

# Criminal Searches Characterize A Background Check

We say it often; criminal searches are the core of every background check. Today we're diving into the lifecycle of these vital reports.



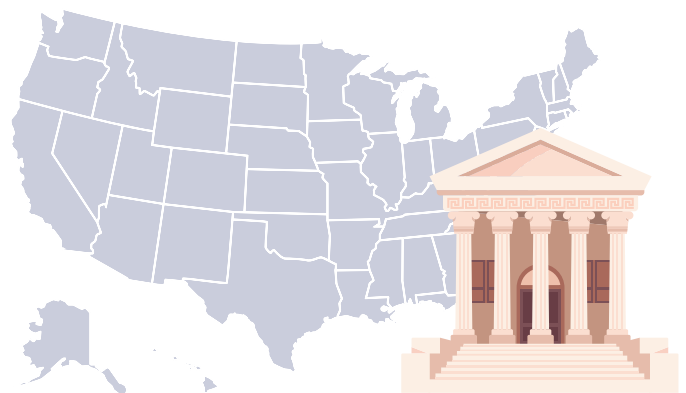
## Go Comprehensive

The people your organization hires might work closely with the public and other employees, have access to sensitive data and company property, or operate potentially dangerous equipment. That's why we urge our clients to run a suite of criminal searches that can show whether a candidate has a record which could indicate they pose an undue risk.

Running criminal background checks can protect your business from claims of negligent hiring and bring peace of mind to people who rely on your brand. A great place to start is with a National Criminal Search, which could retrieve hits from anywhere in the U.S. From there, we recommend using the person's address history to run County Criminal and Federal District Court Searches. Running location specific searches and as well as a national database search is a great combination to thoroughly screen individuals in a timely manner.

## The Importance Of County Searches

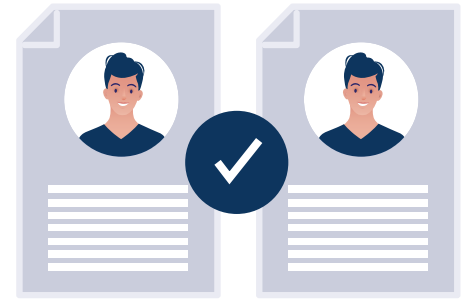
There are approximately 3,143 counties in the U.S. Each state establishes counties as they see fit, which can lead to some unexpected results. For example, California, which boasts around 39 million residents, only has 58 counties. Kansas, with about 3 million people, has 105 counties. County courts have the most current and accurate data.



When researching criminal records, our expanded team pulls data from courthouses throughout the country. Every court has their own policies, intricacies and quirks, and we navigate them all to obtain the best data for you. When a record is returned during a National Criminal Search or other broad check, it is essential for us to complete our due diligence and make sure the record is complete, belongs to the individual being screened and reportable. That's why we have a strong focus on:

## Confirming Records

Simply finding a criminal record isn't enough. Our highly trained team checks identifiers, such as a full name, DOB or SSN, to verify the records are for the right person. Sometimes, court records are incomplete or have redacted data. For example, some courts only provide partial DOB's or Social Security Numbers. This can make it extremely difficult to confirm a record is for an individual, especially if they have a common name. Monikers like John Smith or Robert Miller are prevalent, so pinpointing the exact one can be an arduous task.



Backgrounds Online uses various methods to confirm court data. We might run an alias search, ask the candidate for additional information or request assistance from a court clerk. This can take a while, but it is a critical step that must be completed properly and thoroughly.

## Delays

Retrieving records from a court is not as easy as some might think. Courthouses often have delays due to:

- Closures.
- Insufficient staff.
- Limits on the number of records that can be pulled each day.
- Records are sometimes stored elsewhere and must be retrieved.

A few courts have notoriously long turnaround

times. Current examples include New Hampshire, where understaffing has been an ongoing issue, and Kansas, where the courts suffered from a data breach that shut down the entire system.

No matter the obstacle, we proceed cautiously and make sure you are informed. Our team is happy to go the extra mile to make sure everything is correct and ready to be reviewed. And even then, we're not quite finished.

## Finalizing A Report

Once a background check is ready, we put it through our meticulous quality assurance process. This involves having an experienced team member check everything before it is ready for you. On top of confirming the record belongs to your candidate, we must also verify that none of the records we provide are expunged, out of reporting scope or otherwise unreportable.

While we'd love to complete every order in 24-48 hours, that simply isn't realistic. Backgrounds Online makes every effort to efficiently compile reports so you have actionable data to review per your internal screening policies.

