



Rental Services, Inc.

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Membership Application

National criminal reports, good or bad?

Dear RSI Client,

Many screening companies are now offering National Criminal File Search, also referred to as a search of the National Criminal Index. Many of these companies lead you to believe this search will turn up ANY criminal history that exists for a person. The truth is these kinds of searches are misleading and do not include all criminal convictions and they leave many records unsearched and leave you unprotected.

Many companies that sign up for National Criminal File Search or National Criminal Index Search believe they are accessing NCIC, this is wrong. Only the FBI and all law enforcement officials have access to a "national" database called the NCIC (National Criminal Information Center). This database is built upon information that is voluntarily submitted by various court and law enforcement agencies around the country. There is NO national database that is accessible by any applicant screening services or any other criminal check service.

So, if the National Criminal File Search and National Criminal Index Search are not checking NCIC, where are they checking? Although the names imply that the searches are comprehensive, they are not. They represent a spotty check of various records that do NOT include all criminal convictions. If you wade through the fine print associated with one of these searches, you will find that most companies selling these searches will state that their search will not include all criminal convictions.

The best way to get the most comprehensive Criminal Search is the state by state check offered by Rental Services Inc. These very important checks are available from all fifty states. Most are pulled from statewide repositories; some are on a county by county basis – in any case they are the best reports available that include felonies as well as

misdemeanors. As part of our criminal history reports, we automatically provide information on registered sex offenders. In addition, your applicants are also screened through the OFAC-SDN.

I hope this answers some questions about National Criminal File Searches. If you have any questions about Criminal Searches please send me an email.

Sincerely,

Jeff Malone
National Marketing Director
Rental Services, Inc.