.**

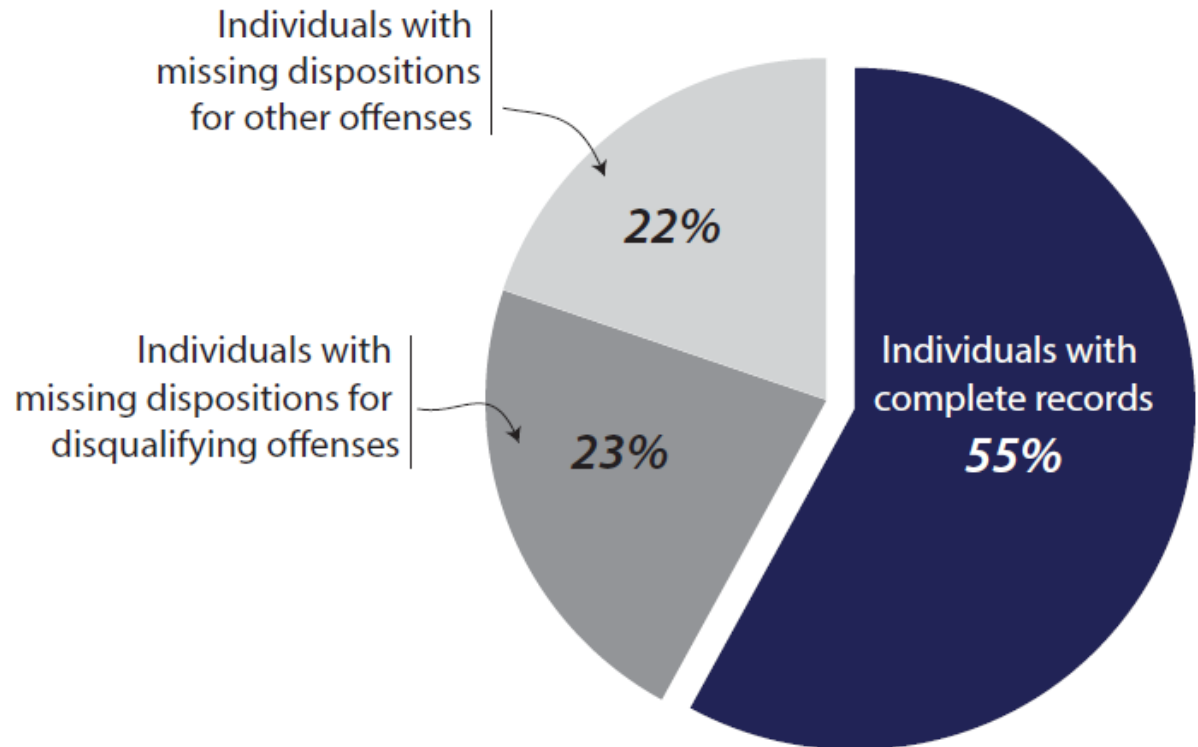
81,100 of the 245,776 dispositions in JIS were missing from WASIS



Over 54,000 individuals had at least one missing disposition

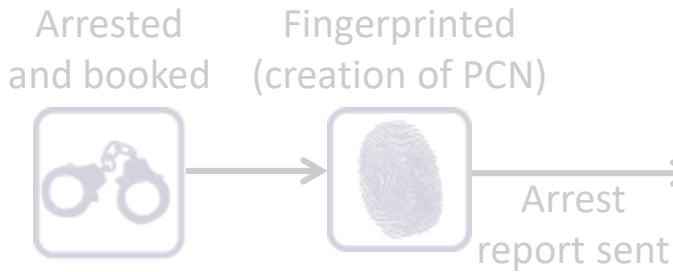
45% of the 120,388 individuals with dispositions in JIS lacked complete records in WASIS

28,000 people had a disposition missing for an offense on DSHS' list of disqualifying offenses

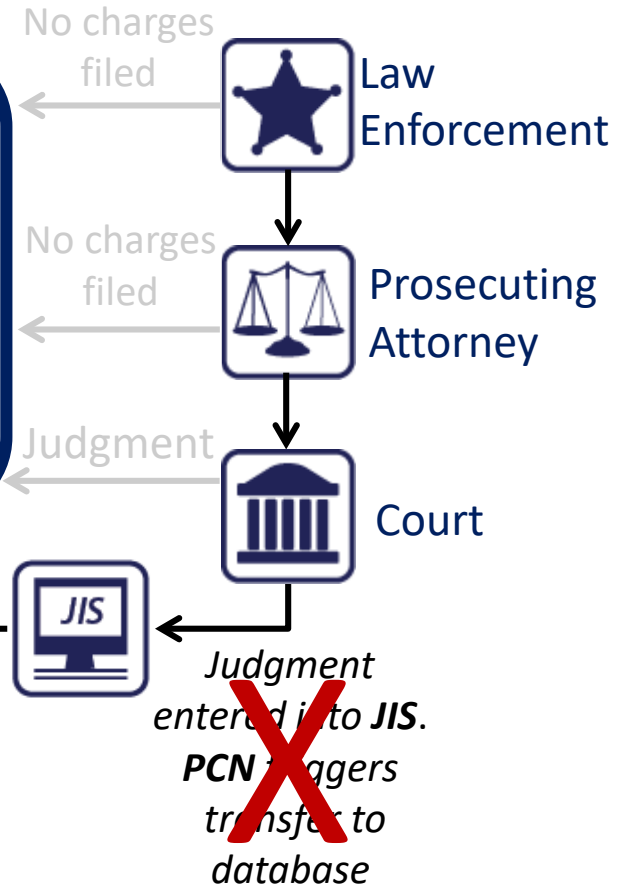


Why are criminal history records incomplete?

Arrest reporting



Disposition reporting



Why are PCNs not used when entering dispositions into JIS?

- PCNs cannot be entered by the courts if they are not received from law enforcement agencies
- Court staff are not inclined to seek out missing PCNs
- JIS allows disposition information to be entered without a PCN

TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION IN BLACK.

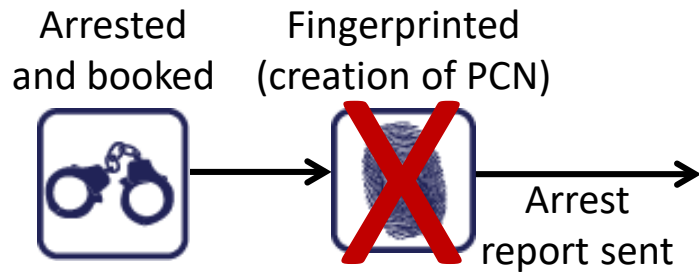
PCN	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	Page _____
				of _____
WASHINGTON STATE DISPOSITION REPORT		ALIASES	CONTRIBUTOR OF FINGERPRINTS (ORI)	123456789
State Identification and Criminal History Section P.O. Box 42633 Olympia, WA 98504-2633				DATE OF BIRTH DOB Month Day Year
THIS DATA MAY BE COMPUTERIZED IN LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL FILES		DATE ARRESTED OR RECEIVED DOA	SEX RACE HGT. WGT. EYES HAIR	PLACE OF BIRTH POB
DATE	SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL TAKING FINGERPRINTS	ARREST NO. OCA	FORM SUBMITTED BY:	
OFFENSES CHARGED AT ARREST		FBI NO. FBI	SIGNATURE:	
		SID NO. SID	TITLE:	
		SOCIAL SECURITY NO. SOC	DATE	

COURT CAUSE NUMBER _____ INTERIM REPORT

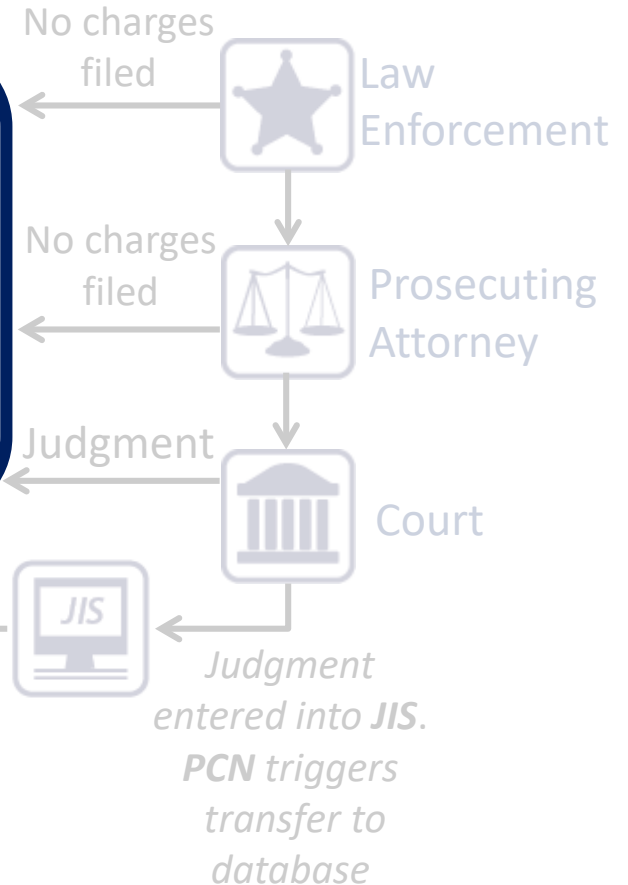
COURT ORDERED EXPUNGEMENT ATTACHED SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

Why are criminal history records incomplete?

Arrest reporting



Disposition reporting



Why are PCNs not generated?

- Offenders may be booked into jail and not fingerprinted
- Fingerprints may be rejected due to poor quality

Why are PCNs not generated?

- Fingerprints are not taken at time of arrest



Why are PCNs not created and used?

- Not all local entities understand the purpose of the PCN
- Local law enforcement agencies lack processes to ensure PCNs are shared with other reporting entities
- Patrol has not taken a direct and targeted approach to providing guidance and training

Recommendations

- Seek changes to state laws and/or rules to require all persons arrested for gross misdemeanors be fingerprinted and to require PCNs be used when entering dispositions
- Clarify guidance on the use of PCNs
- Develop a targeted approach to work with reporting entities to improve processes
- Continue to work with AOC to share ideas and improve communication with county clerks and courts
- Continue to improve processes to reconcile dispositions in JIS to those in WASIS

Contacts

Jan Jutte, CPA, CGFM

Acting State Auditor

(360) 902-0360

Auditor@sao.wa.gov

Chuck Pfeil, CPA

Director of Performance Audit

(360) 902-0366

Chuck.Pfeil@sao.wa.gov

Michael Huynh

Performance Auditor

(360) 725-5582

Michael.Huynh@sao.wa.gov

Lou Adams, CPA

Deputy Director of Performance Audit

(360) 725-5577

Louella.Adams@sao.wa.gov

Patrick Anderson

Performance Auditor

(360) 725-5634

Patrick.Anderson@sao.wa.gov

Website: www.sao.wa.gov