

BE YOUR OWN DICK

**Private Investigating
Made Easy**

**Revised And Expanded
Second Edition**

John Q. Newman

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by John Q. Newman



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Breakout Productions
Port Townsend, Washington

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Be Your Own Dick: Private Investigating Made Easy

Revised and Expanded Second Edition

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Preface

This book is designed to allow almost any person to do investigative work on individuals from the comfort of their home. In many ways this book is the alter-ego of other books on establishing a new identity or increasing your personal privacy. Establishing a new identity essentially involves re-plugging oneself into all the various databases that validate one's existence. The new personal particulars isolate the "new" you from your old self.

These same databases can be tapped by the person who wishes to do the opposite, that is, to invade the privacy of others. In the age of computerized files and databases, this can be done very easily. The moral implications of such actions are left to the individual. But before the reader makes a hasty value judgement, consider this:

Have you ever wondered how a rival long distance company "knew" you spent \$25 a month on long distance calls to Japan? Have you ever wondered how a credit card company "knew" you would be a good prospect for their credit card, or how an insurance company "knew" you were in need of new auto insurance? To one extent or another, these corporations invaded your personal privacy by consulting certain databases and other information sources that contained personal details on you. Having done this, they then determined you were a

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likely candidate for their product and service. Most people simply do not know that this is what is being done.

Other books have been written on this subject, but all too often they have detailed methods and systems that are either too arcane and expensive to be used by the average person, or they detail procedures that will almost certainly lead the reader into a confrontation with the law. This book will explain what 90% of private detective work involves doing: collecting data on a “target” or person.

Introduction to the Second Edition

Seven years have elapsed since the first edition of this book was published. Technology has advanced during this period to the point where many methods that were unavailable or too expensive for the home investigator are now readily available. The thrust of this book has been, and continues to be, the elucidation of techniques and strategies that the average individual can use.

Perhaps the biggest change over the last seven years is the development of the Internet as a viable information exchange network for the average person. Although the Internet existed in the early 90s, it was difficult to use and the general public had little or no knowledge about it.

For the home investigator, the Internet allows a myriad of databases to be accessed remotely that previously were only available in hard copy volumes kept in libraries. Private databases are now easily available via the Internet, as well, and many are free.

The Internet has also led to the proliferation of information brokerage firms. These firms, which numbered less than twenty a few years ago, now number in the hundreds, and their products are much less expensive thanks to the Internet and the continued drop in computer prices.

The Internet is not the only change for the home investigator. Computer software programs are now available that allow

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an individual to have on their home computer databases of every listed residential telephone number in the United States, along with the associated personal information, or a database of every property in the United States.

The older sources of information still have their place, however. We need to remember that most computer databases get their start from hard copy records originally kept on paper or microfiche. A home investigator still needs to have familiarity with these older forms of record access.

Anyone serious about doing home investigations should have a home computer and a subscription to an Internet service provider. Access to the Internet will allow you to complete many searches in just a few minutes, and save a lot of time and postage on others. If this is not possible, investigate the possibility of obtaining an e-mail account with a service provider. Many libraries, schools, universities, and cybercafes — cafes that sell both Internet access and java — will give you access to these facilities.

Regardless of the march of technology, the role of the investigator is still the same — to obtain accurate and timely information about people, places, corporations, or situations. The investigator is able to do his job so easily because in the United States most government records are public. This means the public has the right of access, unless prohibited by a specific law pertaining to a certain record.

Chapter One

TV vs. Reality

When a person mentions “investigations” or “private detective,” certain images immediately come to mind. Popular television shows picture a glorious and adventure-filled life for the private-detective investigator. A typical case scenario tends to unfold along the following line of action:

Late one night our hero, the investigator, gets a telephone call that a sister of a friend of a friend has vanished. The police have not got a clue as to why the woman has suddenly disappeared. The next morning our hero is fast on the case. A first-class plane ride to the missing woman’s former home is sure to follow with a chat with the woman’s relative. While here, our hero has rented a very fast and expensive sports car. This is in case he will need to do some fast getaway driving when he starts making inquiries of the wrong people.

Soon thereafter, our hero will return to his home base. His own personal transportation will likely be a \$30,000-plus sports car. No doubt our hero will have an underworld contact, another “friend of a friend,” who can give him another piece to the puzzle. Acting on this new knowledge, our hero contacts the wrong person, and some very nasty gunplay develops. Of course, our hero is unhurt, and when the police arrive on the scene, he is merely questioned and later released.

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When the case is finally over, it will turn out that the missing woman was involved with a real rogue bunch. It comes out that she was the girlfriend of a big-time drug importer and that she inadvertently became involved. Our hero helps bring the guilty parties to justice. Later on, the woman's saddened but grateful parents reward our hero with a huge fee.

What an exciting and action-packed life the investigator leads! First-class air travel, fancy cars, good-looking women, (our hero has a 36-24-36 girlfriend who puts up with his crap, but is always there at his convenience), gunplay, and fat paychecks. Well, welcome to reality. This kind of image may make for good television, but the real world of the investigator is much different than the fantasy world portrayed on television.

The real investigator's job is to uncover accurate information about the location, condition, or activities of persons of interest. The type of investigators portrayed on television bear no relation at all to reality. Even the few agencies that perform this dangerous type of work will be the first to tell you that when gunplay or fights start, it usually means that an investigator is doing his job improperly. The first rule of an investigator is stealth and discretion. The very fact that an investigation is going on and data being collected is something that should not be known to the subject.

The type of investigations we will be looking at focus on at-a-distance methods that can be employed by you at your present location. Investigators are hired to do various types of work. Bank loan departments and automobile finance companies are good examples of places where a freelance investigator can find profitable work. Once these institutions know where a deadbeat is, they can repossess their collateral.

Delivering unclaimed property is another good example. Each year thousands of people are located by investigators

who can give them the happy news that they are owners of unclaimed property. Naturally, the investigator collects a percentage. Utility companies need reliable investigators who can give good results. Frequently when people move they forget to claim their deposits back from these services. This creates a headache for the company involved because they are legally liable to keep account of this money and the interest it accrues until it is paid out to the owner.

What should be clear is that most of an investigator's working time is spent behind a desk, in front of a book, or computer. Investigation is about information, not fast cars, sexy women, and guns!

Chapter Two

Information is Everywhere

People leave an ever-growing paper trail in life. The only person who cannot be found is a person who has made a deliberate decision to change his identity and follows through with the necessary details. But in some cases, you may wish to uncover personal information about someone you already know. This could be for any number of reasons. It is becoming increasingly popular for unmarried women to hire private detectives to do background investigations of potential husbands. Your reasons are your own private matter. My objective is to show you how to properly organize and execute a search.

Let's go back to what I said about leaving a "paper trail" in life. Consider for a moment all of the personal data that *you* have freely provided to complete strangers. If you have a driver's license, the state motor-vehicle department has your name and number. The credit bureau has you on file if you have ever applied for credit, regardless of whether it was actually received. Do you vote, have medical insurance, or work in a licensed profession? If so, there are places which contain surprisingly detailed information about you. If your dog has a license, a person could learn much about you from this source.

Before you scoff or laugh at my suggestions, a couple of real-life examples are in order. A few years back, the FBI decided that foreign nationals were posing a grave threat to the

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national security of the United States. How did the FBI defend against this? By using the public library. In 1985 the FBI started its innocent-sounding "Library Awareness Program." This program involved the FBI visiting about 100 major U.S. public and university libraries. The FBI requested that the head librarian in each institution forward to the FBI the name, birthdate, address, and book check-out file of any borrower who "appeared" to be "foreign" and whose reading list contained books that might be "sensitive."

What did the FBI consider to be sensitive? Any library books regarding nuclear power, aerospace, high technology in general, and a slew of other subjects under the heading of "inappropriate in the librarian's eyes." To the librarians' credit, the FBI was rebuffed at *almost* every turn. Finally the "Library Awareness Program" was dropped because of negative stories in the media.

However, many innocent Americans now have files established on them at FBI headquarters because they have "foreign sounding" names and read "sensitive" books. The few librarians that did agree to supply the information requested were cowed by the FBI agents hinting that if they did not cooperate, the librarians themselves would become the subject of negative data files at the FBI. The files established on these citizens would then be "fleshed out" with information from other databases.

Consider what can be learned about an individual from his library card files. There is the data collected from you when you established your borrower status. This would contain, at the least, your name, birthdate, telephone number, address, and the number and type of identity document used to prove your residence. Your book-borrowing file would contain the dates of your visits to the library, what type of reading mate-

rial you check out, late fines, and how often you go to the library.

This data itself, because it reveals little about you, is not all that private. But consider how this data can be electronically cross-linked to other databases, which brings us to our next true-life example.

In 1987 there was heated debate about a U.S. Supreme Court nominee. Ironically enough, this judge who was nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court did not believe that the United States Constitution created any type of privacy rights. The nomination failed in large part due to the controversy over the privacy-rights issue. The nominee was a great fan of video-rental stores, and in the melee around the nomination someone managed to get ahold of his movie-rental records. His movie-rental records were harmless, but much controversy ensued over how these records were obtained. In reaction to this, the United States Congress passed a law that now protects an individual's video-rental records more completely than almost any other privately collected database in the nation. The credit bureau can release your credit report to just about anyone, but the proprietor of a video store can face jail and a fine if he releases video-rental records without a court order.

The purpose of these two examples is to illustrate just how much information is available on people at seemingly innocuous places. You can learn how to efficiently and effectively tap into these information sources.

Let's assume one night you are watching your local evening newscast and reporters are doing "on the street" opinion interviews about a major event. From the quick chat you are able to obtain a subject's name and city of residence. Our objective will be to put together a complete dossier on his life for the last two years or so. Let's call him Bill Jones and we will say he is from Portland, Oregon. How can we learn all about Bill?

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The investigation techniques in this book work because most people do certain things in life. A person's paper trail in life begins with a birth certificate and ends with a death certificate. In between there are reams of paperwork one must compile to function. Even if a given individual has managed to avoid one or two databases, another one will surely contain nuggets of data. The key is to accumulate data bit by bit until you have the big picture. The first step is to compile a worksheet like the one illustrated in Appendix One.

The worksheet allows you to fill in what is known about the target and then to systematically work from there. We know our subject is a resident of the Portland, Oregon area and that his name is Bill Jones. You should also jot down the appearance details that you remember: His hair color, eye color, weight and approximate height are all important. Also notice if he has a detectable accent of any kind. The key to investigation of any kind is close attention to details.

The next chapter will give you an overview of potential sources of data and how to use them. After you are acquainted with these data sources, we will then investigate "Bill Jones" by going through each information source systematically.

Chapter Three Data Sources and Methods

This chapter is designed to show you how to do one thing: to collect data on individuals in a timely and organized fashion. This data can be of many types. It can be financial, medical, employment history, or personal data such as marital status and lifestyle. The methods here will locate and provide information on 99.5 percent of people.

These methods are based on the following principle: *Almost all people must interact with certain agencies to function in society.* We are usually able to find the person of interest, or to learn more about his personal habits and background. Most people wrongly assume that their files with public agencies are private, when in reality they are open for inspection to all who request them. A good example and excellent starting point is to examine the motor vehicle departments of most states and see what we can learn about a person from them.

Almost everyone has dealings with the state motor vehicle department. Drivers must obtain their licenses from this agency, and non-drivers often obtain a state identification card from the same source. The other side of driving is motor vehicle registration. Most people who drive own a car. Car ownership generates at least two documents in most states. The car title is the real property deed of the vehicle. The other document is the vehicle registration which is the license for the car

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to be driven on public roadways. By tapping into these sources, we can unearth much more about our subject.

Driver's license data consists of two parts. The first part is the information actually provided to obtain the license on the application. The second part is the driving record. Some states allow anyone access to both types of data on the premise that it is public information. Some states restrict access to driver's license application data to law enforcement personnel. Regardless of the policy you can get the data you need. Because state-identity cards are often issued by the motor vehicle department, you can have access to this data as well for a non-driver.

Let's start with vehicle registration and title records. Titles for vehicles are usually filed at the county courthouse where the car was purchased or where the owner lives. The vehicle title will show the name of the purchaser, his address, vehicle license number, if any, the serial number of the vehicle, and, if the vehicle was financed, the name of the lender holding liens on the car. The easiest way to proceed is to run a check on the vehicle registration and then use this data to find the title. An added bonus of vehicle registration data is it often will contain the driver's license number of the registered owner. The wonderful aspect of vehicle registration records is that anyone can run a registration check.

You may be surprised to hear that driving records are so easily accessible. Driving-record data is handled differently, primarily because of the auto-insurance industry. Auto insurers want people with bad driving records off the highways as soon as possible. The only way to do this is to have free and easy access to a person's driving record. That is why you will get pre-approved auto insurance offers if your driving record is good. The state motor vehicle department has sold your story.

We now will examine four directories which you will find very useful. They are the telephone directory, the city directory, the criss-cross directory, and the phone-locator directory. When one knows how to use these directories efficiently, information about a person can be readily found. The telephone directory is the most obvious. It is surprising how many people can be located very quickly through the telephone directory. Usually people make the mistake of not being thorough enough when they use it. For example, in many larger cities, the city and the surrounding area have two separate sets of white pages. Another fact to keep in mind is that in many areas an unlisted number just means it is not available from directory assistance. The same number may still be in the telephone book unless a person purchases the unlisted and non-published option.

The next directory to look at is the criss-cross directory. This directory is one the telephone company does not publicize. A criss-cross directory lists all telephone numbers in a given street or section of a city. A criss-cross will even list non-published numbers. If you have an idea a person lives within a certain block, you could go to the telephone criss-cross directory and get the number of every telephone on this block. You then use another little-known directory to see if that person does live there. This directory, called the telephone locator, is the alter-ego of the criss-cross directory.

The telephone locator lists all telephones by sequential number, arranged by the exchange number. For example, in the 872 exchange, it would start out with 872-0000, then 0001, etc. Beside each listing will be the address of the number, and to whom the telephone is listed.

These directories are all very useful. What is nice for an investigator is that he need not purchase them outright. Often,

the local library branch has them on the shelf and you can use them there.

The single best directory, which you will find yourself consulting all the time, is known as the city directory. The city directory has nothing to do with the telephone company. This directory provides a wealth of information about individuals that can be linked to other databases.

The city directory collects its data from landlords, telephone books, employees, and, not surprisingly, the people concerned themselves. One way they achieve such a high degree of compliance is the confusion between themselves and the telephone directory. City directory canvassers are told to feed on this sense of confusion, if a canvasser cannot get the required information from the person concerned. For example, in the case of apartment dwellers, they will contact the landlord. City directories contain a large amount of data on the individuals listed.

A city directory listing will contain an individual's full address. The listing also tells the nature of the accommodation. For example, codes on the listing will indicate if a person rents an apartment, whether it is furnished or unfurnished, or, in the case of a house, if the person owns it or is merely boarding. A city directory listing can provide a quick way to find out other useful information about people.

City directories are published for almost every city and town in the United States. You cannot purchase the directory outright. You must lease it, or use one available at the library. City directories are a key tool in getting information quickly and cheaply on people who have non-listed, non-published telephone numbers, or have only "occupant" listed on their apartment building directories. The other utility of city directory listings is to allow you to trace a person's history in a given area relatively easily.

For example, let's say you are doing a background check on "Bill Jones." You go to this year's city directory and obtain his current address. You would then go to past editions of the city directory, conveniently located at the local library, and look under his name. Each year's listing will contain his address at the time, his employer at the time, and other useful data. At some point his listing will disappear. When this occurs, check the suburban editions. Unless he left the area, his name will likely be in the suburban directory.

Another reason for the usefulness of the city directory is its ability to allow you to gather data on people who are related to your target individual. A city directory listing will tell you if a person is married, and if so, the name of the spouse. If, when you are doing your search, the listing for the husband disappears, check for a separate listing for the wife. The same can be done on the subject's children, co-workers, and other associates. Using the city directory wisely allows you to find many people quickly and at a minimum of expense.

Another easily consulted source of information is the voter registration list. Voter registration lists are public records in every state. A voter registration listing will usually contain the person's full name, date of birth, address, and sometimes telephone number and employer. A copy of the local voters list can usually be found at a local branch library, and always at the county clerk's office.

The Social Security number is also a very useful piece of information to have. Even in states where a drivers license does not share the Social Security number, it is often requested and recorded into the DMV computer. The same is true of auto registrations. Many states require a person wishing to register a car to provide their Social Security number. These databases can be searched using the Social Security number. Secondly, Social Security numbers can provide a way to learn about a

person's background. The first three digits of a Social Security number are called an area number. Every state is assigned a different set of these area numbers. Appendix Three shows the number series in use for the various states. Thus, a Social Security number can direct your search to a different state.

Another way that Social Security numbers can be useful is if you can identify a death-claim number. The Social Security Administration has started to compile a history of all "retired" Social Security numbers; "retired" being a nice way of saying "dead." Retired Social Security numbers are purchased from the government by a couple of private companies that then resell these numbers.

The largest private databases in the nation are run by the three large nationwide credit bureaus. Very often good information can be obtained on a person by tapping into this network when other methods have failed. Until recently, these databanks were off-limits to an investigator. However, recent Federal Government decisions now make some of this information available to the investigator. Let's see what the particulars are.

Credit bureau reports contain three types of information. The first is called "header" information. Header information is the personal data that appears at the top of the credit report. This is what allows the computer to find a certain file. Header data includes full name, address, date of birth, telephone number, and on some reports, employer. The second section of a credit bureau report contains the credit history itself. Here you will find a listing of all charge and credit accounts, along with their payment history and balance. The bottom portion of the credit report contains the recording of any tax liens, bankruptcy or other financially motivated legal action.

Recent decisions allow credit bureaus to sell off header information on individuals for any purpose. Previously, this data

could only be released for the purpose of granting credit or for employment where a person's financial standing was an important consideration. To understand the utility of credit header information, one must understand how the National Credit Reporting system works.

Whenever an individual applies for credit, a two-step process begins. The first step is called credit scoring. When an application is scored, a number of factors, such as income and type of employment, are examined. Every creditor has their own definition as to what makes a good risk. If an application passes through this initial screening, a credit bureau report is obtained. The credit bureau report acts as the final check. A credit bureau report allows the creditor to avoid going through the time and expense of calling each reference on the application to verify the details.

The largest credit bureau network in the United States is run by Experian. They have credit files on almost 150 million people, and offices all across the United States. Two other large credit bureaus are Equifax and the Trans Union. Almost all local credit bureaus are either owned by these companies outright, or they are affiliated with them in some way.

When a creditor checks on an application, he provides the credit bureau computer with the "header" data from the application. The credit bureau's central computer will then attempt to find a match based on an internal identification code. This code uses parts of the person's name, birthdate, address, marital status, and Social Security number to attempt a match. If no match is found, a new credit file with the "header" data from the application is created. If a file already exists, it is matched up to the new application, and the address portion of the header information is updated.

This is the reason for the great utility of credit bureau header data in performing address searches on people. Credit reports

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are often run by landlords and employers without the subject being aware of it. If someone you are looking for has moved and attempts to rent an apartment, there is a good chance a credit report will be obtained. By plugging into the credit bureau computer, you will be in a position to obtain this data. To do this you will need to go through a third party service, which will be explained later.

Another good source of data is the county real estate index and local courthouse litigation index. More detail on how these records work is provided in Chapters Eleven and Thirteen.

Chapter Four

Developing Insider Sources and Pretexting

Two excellent assets a home investigator can use are insider sources and the ability to pretext. These two assets will allow you to obtain vital information that you might not otherwise locate with one quick telephone call.

How do you go about developing insider sources? This process begins from the day you start your first investigation. Anyone who assists you in an investigation should be thought of as a potential insider source. Consider the following example:

Let us assume that you frequently call the information desk of an out-of-town library to confirm telephone numbers and addresses that you first locate on your phone number CD-ROM. The librarian is in a position to help you with your searches by providing quick confirmation of information. In the future, you might need something more, and maybe this individual will be willing to help you if you have cultivated the relationship.

How do you do this? The first step is to clearly identify yourself and get this person's name. Each time this person gives you some information, make a point of thanking them. Make a little relevant small talk as well. This person might have ideas or knowledge that can be useful to you. After a

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while, a written thank-you note would be appropriate. You have now developed your first insider source.

The same strategy applies with your information brokerage service. Pay your bill promptly, and thank the staff for providing you with good service. A thank-you note or a complimentary letter to someone's boss are also excellent moves. Over time you will become a valued client, and this may make the brokerage willing to give you extra hints and information that can help you with your searches.

Another strategy to follow is to try and meet people who are doing the same thing. You can do this by joining investigators' associations and attending conventions where other investigators will be discussing the latest developments. Always have business cards available at these events. Finally, subscribe to publications such as *PI Magazine* to keep abreast of the latest news in your field.

Before you know it you will have a list of people who can help you access all sorts of information that you might not get otherwise. Networking is a key avenue to success.

The second skill a home investigator must learn is the ability to pretext under certain circumstances. Pretexting can involve outright lying, or just letting the other party assume facts not in evidence. Pretexting is most often done over the telephone. Here is one very common example of pretexting:

The compilers of the city directory used to send out people going door-to-door to gather information about individuals. When the worker would go to the door, he would say he was from the city directory. Once this was said, the homeowner or apartment dweller would usually tell the canvasser whatever he wanted to know. Why? Because the homeowner assumed that the city directory canvasser was really from the telephone company. This is a pretext. The city directory canvasser knows this is the misconception that allows him to accomplish

his work. He does not explicitly misrepresent himself, but that is the intention.

If you call someone and say that you are from “security” and are investigating so and so, you will find that most people will be willing to talk. Or if you say you are an investigator, especially when you are talking to someone who might have lost money to the subject, mouths will get loose.

Never impersonate a police officer, lawyer or doctor. You can be prosecuted for that. The best pretext does not involve outright lying, but assumption, as in our city directory example. Pretexting also plays on an individual’s natural desire to talk and be helpful. Used appropriately, pretexting is a valuable tool. Pretexting will only work, however, when you sound absolutely convincing and speak with the voice of authority. This erases all doubts in the mind of the individual with whom you are speaking.

Chapter Five

The Importance of the Social Security Number

To locate any individual, you must confirm what are known as base identifiers about that person. Base identifiers do not change over an individual's lifetime. The most common base identifiers are full name and birthdate. Most record systems use these two identifiers to segregate one person's file from another. The third base identifier is the Social Security number. Many record systems identify files only by name and Social Security number. In theory, each individual's Social Security number is unique, and because of this it is a powerful tool in locating someone.

To use Social Security numbers effectively, we must understand how they are constructed and what a given number reveals about the individual.

The nine-digit Social Security number consists of three parts: the area, group and serial numbers. The first three digits comprise the area number. This number identifies in what state or territory the number was issued. The two middle numbers make up the group number. The group number tells when a particular number was issued. The last four digits constitute the serial number. The importance of this number will be made clear later in the text.

The Social Security number was the result of a decision in 1935 to guarantee all working Americans at least a minimal

amount of pension benefits when they retired. Each American would be given a retirement account, to which the deductions from their paycheck would be posted. Each Social Security number, in theory, identifies a particular account, just like an account number at a bank.

The reality of Social Security is different. Current contributions are spent immediately to pay out retirement benefits to those who are already drawing benefits. Only a promise backs the guarantee of pension benefits for those currently working.

This scheme required that the federal government develop an identification system that could uniquely identify hundreds of millions of people, many hundreds of whom have the same first, middle, and last names, along with identical birthdates. The Social Security number was the result of this effort.

Area numbers range from 001 to 649, and 700 to 728. The particular state that a given area number belongs to can be determined by consulting Appendix Three.

The area number is determined by the state where the Social Security number application was made. In the past, most individuals did not obtain a Social Security number until they were about to enter the workforce. Typical ages were between fifteen and twenty-two. Now, Social Security numbers bear close connection to where an individual was born.

Federal tax legislation requires that if a parent wants to deduct child-care expenses, the child must have a Social Security number if he is 3 or older. Many hospitals now process the paperwork for newborns' Social Security numbers right after birth. As a result the Social Security number can point you quickly to a state where your subject has records.

To decode the group and serial numbers you need to understand how the Social Security Administration assigns numbers from a given area. Once you understand this, you can

determine if a given Social Security number would have been issued yet, and if so, the year of its issuance. It will also allow you to determine if someone is using a Social Security number that could not have been issued to that person.

For a given area number, for example 520, there are group numbers that go along with it. These group numbers range from 01 to 99. These numbers are not issued sequentially. The Social Security Administration uses an odd-even-even-odd system of group number issuance.

The first group numbers to be issued are odd numbers less than ten. Then the even numbers between ten and ninety-nine are assigned. After this, the even numbers less than ten are assigned, and finally the odd numbers greater than ten.

The last four digits, the serial number, are used in conjunction with the group numbers. Serial numbers range from 0001 to 9999. The serial number identifies an individual Social Security number with a given area and group number. The first serial number to be assigned will be 0001, and the last will be 9999. When serial number 9999 has been issued, that particular group has been used up, and the next group will be issued according to the odd-even-even-odd rule. This is easier seen than explained, so let us look at the 520 area number, which is assigned to Wyoming.

The very first Social Security number issued in Wyoming was 520-01-0001. The last Social Security number issued under this particular group, 01, would be 520-01-9999. After this number, the next Social Security number issued in Wyoming would be 520-03-0001. The last Social Security number to be issued in Wyoming will be 520-99-9999. What happens when this number is issued? New area numbers will be assigned to this state. This has already occurred in some states, particularly in California, where all of the original area

numbers have been assigned. The 600 series of area numbers are now being assigned in many states.

So it is clear that a thirty-year-old man using a Social Security number, with a group number of 01, or even 03, is a fraud. These numbers would have been issued shortly after Social Security began in 1935.

The Social Security number can also be used to determine if someone has died. When an individual who has paid into Social Security dies, the family is entitled to a death benefit of a few hundred dollars. This payment of the death benefit leads to the Social Security number being officially retired, and placed into a database known as the Social Security Death Index, or SSDI, for short.

The SSDI is updated quarterly and contains the names of everyone who has claimed the death benefit. The database, on CD-ROM, is sold to third-party information brokers and some genealogical organizations. In Chapter Fourteen on information brokers, we will discuss in detail some of the numerous features of the SSDI. For now, its relevance is that a Social Security number can also let us know if the subject of our investigation has died.

In 1980, the Social Security administration released a master list of the year of issue of all Social Security numbers issued from 1951 to 1978.

To recap, we see that the Social Security number is one of the most useful items to have when investigating or locating an individual. A Social Security number can identify where an individual may have lived or was born. It can tell us if an individual is deceased, and it can give us an idea of the age of the individual. In Chapter Fourteen on information brokers, we will show how you can obtain the Social Security numbers of most individuals very quickly.

Chapter Six Telephone Books and City Directories

We need more basic information about Bill Jones, such as an address and telephone number. Once armed with these, we can find out additional data more easily. The first place to look is in the telephone directory. This may seem pretty obvious, but it is amazing how few people think to do this. We know that our target resides somewhere in the Portland area. We would want to check not only the city of Portland telephone book, but also the phone books of neighboring suburban areas. Next, you must keep in mind that Bill can be short for William. On your worksheet you will allow a space to list any common variants of the target's name, and check for these. Now, what happens if you cannot find a telephone listing? In fact, let's suppose that he has deliberately gotten an unlisted number.

First, you will want to exhaust all possible telephone-company leads. This is another important aspect of mounting an effective and timely investigation: *Do not move on to another source until you have milked the current one dry.* A person who has an unlisted number may still be contacted in many cases by calling information directly. This varies a bit from phone company to phone company. Some telephone companies say that with them an unlisted number means that the number is only not published (listed) in the phone book.

These phone companies also have a *non-published, and non-listed* option. But we will further assume that you still cannot get a telephone number on Mr. Jones even after calling information. What is your next move?

The first place you will consult is the city directory. As I said in Chapter Three, this directory has nothing to do with the telephone company. Perhaps you have been accosted at home on a Saturday afternoon by a neighborhood woman and asked questions about your name, marital status, place of work, and ownership of the property. The canvasser, if you had asked, would only say she worked for the “city directory.” Most people, upon hearing this, drop all defense of their privacy and happily answer all questions, thinking it is for the telephone book. Information for the city directory is also obtained from landlords, state drivers license files, and from the telephone company itself.

City directories are published by private corporations. The two largest publishers are R.L. Polk and Coles Householder. The directories are organized into two sections. One section will be indexed according to street location and the other is alphabetical by name. Often a large metropolitan area will have more than one city directory. There will be a city directory for the main city and a suburban directory for the outlying areas as well. A city directory listing that is complete will provide a virtual gold mine of information on a person. A complete listing will show the full name of the person, his street address, whether it is an apartment or house, and further if it is rented or owned by the person. A code will also list approximately how long the person has lived there.

The history will also detail the person’s marital status, and the name of the spouse and any dependents who may live there. A complete listing will also have the employer’s name

and the person's job title. Sometimes the listing is not complete, but it will almost always get you started.

We know our subject's name, so that is where we would look first. It's likely there will be a lot of Bill or William Joneses. Usually the person you are looking for does not have such a common name. But when this is the case, you refer back to the little you do know about the target to narrow the candidates down. For example, our target may have been interviewed (on TV) after work. Clearly a listing that shows a Bill Jones as retired isn't the man you seek. By the same token, a listing for a Bill Jones who is a student is not your target. Once you have narrowed down your list of candidates by eliminating those who are obviously not your man, consider more subtle points.

Where was he interviewed? If it was in downtown Portland after work or on his lunch hour, a history for a Bill Jones who works at a company 20 miles out in the suburbs is probably not your man. How to check company locations? Look in the phone book or in the city directory again. The point I am driving at is there are many possible strategies to follow, depending upon what data you do know. For example, let's say our man was interviewed at home in the suburbs by our man-in-the-street reporter, but when checking the alphabetical city directory listing, you find nothing.

If you are able to pinpoint the general area that he is in, you have a number of options. The first is to turn to the street listings for his community and search them until you find his name. This is the other listing in the city directory we mentioned earlier. Another approach is to then use the phone locator. Once again, exhaust your city directory *first* before moving on to your next information source.

The telephone locator is another privately published directory. As I explained in Chapter Three, it lists telephone num-

bers sequentially, arranged by the exchange. By each number there will be an address and the name of the person there. If you know the general area where your target resides, it is an easy matter to look in the phone book for the exchange or exchanges that serve the area. Once you have this, you would consult the phone locator listings under these exchanges and scan the listings until you have found your man. So armed with a telephone number and address for our Bill Jones, you can proceed to learn more. Before we do, I want to mention another source of basic personal data.

The local voters' list is available at the local library, as are the city directory and phone locator directory. The voters' list will give you the local address, which will then allow you to obtain the phone number and other personal data from the city directory and phone locator. These are sources for only basic data. These sources will not give you the intimate details of your target's life, but they put you on the fast track to getting it. The other thing is that these information sources are available free of charge at the local library. (If, by some chance, you don't find the local voters' list at the library, then try the county clerk's office.)

So we now have our target's name, home address, and telephone number. We should also know if our target rents an apartment or rents/owns a house. But our thirst for knowledge has just begun to be slaked. One added point: sometimes you will not find a listing in the current city directory, phone locator, or voters' list. When this occurs, go to the stacks and use a copy of last year's and previous years' directories. Almost always this will yield good results, and as an added dividend it can tell you about previous addresses and phone numbers.

Chapter Seven

Motor Vehicles and Driver's Licenses

Most people will interact with their state's motor vehicle department. This is for two reasons. The first is that most Americans will learn how to drive a car, and that means obtaining a driver's license. The second is that the motor vehicle department administers the issuance of state identity cards in most states. Because people generally want to have one piece of state-issued identification, people who do not drive often get a state identity card instead. The motor vehicle department is a "soft touch" when it comes to data exchange.

A person's motor vehicle department file has two parts to it. The first part is the base identification file. This part of the file consists of the basic personal information provided upon an individual's first contact with the motor vehicle department. This part of the file will usually contain information on the supportive documentation that was presented as proof of identity.

The second part of the motor vehicle department file consists of the individual's driving record. This is the "active" part of the file that is updated whenever an input is made into the system. For example, the file will be updated to show that a person received a speeding ticket or was involved in an accident. The driver record will include the current address of the driver, the total of all moving violations, current insurance

information, current license information, change-of-name data, and any driving while drunk or vehicular homicide convictions as well. Some states will include an actual photocopy of the drivers license and the application form when the driving record is obtained.

Most people falsely believe that a person's driving record is only available to other states' motor vehicle departments, automobile insurance companies, and law enforcement personnel. Nothing could be more inaccurate than this. Practically every state will sell a copy of a person's driving record to anyone. In fact, most states sell all changes of address stored in the motor vehicle department computers to national firms that advertise they can update addresses nationwide. You might wonder how this state of affairs came to pass.

In short, the motive was greed and profits. The automobile-insurance industry is the reason that there is no privacy in motor vehicle department records anymore. The next time you receive one of those "pre-approved" offers for low-cost automobile insurance, you can thank the motor vehicle department for providing the data. The automobile insurance industry creates profits by identifying the bad drivers and no longer insuring them, and by searching out the good driver and writing him a policy. Open motor vehicle records allow this. Insurance companies will run large scale checks of all drivers in a particular state's database. This can be further narrowed by singling out certain groups of drivers. For example, the insurance company could ask for a listing of drivers over thirty-five-years old with no accidents for the last five years. This tailored computer search would then provide all the names of drivers meeting these criteria. Clearly, for an investigator, the motor vehicle department is a very useful source of data.

Appendix Two contains the addresses of the central motor vehicle department offices for all fifty states. It is from these offices that requests for driving records are handled. Most states have a preprinted form you use to run a search-all. You must submit this form, along with the current fee, and you will have an answer back in a few days, allowing for the mailing time. Your first order of business should be to send a letter to these addresses asking for a request form and the current fee. The request form you can photocopy, and you should set up an alphabetical file for these. You should understand the different types of searches that can be provided for you.

The most useful search is called an "alpha" search, "alpha" being short for alphabetical. An alpha search simply means you have a name and you want the database to be checked to see if anyone by that name, and possibly address or birth date, has a license from this state. The other type of search is called a numeric search. On a numeric search, you may have a license number and you want to find out the driver's name and driving record that goes with it.

The other side of the driving record is vehicle-registration information. In the United States we have a two-level system in operation on vehicle registration data. In most states, when a person goes to register a car, one does not go to the motor vehicle department, but to the local county registrar or auditor's office. License plates and registration documents are assigned from here. But the motor vehicle branch central computer maintains a data file on all vehicles registered in the state. This is the database that a police officer consults when he pulls over a vehicle. The vehicle registration index will contain the details of the vehicle serial number and body style, along with the registered owner's name and address and the legal owner's name and address.

In the United States, most states issue a title document to a car. The original of this document will be on file at the county courthouse or county auditor's office in the county of vehicle registration. These are public documents. The vehicle title shows who the owner in the legal sense is, and if there are any liens on the vehicle.

Vehicle-registration data is almost universally available in all states to anyone. We know that Mr. Jones lives in Portland, Oregon, and we can assume at this point that if he has any cars, they carry Oregon registrations on them. Your check back a year or two in the city directory confirmed this. The "alpha" search will search by name and address all vehicles registered to him. Many states require a person to give a Social Security number when they register a vehicle, and often this number is on the registration form. So it is quite likely that you can obtain Mr. Jones's Social Security number from the alpha search. Once you have the vehicle registration information you can then obtain a copy of the title from the local county courthouse. If one particular state gives you some bureaucratic runaround, you can always check out a car from that state by doing it through another state that has more open access to its records.

While we are running the vehicle search at the vehicle license office, we can open a similar search on the driver's license front. Let's assume that Mr. Jones lives in a state where driver's license application data is available to anyone. You would write or call the state motor vehicle department office requesting information on the current fee for doing a search. Once you have this you would send your request for all driver's license/state identity card application information on file. What you will receive is a very detailed look at our Mr. Jones.

The application data will show his name, birthdate, Social Security number, place of birth, his mother's and father's names, and most importantly, the documents used to prove his identity. This will almost always include a previous driver's license or state identity card and his birth certificate number and state of issue. Some states even list your marital status.

What happens if you are dealing with a state that wants to restrict this type of data? You have two choices. The first is to go through a private company that is able to obtain this data for a fee. These firms are listed in Appendix Four.

But I recommend you try option two before you pay another party to accomplish what you can do at a lesser price. Even in states where the official policy is "police access only," the reality is totally different. Go spend \$20 and have some letterheads, business cards, and envelopes printed up with an official-sounding title, such as "Personnel Verification Corporation," or something similar. Send a typewritten letter requesting a copy of the drivers license application data along with the required fee, stating in the letter that it is needed for "background verification purposes." You will receive a reply quickly.

Appendix Five lists the addresses for each state's accident report files. The driving record will contain details of all moving violations, citations, license suspensions, and accident or drunk driving records. In the case of accidents, the driving record will list the accident report number. For citations, a citation number is listed. Where a criminal charge resulted from an accident, such as drunken driving, a court file will be listed as well. The excellent aspect of this is all of these records are public domain. The driving record is available from the same place as the driver's license application form data. First get the driving record data, then write for specific accident reports or citation data.

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So what more do we know about Mr. Jones now? Quite a bit. We know where he was born, where he lived before coming to Portland, if he is a good driver, and what kind of car he has. We also know if his car was financed, and if so, by whom. We might also know if he is married or not. We might know that he has a drinking problem if he has several alcohol-related citations. But the picture is far from complete. We must press onward!

Chapter Eight

The Home Front

It might be useful to find out more about Mr. Jones's home and family life. We should find out something about his parents and if he has any brothers or sisters. If you recall when we obtained a copy of his drivers license application or state identity card application, we were given details of his date and place of birth and the names of his parents. We should then contact the state vital statistics office in his place of birth and request the long-form certificate of birth.

The long-form certificate of birth is very rarely used. It is too big and bulky, so most people just purchase a short form when they need a birth certificate. The long-form certificate is much better for our purposes because it will contain details about Bill's parents, and other information. You have enough information to request Bill's birth certificate in his name if you so desire. As with driver's license application data, states vary in their policy about third-party birth certificate requests. Many states treat birth records as public domain documents, others do not. In reality, there is no need to apply in Bill's name if it makes you uncomfortable. In restrictive states, simply send one of your letterhead letters saying that a copy of the certificate is needed for "U.S. birth verification." Your request will be honored at once. A listing of all state vital records offices is included in Appendix Six. Write first and find out the

current fee and availability policy. This saves you time later on.

With the long form of Bill's birth certificate — and we should now call him Bill because we know him so well — we can start seeing if he has relatives in the Portland area. A quick check of the city directory and telephone book will tell us if the whole family has relocated to Portland. The birth certificate also allows us to make a quick trace of Bill and his family over the years.

If Bill was born in Indiana, let's say, he had to come to Portland at some point in time. Or it is possible that Bill's parents moved to Portland with him at an early age? The way to run this search is to go back ten or fifteen years in the old Portland city directories. If Bill's parents don't live in Portland, do your first check under Bill's name. Eventually you should reach a year where Bill "drops out" of the city directory. If Bill is married, and the marriage occurred during your search period, Bill's wife will drop out of the city directory listing in that year or the previous year. If Bill's parents now live in Portland, check back on their listing as well. Another approach is to send a letter to the library in the city where Bill was born and ask them to send you a photocopy of the city directory listings of his parents for ten years following his birth, or until the listing "drops off." This gives you a chronological history of the family.

We mentioned that if Bill was married during your search period, his wife's joint listing will vanish at some point. You could then look up his wife's city directory listing as well. When people are married, two sets of data are created. The first set of data is the application data to obtain the marriage license itself. The second set consists of the papers that are sent to the county recorder's office once the marriage has taken place. You can obtain these files as well, if you want

them. The only sticking point is knowing the date of the marriage so you don't have to search through a year of files. If you want the data, you can get it.

The city directory listing told us what type of accommodation Bill lives in. Perhaps we would like to learn more about it. If it is rented, a quick call to the apartment manager will give us his monthly rent and length of tenancy. Landlords blab on everyone, especially if the building is owned by a corporation. You may prefer to use the letter approach, but send it to the office of the real estate company. The company will then send this to the on-site manager to complete and mail to you. In cases like these, always include a self-addressed, stamped envelope to facilitate a speedy reply to your letter.

If Bill owns his house, we might want to know how many square feet it has, when it was purchased, the purchase price, and what lender provided the financing. These records are in the public domain in every state. The city directory can be a big help in narrowing our search. Note the year that Bill obtained his present address. That is likely the year in which he purchased the property.

Real estate transactions are compiled on an annual basis by the county or city concerned. All persons selling property in a given year are in one volume for the year, and likewise all people buying property in a given year are in another volume. These files will be arranged alphabetically by the last name of the person buying or selling the property. These records are open to public view, and now they may be on microfiche or on computer. The property record will contain the seller's name, the buyer's name (Bill), type of deed issued on the property, the date the deed was granted, which specific book the deed is contained in, how much was paid for the property, and the property location. Guess what? You can now go and get a

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copy of the deed on Bill's house at the same office. They will be happy to help you. For good measure, get it certified!

We now have the deed to Bill's house and the title to his car, but a lot more of the story of Bill Jones remains to be fleshed out.

Chapter Nine

Finances

We would like to know about Bill's financial picture. We have made some start in that direction. From the landlord or property office records we have a good idea of how much he spends each month to keep a roof over his head. When we checked out his cars, we found out he is paying a monthly car payment. It might be nice to learn his monthly income.

The city directory will have listed his employer and job title. There are various avenues to get a good estimate on Bill's income. By having gone back a few years in the city directory we have a good idea of how long Bill has been with his present employer. If Bill works at a unionized company in a job that requires a union card, we have our answer.

A quick call to the company's personnel office will tell us which union represents workers who do Bill's job. After that, telephone the union's local and ask what the hourly rate was on the last contract settlement at this company. Sometimes you can even get a copy of the collective agreement. If Bill works in a salaried professional level job you have a number of options.

If Bill works in a profession that requires a license by the state, odds are very good that they have a professional society that regulates their members. (See Appendix Seven for a list of state-regulated businesses.) You can write to the professional society on your letterhead and ask if Bill is a member in good

standing and how long he has been a member. The society will be more than happy to vouch for his standing. The letter you receive back will give his date of membership and may contain some information on his educational background. It will almost certainly contain the date he received his professional license.

You can then write to the state licensing agency and for a fee obtain a copy of his professional license. In some vocations, such as pilots, the federal government maintains the licensing. The federal government will provide you with a copy of the license of any pilot for a fee of a few dollars.

The point of all this is to obtain a rough idea of Bill's qualifications so that we can guess at his salary accurately. Once we know his qualifications and job title, we can send a letter to Bill's company asking what rates of compensation they would pay, let's say, an economist with a Ph.D. and three years of experience, exactly Bill's qualifications. In the letter, we would say we are doing a salary survey in the Portland area and companies responding will not be named. Send your letter to the personnel office.

If Bill works for any government agency, state or federal, or any institution supported by tax dollars, you can get his salary easily. Taxpayers have a right to know the compensation of employees of the state or local governments. For example, if Bill is a school teacher, you can request to see the financial records of the school district, saying that you are an irate taxpayer. If Bill is a university professor, you can find out his rate of pay by searching through the correct indexes at the university library or by writing the state revenue office directly for where to get information. A listing of state tax offices is in Appendix Eight. Federal workers' salaries are easily available. Simply call the local office of the General Services Administration and ask what a particular grade of worker would earn.

Because credit reports are difficult — or illegal — to obtain, it is hard to get an up-to-the-minute credit status on Bill. Right now we have no idea of how deeply in debt Bill is or what his payment history is like. Maybe Bill can make the car payment and the mortgage, but nothing else.

How can we learn Bill's credit status? One method involves going into a department store and applying for an "instant" department store credit card in Bill's name. Often you are not required to show any identification. Simply tell the salesman that you would like to purchase a color TV on credit. After the sale is written up, he will have you go upstairs to the credit office and fill out a short-form credit application. You already know all of Bill's personal details, so filling out the form is easy. Within two hours your application will be approved or rejected. If it is rejected, you know Bill's credit is bad. If the sale is approved, you would change your mind at the last minute and leave the store. In that case, we know Bill has good credit.

Chapter Ten

Understanding Criminal Records

In Chapter Fourteen we will see that a few states allow you to search the statewide repository of criminal record information. These states are a minority, however, and most criminal record checking still must be done on a county-by-county basis. We are going to examine how criminal records are created, and a quick but questionable way to determine if an individual has a record.

All criminal record information begins with an individual's arrest or citation to appear in court for a nontraffic offense. When an individual is arrested or cited, the person's name, birthdate, physical description, race, and sex are entered into police files. An individual arrested has had fingerprints taken as well.

The information makes its first stop at the state central identification bureau, the central repository of statewide criminal record data. The computer will look for a match with an existing file based on biographic information and the fingerprints. If no match with an existing file is found, a new file is created.

After the state-level search is completed, the information is electronically transmitted to the FBI computer. This computer contains two sets of files that are of interest to us. The first is the Wanted Persons Index. This is known as a "hot file" be-

cause it can lead to an individual's arrest. The Wanted Persons Index contains all people who are wanted on federal charges, as well as all state arrest warrants that are extraditable. Anytime a police officer pulls an individual over, he runs the name and birthdate against this file.

In other words, a local warrant created because of an unpaid speeding ticket will not get listed on this system. The reason for this is that the jurisdiction issuing this warrant will not be willing to pay the costs for your detention and shipment home if you are arrested out of state for this unpaid speeding ticket.

The second database residing on the FBI national crime computer is something known as the Interstate Identification Index, or Triple I, for short. This database is a consolidation of criminal record data from all fifty states and the federal court system.

The FBI requires the states to forward all criminal conviction information for serious misdemeanors and felonies. This data is then centralized onto one massive database. In theory, the Interstate Identification Index should allow local prosecutors to get an idea of an individual's entire criminal record from across the nation. An individual arrested in Oregon for attempted rape might have a higher bail set if a check of Triple I reveals prior convictions for other crimes of violence.

The easiest criminal record to check for is a federal record. You must remember that the federal courts will only handle cases that involve federal jurisdiction. Most crime involves the violation of state, not federal, laws. If someone blew up a post office or is running guns across state lines, he has committed a federal crime.

You can learn if an individual has served time in a federal prison or been on federal probation by calling (202) 307-3126. The Federal Bureau of Prisons will tell you what the individual was convicted of, what prison they served time in, and the

length of the sentence. You will need the name and birthdate of the individual.

This brings us to a questionable, but definitive, way of ascertaining if someone has a record. The new federal legislation regulating the sale of handguns requires that all potential purchasers undergo a criminal record check. This criminal record check involves the particular state criminal record repository and the Triple I database. It can be concluded that an individual who can pass this screening and purchase a gun has no serious record.

To do this would require you to impersonate this individual at a gun store. This might get easier to do in the future, because the gun stores are supposed to have access to a computer system that will instantly issue an approval or refusal for someone attempting to purchase a handgun.



Chapter Eleven

Civil Court Records

We have discussed real estate transaction records but your courthouse contains a myriad of other records likely to have your subject's name on them. These are the civil court records at your local courthouse and the records of the federal bankruptcy court system. Let's look at the bankruptcy court first.

Each year hundreds of thousands of Americans declare bankruptcy. The stigma of bankruptcy is no longer what it once was. People can declare bankruptcy one day, and finance a car the next. Most people file bankruptcy under the Federal Bankruptcy Act, and the records of all bankruptcies are public. A separate federal court system administers the bankruptcy law.

If you think an individual might have filed bankruptcy, you will want to check with the federal bankruptcy court in the cities where he has lived. Discovering a bankruptcy is excellent on its own merits, but the bankruptcy filing can give reams of other personal information about the subject. Bankruptcies are filed by name and Social Security number. Many information brokers also provide a statewide bankruptcy search if provided the individual's name and Social Security number.

The information broker's report will usually contain the name, Social Security number, and address of the bankrupt

person, along with how much debt was wiped out. I urge you to obtain the entire bankruptcy file because of the wealth of information it will contain.

A bankruptcy filing will contain the following information:

Description of all real estate owned and its value

Serial and license plate numbers of all vehicles

Estimated value of all vehicles

All credit cards and amounts owed on each

All other debt and amount owed

Any unpaid taxes

Any unpaid child support

Any unpaid government student loans

Inventory of all personal property

Name of spouse

This information can provide you with new information to energize your search, even if the bankruptcy is a few years old.

Local civil records cover such a wide spectrum that almost everyone has some sort of civil record at a courthouse somewhere, even if it is just a property record. The wonderful thing is that all of these records are public.

Consider a divorce record. A divorce file will contain a ton of information. When people divorce, assets must be divided, child support and alimony paid, child visitation and living arrangements made, and on and on.

If you are searching for an individual who was divorced five years ago, the divorce record might provide you with just the opening you need. If you call the former spouse saying you are out to collect a debt, his or her animosity might cause her to give you your subject's address.

The address on file for the children might be the current address that your subject is residing at, or the child custody

agreement might have been updated with new addresses for the parents. If you find your subject was divorced, always review the entire divorce file.

The following is a partial list of the other types of civil records you will find at most courthouses:

- Mortgage filings
- Universal commercial code filings
- Motor vehicle titles (in some states)
- Eviction orders
- Judgements and lawsuit filings
- Power of attorney filings
- Child support agreements
- Probates of wills
- State tax liens
- Federal tax liens
- Name change decrees
- Garnishment orders

All of these records are open to the public, and any one of them can provide you with valuable information. One strategy to use when searching for civil records is to have an information broker do a civil record search for you. The broker's civil record search will usually tell you what kind of records an individual has and the year they were made. Once you have this information, you can then write to the court clerk directly for a copy of the record.

A few states allow the public access to worker's compensation records. These records can be accessed by name and Social Security number. A worker's compensation record will tell you the injury the individual suffered, along with how long and for what amounts they received compensation. These states and their addresses appear on the next two pages.

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Alaska:

Worker's Compensation Division
PO Box 25512
Juneau, AK 99802

Arkansas:

Worker's Compensation Commission
625 Marshall Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

Connecticut:

Worker's Compensation Division
1890 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06514

Illinois:

Illinois Industrial Commission
100 West Randolph
Chicago, IL 60611

Iowa:

Industrial Commissioner's Office
1000 East Grand Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Kansas:

Division of Worker's Compensation
900 Jackson
Topeka, KS 66612

Maine:

Worker's Compensation Commission
State House, Room 27
Augusta, ME 04333

Maryland:

Worker's Compensation Commission
6 North Liberty Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

New Jersey:

Division of Worker Compensation
State Office Building
Trenton, NJ 08625

Oklahoma:

Worker's Compensation Court
1915 North Stiles
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Make a point of visiting your local courthouse and learning your way around the files. The clerks can be most helpful, and part of any good home investigator's training is learning how court records are kept. At the same time, you will be cultivating a relationship with the court clerks who can aid you in locating hard-to-find information.

Chapter Twelve

Specialized Databanks

These services should be contacted after you have done your initial information search and it has not yielded much data. However, if you know for sure that information is available from one of these sources, then run a check here as soon as possible. In the example of Bill Jones, we did not know much about him. But what if we know that Bill Jones had been in the military, or perhaps was still connected to the military through the Reserves or the National Guard?

Military records are a boon to a person conducting an information search. Under the federal government's Freedom of Information Act, most information from a current or former service member's personnel file must be released upon request. The only data that will not be released is the medical history of the service member, details of any classified assignments, current address and Social Security number.

What will be released to you is a detailed chronological history of the subject's life in the military. The record will detail all locations of duty assignments, when and where the subject was promoted, the subject's place of birth and date of birth, all children and other dependents of the service member, along with much other data. I draw attention to the information on dependents because it will also include the age and names of the children. This can help you determine the birthdate and birthplace of the children, as well as additional data

on the subject's unit assignments; these will allow you to compile a whole network of people you can contact through the military to learn more about your subject.

You would accomplish this by making use of the Military Locator service to find these former colleagues and then contact them. Or you could request these other people's military records and contact them that way. The easiest way to obtain more information on a subject via a former colleague is to make use of the service through the Veterans Administration. They will provide you with the V.A. file number, the regional office handling the case, and the way to have the letter forwarded, on the seeming grounds of a unit reunion. You would know the unit or units your subject had served in from the military service file. This information would be sent along with \$2.00 for each colleague you wanted the current address of.

With current or former military members, the starting point is obtaining the current or past service file. Once you have done this you will often have the information you seek. If not, then arrange to have a letter forwarded to get current address data. In general, by the time you have received the military personnel file, you will already have current address and telephone number from other sources.

Criminal records are the next specialized database that you will want to check out. Most people do not have criminal records, and if they do, they will usually be picked up by the credit bureau and listed on the subject's credit report. There are cases where this may not happen. If our Mr. Jones was convicted of an offense ten years ago, it will no longer appear on his credit report.

Your information search will have given you a chronological history of Bill Jones' addresses. Most cities and counties sell something called a "compliance" certificate or something

similar. These certificates say that the person named therein does not have a criminal record with the city or county involved. Frequently, companies that require their employees to be bonded require that applicants obtain these certificates before they will be formally hired. Often, this can be done by mail by sending in the appropriate fee and request form to the county or city records clerk. You would apply for such a certificate in the name of the target. If it is issued, you can safely assume that he has no record. You could do this for each locale where he lived.

In some cities there is open access to the criminal litigation index. You can actually sit at a computer terminal and search the index yourself. The litigation index will provide the nature of the charge, the judge and attorneys involved, and the case disposition along with other information. Federal criminal records can also be obtained this way. Although the actual criminal record itself is restricted data, the court proceedings that led to its establishment are not.

Federal court indexes are better organized than local or state court indexes. Essentially, you do the identical procedure, but at the federal courts concerned. You might also wish to check at the federal bankruptcy court as well. Private firms that advertise that they can get a criminal record on an individual essentially do the same thing or they know someone in law enforcement who will run National Crime Information Computer checks for them. You can accomplish the same.

Other specialized databanks to check out are city business-license records and the county fictitious name index. Most cities require all businesses to be licensed. If it appears that the company your subject works for may be owned in part by the subject, check out the business license. These are public records. City business-license records will usually detail the owner of record, the officers of the business, and the addresses

of these people. License renewals will often request data on last year's sales figures, and frequently contain Social Security numbers and business tax identification numbers for all listed parties. The county fictitious names index lists private operators who use a "doing business as" name for their operation. These forms will be on record at the county courthouse, and contain a similar amount of data.

Getting medical data on a target can be difficult. However, there are ways to get at least a partial perspective on the target's medical history. The equivalent of a credit bureau for the insurance industry is something called the Medical Information Bureau (MIB). The MIB contains the health records of millions of Americans who have health insurance and have made claims against it. The MIB will not give you any information directly, but you can access it without their knowledge. The MIB acts like a credit bureau does to those who have bad credit. Except in this case, "bad credit" is a poor medical history.

People who have been treated for certain serious illnesses find out later on that they can never purchase any more health insurance. The MIB sees to this with ruthless efficiency. Part of an insured person's agreement with the insurer allows a copy of the patient's medical history to be placed on file at the MIB. As claims are made against your insurance, they are logged at the MIB. At some point, the person may become a "bad risk." At this point, he will be denied further insurance coverage. An easy way to see if your subject has had any serious medical claims is to apply for a supplemental hospital cash policy in his name. If the policy is granted, odds are his medical history is relatively clean. If you get a letter back from the company saying coverage is denied entirely, or they will grant coverage but will exclude certain illnesses, you can almost bet he has had these. A follow-up letter to the particu-

lar carrier involved will often net you a more detailed response about the illness involved.

Chapter Thirteen

Computer Software Programs

One big change since the first edition of this book is the rapid conversion of hard copy information into electronic form. A good example of this is the telephone directory. When the first edition was written, the only way to develop a comprehensive file of out-of-town telephone directory information was to purchase bulky telephone directories from the phone company. A second option was to go to a library and use their out-of-town telephone directory collection.

Both of these options have their drawbacks. Developing your own collection, even for just one region of the nation, could be very expensive and consume a lot of space. The out-of-town directories at the public library frequently will be many years out of date and incomplete. Criss-cross directories are yet another expense.

Technology has come to the rescue. A number of private companies now purchase telephone directories from every state and enter the relevant information into one massive computer database. Many public libraries now have one of these products available. You can also purchase a similar product for your personal computer for less than \$75.

The beauty of these electronic phone directories is that you can search for a listing via numerous criteria. You can search by an individual's or business name. You can also do a reverse

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search on many of these products with an address, or by type of business. These products give you a built-in ability to do a criss-cross search.

With any product of this type, there are pros and cons. The advantages are quite obvious. Once you have bought the software and installed it on your computer, you can run as many searches as you want. The cost per search is minimal, and it is very convenient.

The drawbacks are twofold. The first is human error. These programs are compiled by scanning the contents of thousands of telephone directories into a computer. Errors and omissions occur. Results from any search you run on one of these telephone programs should be confirmed with a call to the local information number in the relevant city. This is especially true when the program does not find a listing.

The second drawback is that the information is dated. Once you purchase the program, the information starts to get old. The information in these programs may be as much as a year old when you purchase it. One way to minimize this problem is to find out when the new edition of a program is to be released, and wait until then to purchase it.

The two most popular telephone search programs are Phonedisc and Phonefile. Both of these and others are available at a well-stocked computer store. Some of these programs offer other enhancements such as providing a map to the address listed. If at all possible, try the programs out before purchasing them.

There are also programs that will give you information on every piece of residential and business property in the United States. These programs will typically provide data such as:

- Name of property owner
- Location of the property

- Legal description of the property
- Amount paid for the property
- Assessed value
- Address for tax bills
- Mortgage holder
- Neighborhood demographics

The neighborhood demographics can be very useful. This information, which is culled from census and other records, can tell you the average income of homeowners in a given area and the average value of a house. Some of these programs will even tell you how long an individual has lived at a particular address.

One of the most popular vendors of this type of data is TRW REDI data. This database is frequently used by real-estate lenders and mortgage brokers. Your local library may have TRW REDI data available for your area on microfiche or CD-ROM. A full set of TRW REDI data is very expensive; however, other software companies offer stripped-down versions at an affordable price.

Once again, remember that a computer file is only as good as the source of the information. The property information database is compiled from county tax records from across the nation. Errors are made. Always confirm any information from these sources directly with the original record maker.

Finally, for those who are really serious, many state motor-vehicle departments make the entire database of driver's records available to the public for purchase. This can be expensive, but if you run a lot of searches in Oregon, for example, nothing could be more easy than having everyone with an Oregon driver's license at your fingertips. You can find out what states will sell their entire database of driver's data by

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writing to the motor vehicle department addresses given in Appendix Two.

Chapter Fourteen

The Internet and Information Brokers

The Internet allows you to easily access a wide variety of information sources thousands of miles from your location. Many information brokers now sell their services via the Internet. The Internet has also increased the speed by which a search can be conducted, and, in many cases, reduced its cost dramatically.

Another change has been the development of information brokers who gladly sell their wares to the public without a lot of hassle. When the first edition of this book was published, the number of brokers who would do this was very small. Now, new information brokers pop up all the time advertising their wares to the public. Before we start looking at information broker searches, let us look at some searches you can run on the Internet for free.

We mentioned the Social Security Death Index. The Social Security Administration does not sell this index directly to the public, but it is available through a number of information brokers and free sources.

Internet sites that cater to people doing genealogical research on their ancestors frequently have the Death Index available, usually as a free search. The edition of the Death Index they have may be a year or two old, but unless you are looking for someone who just died, this may suit your needs.

The Death Index itself can be searched by name, Social Security number, year of death, or location where the death benefit was paid. This makes it a very useful tool. You enter the name of an individual, and get back a list of everyone with that name who has died. You can use the other identifiers that are returned with the search to see if the "John Doe" listed is your "John Doe."

One site that has the Death Index is <http://www.ancestry.com>. Because specific Internet addresses change from time to time, however, the best way to locate a genealogical or death index site is to use a search engine, such as Yahoo or Lycos. Then type in "Social Security Death Index" or "Genealogical", and then surf through the Internet sites given until you find what you need.

You can also do telephone searches for free over the Internet. Most of the major on-line services have hot links that will direct you immediately to nationwide telephone directory services such as Switchboard or 411 America. These services can also be accessed via a search engine, or something known as the United Internet Search facility.

This brings us to information brokers available via the Internet. The prices of information broker products have fallen dramatically since the first edition of this book was written. This price drop now means information brokers can be a cost-effective solution for the at-home investigator.

Usually information brokers save you time. A driver's record search is a good example. You can run a driver's record search yourself by writing for the information in most states. The drawback is the delay you will face. The letter must be mailed, processed, and the results sent back to you. This can take a few weeks. A driver's record search performed via an information broker will take a few days at most. The difference, of course, is price. The driver's record search you per-

form on your own will cost only a few dollars. The information broker will charge a premium for his quicker access to information.

There are some searches that only an information broker can perform. Many searches involving a Social Security number or an attempt to locate a Social Security number will fall under this category.

Social Security number searches are performed by consulting the "Header" data on the credit files maintained by all three major credit reporting agencies. This header information is considered public record information because it does not actually contain the consumer's payment history. Header data will consist of the following information:

- Full name
- Birthdate
- Social Security number
- Current address
- Previous address
- Employer
- Telephone number

The three major credit bureaus sell what are known as identification reports to third-party information brokers. These brokers usually do not have access to full credit bureau reports, but are given access to the header information.

The first type of identification report you will want to run is called a Social Security number sweep. This report is run when you have the subject's Social Security number. The Social Security number is run through all files in all three bureaus. Anyone using that number will have their header information pulled.

This search is used by talk shows where they reunite long-lost family members or friends. In most cases, someone had

the Social Security number of the missing party. It is a simple matter after that. The databases are updated whenever the missing individual applies for credit, or a credit report is run on him for some reason. This search normally costs \$10 to \$30, depending on the broker used and the number of credit bureaus consulted.

The second search you will want to use information brokers for is called the Social Security number lookup or national identifier search. You run this search when all you have is a former address of the subject, but do not know the Social Security number.

This search works when you have a good former address of the subject. If the subject has ever applied for credit using this address, or had a credit report run on them whilst they were living at this address, the computer will match the name and former address to a Social Security number. This search will frequently return a current address as well.

Information brokers offer many other searches as well, not all connected to the credit-bureau system. Many information brokers now offer a voter registration search. In 1995, about twenty states had their voter registration lists computerized and maintain a unified list for the entire state.

Information brokers can now access this data in a few minutes via computer. The problem with a search like this is that each state uses a different format for its voter registration records, and this means the information necessary to match a file will vary from state to state.

This means if you enter too much information about an individual, the search will return a negative response. By the same token, if your subject resides in a state where the voter registration document requires a Social Security number, the lack of one will cause your search to come back negative.

Voter registration records are one information source where it is still best to contact the record holder directly. This way you are sure of getting accurate information, even if it means waiting a little longer.

One search that information brokers are most useful for is a forwarding address. The postal service will not give you the new address unless the person has used his old address for business purposes. If a forwarding order is in effect, they will forward a letter to the new address, but they will not give this address to you, as an individual.

The postal service does sell all address changes to private-sector service bureaus that service the direct mail industry. Information brokers have access to this database. Additionally, most information brokers enhance information with data from major catalog sales firms and numerous magazines. The combination of all three of these sources makes it very likely that an information broker can locate the new address of a subject who has filed a change-of-address order.

The change-of-address search is very useful when the address update search via the credit bureau has failed. The address update search will frequently fail if the person has not applied for credit with the new address, or if the person has dropped out of the credit system entirely.

Many information brokers offer criminal record searches. Most states do not allow access to their central repository of criminal conviction data. This means a criminal record search at the state level must be done county by county. Most county clerks will provide this service free, or at a very low cost. The following states do allow the public direct access to their central criminal record repositories:

Colorado

District of Columbia

Florida

Mississippi

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Hawaii

Illinois

Indiana

Kansas

Kentucky

Maine

North Dakota

Oklahoma

Oregon

Pennsylvania

South Carolina

Wisconsin

To run a statewide search for a criminal record in one of the listed states, write to the state-police addresses given in Appendix Five. Ask them for information on running a statewide criminal record check. Some states require you to submit your request on an official state form, and the information required varies a little from state to state.

A few information brokers also supply full credit reports. I urge you to exercise some caution here. Many information brokers will accept your written word that you have a bona fide reason for requesting a credit report. If you have been retained to collect a debt, you have a valid reason. Idle curiosity is not justification.

If you obtain a credit report on an individual without valid reasons, you have violated a federal law, and if the subject finds out, you could be sued for a hefty sum. The broker will face no liability, because he was only fulfilling what he thought to be a valid request. Remember, all inquiries made on a credit report are recorded on the credit report, and the subject could trace the request back to you.

Some brokers offer other searches, such as bank account locates. A bank account locate will attempt to find one active bank account belonging to the subject. This search can be quite expensive, costing well over a hundred dollars in some cases.

Many brokers also offer borderline illegal searches. These searches involve such things as getting a list of charges posted

to a given credit card account number, or a list of toll charges made to a given telephone number. I would avoid these searches, because they almost always involve the broker pretending to be someone they are not in order to get the required information.

In addition to the ones listed in Appendix Four, you can locate many additional information brokers, by logging on to the Internet and going to <http://www.pimall.com>. This web site is maintained by *PI Magazine*, which is itself an excellent source of information for the home investigator. The site has a complete listing of information brokers. Alternatively, you can use a search engine and look under “information brokers.”

Chapter Fifteen

Conducting a Debtor Search

All searches have one principal guideline: you get as much information as you can without outside help, and only if you are unable to obtain satisfactory results on your own do you turn to a third party. These sources will be discussed later on.

Let's suppose that you are working as an independent investigator and you have been given the file on a John Doe who owes the Acme Finance Company \$2,000 on a personal loan account. The loan was taken out three years ago and there had been intermittent periods of late payments over this time. About a year ago the payments ceased, and the account went into collection and eventually was charged off. The company's contract collection agency was assigned the account, but with no result. The file you have been given contains the original loan application, copies of the cancelled checks tendered in payment, and an old credit report. We can assume that the easy work was already done. The outside collection agency would have already contacted his local bank, employer and any other creditors or relatives listed on the application. This will have yielded no results. We can assume that our subject has left the area, and has no assets that can be easily traced. Where do you begin?

The first step is to expend a little energy finding out about our target's past. Obviously, the relatives or friends listed on the loan application will not say anything, but how about his

former landlord? A quick visit here will often get you some answers about his past. Most importantly, check any references listed on the application. This will give you an idea as to where he came from before he relocated to your area. It will also allow you to talk to his former neighbors to learn more about him. Now we are armed with more information than most collection agencies will even bother to obtain. We can now begin the second phase of the search.

People tend to return to places they have come from. You would run an alpha driver's record search in your current state, his previous state of residence and all neighboring states. If he had any cars, it is a good idea to do the same thing with respect to his vehicle registrations. In a week's time you should have some idea as to his whereabouts. But you must be able to properly interpret the information you will receive from these sources. For example, if you find that he did not renew his vehicle registration, one of two things happened. The first possibility is that he moved out of state, and re-registered his car there. The second possibility is that he sold the car to someone else. If the purchaser was within your current state, it means that the vehicle has not yet been re-registered, otherwise the computer will show that the registration has been transferred to the new owner. If the car has been sold to an out-of-state buyer, the computer will not show this. This is because most states, after checking to see that the car is not stolen, simply issue new plates and registration, and shred the old documents. Your multi-state search will give you an answer if he has a driver's license or car registered in any of these states.

The most wide-reaching vehicle search you can run is called a vehicle identification number search, or VIN search for short. This works if the subject has changed his name and registered the car to himself in this new name. The VIN of a

car will never change. This is the unique serial number that the manufacturer gives every car or truck at the factory. A VIN search will give you the name and address of the legal and registered owner. If he has sold the car, the VIN search will tell you that at once. For this reason, you may prefer to run a VIN search at once instead of an alpha search. But remember, to run a VIN search you must first have the serial number.

The next angle to work is to see if he has left a forwarding address anywhere. You would, of course, have already asked the former landlord and neighbors if they knew a forwarding address. If nothing was forthcoming, you can assume that he did not tell anyone where he would be. However, most people want to get their mail, and he may have filed an address-change form with the post office. All change-of-address forms can be obtained in one of two manners. The first involves a Freedom of Information Act request. If you file this request form the post office must tell you who the boxholder is, or what the forwarding address is. This leads us naturally to the second source of data, which is a third party information-broker.

The post office sells off the listing of all address changes to a number of information vendors. You can always obtain this list of address changes from them. I will explain more about this later, but you may be wondering why I take the attitude I do toward the use of third party information vendors.

There is a place for using these services in a search. But you should only use these sources when you have already exhausted your own efforts. It is especially bad practice to develop a heavy reliance on these sources as a beginning investigator, because you will never develop the tracking skills a good investigator must have.

Back to our debtor search. While you are waiting for a response on your motor vehicle and address-forwarding

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records, now is the time to start working some other angles. One is to contact the telephone company. If the subject has skipped out on bills, there is a good chance that he stiffed the phone company on the last bill as well. Often telephone company collection agents will be willing to share some information with you if you agree to tell them about any additional information your investigation turns up. Make sure you follow through, even if it is just to say that you have nothing new to report. Sometimes you can obtain a listing of long distance numbers that the subject has called. This can put you on track when it seems like an investigation is dead-ending. This can also lead your search to a state where you had not considered running a check of the records before. Sometimes talking with the person whom he has called will elicit information as to your target's whereabouts. Often you will have to use a cover story, also known as pretexting. Remember, never pretend you are a doctor or a lawyer or a police officer or other professional person. You can get into serious trouble for doing that. You can get away with such ruses as saying that you have an urgent message for the target, or that he has some unclaimed property due him, and those who have it need to know his current address. Another excellent pretext is to say that the subject has listed you as a personal reference in connection with an employment application. You can easily maneuver the conversation around so you can obtain some current address information.

Let's say that you have gone through all of these steps and you still have been unable to locate your subject. This is when you would turn to a third party information broker. For example, to run a fifty state search of motor vehicle records would be very costly. A third-party information provider can do this. One way is through the credit bureau header information mentioned previously. If you know the subject's

name, Social Security number and birthdate, you can use these services effectively.

One company that purchases access to this header data from all of the credit bureaus on a nationwide basis is called IRSC. Another company that provides this service is called NCI, for National Credit Information. Both of these networks also incorporate other databases such as change-of-address records and nationwide criss-cross directory capability. These services can be accessed on-line via computer, by telephone or mail. Chapter Fourteen includes detailed information on on-line searches.

Chapter Sixteen

Conducting Background Investigations

Background investigations are another potential source of revenue for an investigator. Most background investigations are what is known as a passive investigation.

Consider what happens when a company wants a bonded employee. Before the insurance company will agree to bond a company's employees, it will first want some type of assurance that the workers have no criminal record, for theft in particular. All criminal records are public information. The investigation that will follow will usually involve no more than checking out the criminal litigation index in the counties or cities that the applicant has lived in. If the search is negative, meaning that there are no criminal records on file for this individual, then the bond will be issued.

This sort of work is easy. Many smaller businesses now want to do some type of pre-employment screening of all their employees, for liability purposes. The thing to bear in mind with criminal records is that the only thing that is privileged about them is the mode of access. All states have a central criminal records computer repository, as does the FBI on a national level. These databases are off limits in most states unless you know someone in law enforcement who has access. The federal system is called the National Crime Information

Computer. This is the one that police officers routinely use when they pull someone over and check the person out. The other part of these records is the criminal record index. This is a separate listing of all people who have been convicted of serious criminal offenses in the United States.

One way to have access to these records on a nationwide basis is to use the services of one of the aforementioned third-party search firms. The way these firms work is they have someone in every county who can physically check the criminal files in that locale. Some of these companies actually maintain their own parallel computerized database of criminal records. Once again, use these services only when necessary. If you run criminal history checks in a few locales all the time, you will know what the current fee and request form is.

Another nationwide source of data is licensing bodies and professional associations. If you know a person works in a trade or profession that normally requires licensing or union membership, you have a ready-made access to information. A letter or telephone call to the licensing agency will tell you if the person is working in that particular state. These organizations are normally only too happy to provide information, because this allows them to protect their membership from unlicensed competitors. A listing of state-regulated occupations is given in Appendix Seven.

State licensing bodies can be very useful in doing another type of investigative work. Universities and colleges of all sorts need to stay in touch with their alumni for fundraising purposes. As the federal government has cut back on education funding, this type of contact has become more vital. Because many university and college graduates practice or work in state-regulated industries, locating these people just boils down to identifying the current state of residence, and then

contacting the relevant professional association or state licensing body.

This brings us to a special case of people who have been in the military. As we saw in Chapter Thirteen, military records should not be overlooked as a potential source of information, even if it has been many years since the person was in the Armed Forces. All military personnel and service records are universally available to anyone. This is due to the fact that military people are paid with public funds.

Another valuable source of information is the county real estate index. This is arranged alphabetically by the last names of all people buying and selling property during the year. This is a public record document and is available without the need for doing any pretexting at all. These records will tell who the seller was, how much was paid for the property, and the name of the mortgage holder, if any. This can provide valuable leads on a person and with whom they have had financial dealings. This can provide an avenue to learn about such things as income and assets.

Passive vs. Active Investigations

All investigations have the same goal: to expose various aspects of a person's life. An investigation can take different forms. When a person applies for a new job and is asked to give references from his last employment, this is a background investigation. Background investigations can be divided into two types: passive and active.

A passive investigation is the kind most of us are familiar with. In a passive investigation, the lack of any negative information is considered proof positive that the individual concerned is worthy of the job or other privilege to be granted. An

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active investigation is a horse of a completely different color. The active investigator is not satisfied with the mere lack of negative information. The investigator actively seeks out discrepancies in an individual's story or background, and upon finding them, tries to expose as much detail about them as possible. Consider the difference in how educational credentials would be verified in a passive investigation and an active one.

Assume that we are conducting a passive investigation of an individual. This individual has applied for a job that requires a university degree. On the resume, the job applicant has written that he has a degree and also what his grade point average was. The passive investigator will simply call the university in question to confirm the degree and the grade point average. On hearing confirmation of this, the passive investigator will regard the matter as being closed and move on to something else.

The active investigator takes an entirely different approach. The active investigator will not be content with merely obtaining confirmation of the individual's educational bona fides. He will write and obtain the actual transcript and student record. With these, he will look carefully at the courses taken and at the specific grades received to see if there is anything there that was not listed on the résumé.

Active investigating got a big boost in the 1980s after the major spy case involving the Walker family. In 1985, four members of this family were convicted of engaging in espionage against the United States. The secrets they betrayed dealt with the nuclear missile firing submarines, in particular the coding system used to issue missile launch orders. The members of this family had all passed traditional passive background investigations conducted by the military. After this in-

cident, and others around the same time, the whole business of background investigations was revamped.

It was decided that the passive investigations that had been done up to this point were no longer adequate, and that the active investigations that previously had only been done on applicants at the highest levels would be extended to almost all Defense Department security clearance investigations. The new system would be similar to the British system called “positive vetting.” In these types of investigations it is virtually impossible for an individual to slip through the net undetected.

We will first look at how passive investigations are carried out. This is due to the fact that most private company investigations, state-level clearances, and federal civil service investigations are done in this fashion.

Passive Investigations

When you see a job that says “background investigation required” advertised by a state agency, federal civil-service or private employer, it will usually involve a passive investigation. This investigation will involve two parts. The first will be verification of an applicant’s employment and educational background. The second will involve checking certain databases for negative information. Perhaps the most familiar type of passive investigation that goes on is when a person is bonded for certain types of employment. This is very common in the banking and janitorial businesses. An insurance company agrees to indemnify the business in question, provided all employees meet their screening requirements. People often wonder what happens if a bank teller gives out ten \$100 bills

instead of ten \$10 bills. The teller might be fired, but the insurance company pays the losses.

Bonding requirements are usually quite simple. They normally only require that the applicant have no criminal record. Such things as traffic infractions are not considered, unless it is drunk driving. Quite often the applicant himself is required to go to the local police and obtain a certificate of good character. This is a simple passive investigation.

Some passive investigations can be more encompassing than this. The one thing all passive investigations have in common is that the databases that are consulted will only contain information on the exceptional citizen. A good example is the background investigation of a person who wants to drive trucks in interstate transportation of merchandise. Most trucking companies will do a passive investigation that is more comprehensive than just a simple bonding check. The trucking company needs to know that the driver is not prone to steal from his shipments, that his driving record is not riddled with accidents, that his licenses are valid, and that he possesses the necessary background. This can all be accomplished through a passive investigation.

The databases that must be consulted are many. Let's look at the driving history first. The investigator will want to contact the motor vehicle department of the state where he was issued his Commercial Driving License. His driving record will tell whether or not his license is valid, and also his entire driving history. All traffic citations and accidents will be listed. This will tell if the applicant has given a true picture of his driving background. Once it has been determined that the driving history meets the company's requirements, the investigator can proceed with the next step in verifying his background. This will involve a criminal-background check. The investigator will write to the court clerks in each state and city

of residence asking them to search for a criminal record in the name of this individual. If the result is negative, the investigator will then proceed with verifying the employment and educational background of the applicant. This will usually involve no more than making a few telephone calls to former employers and asking if the applicant worked there in the capacities given and also ascertaining what type of worker he is.

If all of these checks are negative, meaning no derogatory information is found, the applicant has successfully passed this passive investigation, and he will be hired.

Passive investigations all share certain common features. The most important one is that a lack of negative information from certain sources is considered positive and serves to validate the background claimed.

To aid passive investigations, many states are creating new databases. One example involves medical doctors. Many of the states, with the help of the federal government, are compiling a nationwide database of all medical practitioners whose licenses have been suspended, revoked, or found guilty of malpractice claims. This database will provide an easy way to check if a doctor has been the subject of such adverse action. When the system is complete, an investigator would merely input the name, birthdate and Social Security number of the doctor in question, and the system would respond with either a no or yes.

Over time, many agencies will come to rely on this system as the arbiter of a doctor's standing. But one example of how these databases can give a false sense of security is one of the oldest, the National Drivers Register. Almost every state uses it, although it is an example of how "negative information" databases do not always work reliably.

The National Drivers Register is supposed to contain the names and birthdates of every driver in the United States who

has had a license revoked, or is currently under suspension. When a person applies for a new driving license in most states, this database is automatically consulted on line by the computer. If the National Driver Register indicates that the new license applicant has a file, the new license application will be denied. The applicant will be told that he must resolve the existing problem before any new license can be issued. The National Driver Register is designed to catch drivers who make simple attempts to evade it, such as transposing their first and middle names. However, a negative database like this can very easily be defeated. If a person transposes their first and middle names, and gives a different Social Security number, the system is easily defeated.

Almost all negative databases can be easily out-manuevered in a similar fashion. For example, some states have a computerized listing of all people suspected of child sexual abuse. If a person gets on one of these lists, even when it occurs with no evidence, it is virtually impossible to get off of the list. People whose names are wrongly on these lists find they cannot work in a whole range of jobs, because they might have some contact with children.

However, such computerized blacklisting can be overcome by simply altering enough personal data so that it does not match the information contained on the list. A person who is on a state child abuser list can change the order of his names and his Social Security number and eliminate his problems.

Because negative databases can be evaded in this way, an investigator may wish to check out transposed versions of the name the subject is using. This can expose people using this simple method to hide negative information. But to reveal negative information about someone who has used more elaborate methods of creating a new identity requires an active background investigation, as described later in this chapter.

Let's look at the databases that are typically consulted in a passive investigation and how they operate.

One of the most consulted databases is the credit bureau network across the country. In most states, it is perfectly legal for an employer to order a credit bureau report on a job applicant. Quite often in the small print on job applications, a waiver is given allowing the employer to do just that. In general, the only employers who will bother with credit checks are those where the employee's job will involve contact with cash or valuables. The logic is that someone with bad credit and in debt up to their ears will not make an employee who can be trusted. Some employers regard good credit as a sign of reliability. Once again, what is being looked for is negative information.

The next major database checked will be the county criminal record index. As we saw earlier, employers that require bonding of employees will always check this. They will also check in the counties where the applicant previously resided. All county courts will provide the record, or non-record of a person to anyone who will pay the required fee. Along with these criminal record checks are the other databases that we mentioned before that deal with child molesters and the like. Quite often these checks will be done in tandem.

Motor vehicle department records are also readily consulted. Nearly every person has some contact with this department. A person's driving record can be of legitimate interest to any employer who will have company vehicles driven by employees. This database can also be accessed in all states by anyone for payment of a small fee. The National Drivers Register, as previously mentioned, will also be consulted in tandem.

Other databases include the credit bureau networks maintained across the country. In conjunction with these, some investigators will check the county civil litigation index to see if

a person is the subject of lawsuits. If a person is the practitioner of a profession or trade that must be licensed, the records of the relevant state licensing body can be consulted.

We should look at the differences between passive investigations conducted by governmental agencies and private corporations. The main difference is in the data banks they are allowed entry to. For example, all states have a criminal identification bureau database in the state capital. In most states this is only available to law enforcement officers, and private individuals and companies are not allowed access to it. The state criminal identification bureau compiles its data from the local counties. Whenever a person is arrested on a serious charge, the fingerprint data and charge disposition sheet are forwarded to the bureau. The FBI criminal record index is in turn compiled from the files in the state identification bureau.

Some state and most federal governmental agencies that run passive background investigations on individuals are able to access these databases directly. In fact, this is often called a "National Agency Check" when a passive investigation is done in this fashion. What needs to be realized is that there is no different information available here. Only the method of access is different. Instead of checking each former county of residence for the existence of a record, one goes directly to the state identification bureau. We should also mention that many quasi-governmental bodies such as school boards also have access to these types of databases. If a private investigator has a friend who works in law enforcement, for example, he may be able to take a short cut in obtaining certain information.

Active Investigations

The active investigation proceeds in a totally different manner than the passive background investigation. This concept became very popular in Great Britain years ago. It is called "positive vetting."

An active background investigation pursued to its furthest ends should be able to reveal every significant event in a person's life, from their birth to the present. In effect, this is what active investigations of the highest order attempt to do. This also exposes the inherent weakness of the passive investigation. The passive investigator relies upon databases that will only contain information on the exceptional citizen. The other tool the active background investigation utilizes is time-line techniques. With these techniques, a chart can be plotted that shows a person's movement through each phase of his life. A person who passes such an investigation can be said to have few secrets left.

Another key aspect of active investigation techniques is periodic reevaluation of the subject. People who interact with the subject presently are interviewed, and an updated search is made on certain databases for new negative information. This type of active investigation would have exposed the Walker family spy ring long before the worst damage was done.

I am going to show how the federal government carries out active background investigations of people who must have a security clearance to work in sensitive positions in the government or the defense industry. This will show you the nature of an active investigation of the highest order, even though it may be a bigger project than you want to tackle.

The beginning of this type of background investigation is the personal history statement. This is a long stack of forms

that interrogates the subject about various aspects of his life. The subject must complete these forms at the office, and is not allowed to take them home. The reason for this is that these forms act as a control standard against what the investigation yields. There will be some discrepancies — a person cannot recall exactly every major activity they have done in the last ten years. However, there should not be major differences. One form will ask the subject to detail his educational history since grammar school. Another form will ask him to detail his employment history since he's been an adult. A separate biographical data form will ask him to list his birthdate, birthplace, parental birthdates and birthplaces, as well as other information on his siblings and friends he has known over the years.

Another sheet will ask the subject to detail his financial history over the years: where he has banked, what credit cards he has, how much money he has in various accounts, and if he has any foreign bank accounts. Another form will ask about his foreign travels and residences. If he has a passport, they will want a photocopy of it. The subject will also have to submit to a fingerprint check, and finally agree to allow his medical records to be examined.

The personal history statement provides the rough data that the investigating agent works with. In the federal government, the FBI is the agency responsible for carrying out the actual investigation. The starting point is a passive investigation of sorts. The subject's fingerprints and personal data will be subjected to a national agency check. The FBI will check them against its own criminal records index, and those of any foreign countries that the subject has visited or lived in. They will also check his name against listings of illegal tax protesters maintained by the Internal Revenue Service. Other agencies' listings of persons of interest are also consulted.

Once this has been completed the field investigation begins. This is where the investigation shifts from a passive to an active mode. At this point in the investigation we can say that the subject is not on the top ten most wanted list and that he has no criminal background. This is what he is not. The objective of the active investigation is to establish who he really is.

The active investigation will start with the details of the subject's birth. The field agent will pay a visit to the state vital statistics bureau and the registrar in the subject's county of birth. These records will be compared with the copy of his birth certificate that he previously provided. The agent will note the small details on the subject's birth certificate. He will jot down if he has any brothers or sisters, where the birth took place, and the name of the attending physician, nurse, or midwife. The names of these people will be written down. The agent will also note the name on the subject's birth certificate and notice if there are any variations between the name he uses presently and the name he was given at birth.

The next level of verification that will take place on the subject's birth certificate is to contact the state medical board that licensed whomever the attendant at birth was. They will attempt to verify that the doctor or nurse listed on the certificate actually existed. They will also attempt to contact this person to see if their personal records agree with the birth certificate. The final check involves establishing that any siblings listed exist and that they agree they have a brother or sister of that name.

This may seem to be a lot of trouble to go through for a birth certificate, but when the procedure is finished, there can be no doubt left as to the authenticity of the document. Sometimes a false birth certificate can be put into the files of the county registrar and at the state vital statistics agency. But a

false birth certificate will not have generated the secondary records that accompany a real one.

The next step in the active phase of the investigation is to verify the background segment of the personal history statement. This is the sheet where the subject lists his addresses and residences since he was a child. This information will be confirmed in a variety of ways. No, they do not interview all of the subject's old teachers. They will contact the schools listed and check for his attendance during the years indicated. They will also obtain a copy of his transcripts from his high school years and from any schooling above the high school level. These will be compared with ones that are already in his personnel file.

The other way the subject's former residences will be checked is through older editions of the city directories. These are available to the field agents in the various cities where he had lived. They will look under his name, and if he was a child during the years in question, they will look under his family name. When these listings all come back with information substantially verifying the information he provided on the personal history statement, this phase of the active investigation is closed.

At this point, the background investigator can conclude that the subject is the person that he has claimed to be on his personal history statement. His whereabouts for the last ten years are known, and from the day of his birth he has been scrutinized. The second part of the background investigation will involve taking a detailed look at his financial background and status.

The government will order credit reports on the subject from all of the major credit bureaus. They will also contact his bank and other financial institutions. His investment portfolio will be examined to see if it is in line with his income. His credit

report will be pored over to see if he is a person who lives within his means, or if he is steadily going deeper and deeper into debt. This is of concern because a person in perilous financial condition can be more easily compromised.

Once his finances have been checked, his medical records will be examined. In his medical file they will look at his overall health over the years and if he has been treated for any medical conditions that indicate certain behaviors. For example, a person who has a history of liver problems may be an alcoholic. What they are searching for is a medical condition that a foreign intelligence agency could use against the subject. If nothing is turned up here, the field investigation moves into its final phase.

The final phase of the background investigation will involve personal interviews with friends and acquaintances who have known the subject over the years. On the personal history statement, he will be asked to provide the names, addresses and telephone numbers of many people who have known him. But these people will be subjected to a background check themselves. This consists of a national agency check to ensure that the people he has listed as references are not criminals. Then the FBI will conduct casual interviews with many of these people and former neighbors.

During these interviews, the government will seek to determine what type of lifestyle the subject has now and has had in the past. This is the most subjective part of the interview process. The government will seek to determine if he fools around on his wife if he is married, or if he is a closet homosexual if he is single. They will seek to determine if he engages in such activities as wife-swapping and sexual swinging. The reason for this is all of these things can be used to blackmail a person. A person's being a homosexual or bisexual will not automatically disqualify them from receiving a security clearance.

There are many thousands of openly homosexual people who hold security clearances.

A good example of what will cause problems is the case of John Tower, who was nominated to become secretary of defense in 1989 by President George Bush. He had previously been married for many years, and one of the grounds for his divorce had been adultery. He was also said to have been seen intoxicated in public. As the FBI continued the background investigation, the allegations became more and more numerous. In the end the nomination was rejected by the Senate. Tower's real problem was that he gave the appearance of being an unreliable, undisciplined person through his overall behavior.

One former neighbor who disliked the subject is not enough to kill a background clearance. What is important is the person's overall lifestyle. In effect, what the investigators are looking for is a "smoking gun" that could be used to compromise the subject in the future. Only active investigations are able to ferret out such details. Many people fail these investigations because of a smoking gun in their past. Many people have been successfully turned into agents for hostile nations because the other side identified such Achilles' heels. In fact, a few years ago in California, the Soviet Government attempted to purchase a bank that served many people who held top secret security clearances and worked at a sensitive military electronics plant. The Soviets were thwarted at the last minute. Clearly they were hoping to find some employees who were in trouble financially and could be compromised.

When the field investigation is completed, the results are given to the agent in charge of the investigation. He then makes a recommendation as to whether the clearance should be granted or denied. Generally this decision can be appealed by the subject of the investigation.

Depending on the situation, a private investigator may not be able to use all the techniques the federal government uses to carry out an active background investigation of an individual. For example, it may not be feasible, in some cases, to have the subject fill out a personal history statement. This will obviously make things harder for the investigator, who will have to take whatever information he has about the subject and use the various data sources discussed earlier in this book to build up a more complete picture of the subject's background. This will provide the investigator with the leads he needs, such as the names of family members of the subject, as a starting point for an active background investigation.

Chapter Seventeen

Running an Investigation

The key to performing a successful investigation is careful organization and a clear objective of what it is you wish to learn. Do you wish to learn the financial status of this person, or are you only interested in learning if the individual has declared bankruptcy? Maybe you want to learn everything you can about this person.

Regardless of your objective, you need to work smart. This means locating and confirming the fundamental personal identifiers first. These are full name, birthdate, and the all-important Social Security number.

We have seen that if you can locate a valid former address of the subject, you can usually obtain the Social Security number. With the Social Security number you can access other records to locate the birthdate.

If you are unable to turn up a good former address quickly, check court records and motor vehicle records to see if an address pops up that way. If nothing is found there, do a name search with a nationwide telephone database, and play the game of elimination.

Use whatever nuggets of information you have to locate the next string of data that may lead you to the big picture. Frequently, if an individual has dropped out for a time, they might be in prison. Check for a federal prison record, and then at the county and/or state level.

One way to hone your skills is to pick a famous person you are interested in, and see what you can learn about them. A famous person's public records are public too. You can learn the Social Security number, birthdate, property owned, and civil filings that exist on a celebrity just as easily as you can about a regular person. Try it, it can be fun.

Celebrity biographical information can be obtained from fan clubs, Internet Web sites, or directories such as *Who's Who in Show Business*, and the like. Frequently, the address celebrities use for fan mail belongs to an agent or management firm. A Social Security lookup run against this address may give you the celebrity's Social Security number. Check property tax records, especially for residential property owned by the celebrity's production company. This is often the actual residence address of the individual.

Good luck in your investigations!

Appendix One Sample Worksheet

Full Name: _____

Variants of First Name/Nicknames: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Current Address: _____

Former Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Personal Appearance: _____

(Voice, tone of voice, accent) _____

Marital Status/Spouse's Name: _____

Present Employer: _____

Job Title: _____

Years of Service: _____

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Salary: _____

Landlord Address: _____

Mortgage Holder: _____

Car Registrations: _____

Drivers License Number: _____

Military Service Record: _____

Criminal Record: _____

Local: _____

Federal: _____

Medical Record: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Educational Background: _____

Credit Bureau File: _____

Appendix Two State Motor Vehicle Department Offices

Alabama

Department of Public Safety
PO Box 1471
Montgomery, AL 36102-1471 (334) 272-8868

Alaska

Department of Motor Vehicles
450 Whittier
Juneau, AK 99801 (907) 465-4361

Arizona

Motor Vehicle Division
1801 West Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85009 (602) 255-0072

Arkansas

Office of Driver Services
PO Box 1272
Little Rock, AR 72203 (501) 682-7202

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California

Department of Motor Vehicles
Driver License Division
2570 24th Street
Sacramento, CA 95813

Colorado

Department of Motor Vehicles
Traffic Record Section
Denver, CO 80261-0016 (303) 205-5613

Connecticut

Department of Motor Vehicles
60 State Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109 (860) 263-4421

Delaware

Motor Vehicle Division
PO Box 98
Public Safety Building
Dover, DE 19901 (302) 739-4421

District of Columbia

Bureau of Motor Vehicles
301 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20001 (202) 727-6680

Florida

Division of Drivers Licenses
Department of Highway Safety
2100 Mahan Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32308 (850) 488-0250

Georgia

Department of Public Safety
675 Ponce de Leon Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30308 (404) 658-7600

Hawaii

Motor Vehicle Office
Main Station
1199 Dillingham Boulevard.
Honolulu, HI 96813 (808) 832-4117

Idaho

Drivers Services
PO Box 34
Boise, ID 83707 (208) 334-8736

Illinois

Department of Motor Vehicles
2701 Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62723 (217) 782-2720

Indiana

Bureau of Motor Vehicles
100 N. Senate Ave N Room 405
Indianapolis, IN 46204 (317) 233-6000

Iowa

Department of Transportation
Office of Drivers Licenses
100 Euclid Avenue
PO Box 9204
Des Moines, IA 50306-9204 (515) 237-3153

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Kansas

Driver Control Bureau
PO Box 12021
Topeka, KS 66612 (785) 296-3671

Kentucky

Division of Driver Licensing
501 High Street
Frankfort, KY 40622 (502) 564-6800

Louisiana

Department of Public Safety
Office of Motor Vehicles
3132 Valley creek Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808 (225) 925-3870

Maine

Bureau of Motor Vehicles
29 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333 (207) 287-3556

Maryland

Motor Vehicle Administration
6601 Ritchie Highway NE
Glen Burnie, MD 21062 (301) 729-4550

Massachusetts

Attn: Court Records
Registry of Motor Vehicles
Driver Control Unit
PO Box 199150
Boston, MA 02119-9150 (617) 351-9213

Michigan

Registry of Motor Vehicles
7064 Crowner Drive
Lansing, MI 48918 (517) 322-1460

Minnesota

Driver and Vehicle Services
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul, MN 55103 (651) 296-6911

Mississippi

Department of Public Safety
PO Box 958
Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 987-1212

Missouri

Driver License Bureau
PO Box 200
Jefferson, City, MO 65105-0200 (573) 751-4833

Montana

State Drivers Services
301 N. Roberts
Helena, MT 59620-1430 (406) 444-3292

Nebraska

Department of Motor Vehicles
Driver Records
301 Centennial Mall S
Lincoln, NE 68509 (402) 471-4343

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Nevada

Drivers License Division
555 Wright Way
Carson City, NV 89701 (702) 885-5360

New Hampshire

Motor Vehicle Department
10 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03302 (603) 271-3111

New Jersey

Division of Motor Vehicles
3200 Brunswick Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08648-2410 (609) 896-0694

New Mexico

Motor Vehicle Division
PO Box 1028
Santa Fe, NM 87504 (505) 827-1667

New York

Department of Motor Vehicles
6 Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12228 (518) 474-0841

North Carolina

Division of Motor Vehicles
1100 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27697 (919) 715-7000

North Dakota

State License and Traffic Safety
608 E. Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505 (701) 328-2604

Ohio

Bureau of Motor Vehicles/Records
PO Box 16520
Columbus, OH 43266-0020 (614) 752-7888

Oklahoma

Department of Public Safety
3600 North Martin Luther King Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73111 (405) 425-2262

Oregon

Motor Vehicle Department
1905 Lana Avenue NE
Salem, OR 97314 (503) 945-5000

Pennsylvania

Bureau of Driver Licensing
1101 S Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17113 (717) 391-6190

Rhode Island

Division of Motor Vehicles
286 Main Street
Pawtucket, RI 02860 (401) 588-3020
ext. 3309

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South Carolina

Public Safety
Division of Motor Vehicles
955 Park Street
Columbia, SC 29201 (803) 737-1767

South Dakota

Department of Public Safety
40 E Cultural Heritage Center
Pierre, SD 57501 (605) 773-3541

Tennessee

Driver License Administration
503 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37219-2312 (615) 741-3954

Texas

Department of Public Safety
Driver Records
PO Box 15999
Austin, TX 78761 (512) 424-2600

Utah

Driver License Division
2780 West 4700 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84119 (801) 965-4400

Vermont

Motor Vehicle Department
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Virginia

Department of Motor Vehicles
2300 W Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23269 (804) 367-0538

Washington

Department of Licensing
PO Box 48001
Olympia, WA 98504-8001 (360) 902-3900

West Virginia

Department of Motor Vehicles
1606 Washington Street E
Charleston, WV 25311 (304) 558-3900

Wisconsin

Department of Transportation
Records and Licensing
PO Box 7995
Madison, WI 53707-7995 (608) 266-2353

Wyoming

Motor Vehicle Division
22305 Carey Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82930 (307) 777-4801

Appendix Three

Social Security Number List

Alabama	416-424
Alaska	574
Arizona	526-527
Arkansas	429-432
California	545-573
Colorado	521-524
Connecticut	040-049
Delaware	221-222
D.C.	577-579
Florida	261-267
Georgia	252-260
Hawaii	575-576
Idaho	518-519
Illinois	318-361
Indiana	303-317
Iowa	478-485
Kansas	509-515
Kentucky	400-407
Louisiana	433-439
Maine	004-007
Maryland	212-220
Massachusetts	010-034
Michigan	362-386
Minnesota	468-477
Mississippi	425-428

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Missouri	486-500
Montana	516-517
Nebraska	505-508
Nevada	530
New Hampshire	001-003
New Jersey	135-158
New Mexico	525 & 585
New York	050-134
North Carolina	232
North Dakota	501-502
Ohio	286-302
Oklahoma	440-448
Oregon	540-544
Pennsylvania	159-211
Rhode Island	035-039
South Carolina	247-251
South Dakota	503-504
Tennessee	408-415
Texas	449-467
Utah	528-529
Vermont	008-009
Virginia	223-231
Washington	531-539
West Virginia	232-236
Wisconsin	387-399
Wyoming	520

Additions

Arizona	600-601
California	602-626
Florida	589-595
Mississippi	587-588
North Carolina	232

Miscellaneous

Virgin Islands	580
Puerto Rico	580-584
Guam, Samoa & Pacific Territories	586
Railroad Ret.	700-728

On the next few pages we will list the highest group numbers that have been issued with each area. Frequently made up Social Security numbers will have group numbers that have not yet been assigned. This list will help detect these numbers.

<u>Area Number</u>	<u>Highest Group Assigned</u>
001-002	84
003	82
004-007	92
008-009	76
010-015	76
016-034	74
035	62
036-039	60
040-043	90
044-049	88
050-084	80
085-134	78
135-151	92
152-158	90
159-162	74
163-211	72
212-219	35
220	33

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<u>Area Number</u>	<u>Highest Group Assigned</u>
221	82
222	80
223-225	65
226-231	63
232	39
233-236	39
237-241	73
242-246	71
247-249	89
250-251	87
252-255	83
256-260	81
261-267	99
268-302	94
303	13
304-317	11
318-359	86
360-361	84
362	15
363-386	13
387-399	08
400-406	43
407	41
408-412	71
413-415	69
416-420	39
421-424	37
425-428	73
429-432	81
433-439	83
440-448	02
449-467	99

<u>Area Number</u>	<u>Highest Group Assigned</u>
468-477	25
478-485	21
486-500	06
501-502	19
503-504	21
505	31
506-508	29
509-515	06
516-517	25
518-519	41
520	31
521-524	85
525	97
526-527	99
528-529	99
530	67
531-539	27
540-544	41
545-573	99
574	13
575-576	63
577-579	25
580	31
581-584	99
585	95
586	13
587	73
588	03
589-595	25
596-599	38
600-601	21

<u>Area Number</u>	<u>Highest Group Assigned</u>
602-626	62
627-645	34
646-647	14
648-649	01
700-723	18
724	28
725-726	18
727	10
728	14

When using this table, remember that each year new group numbers are assigned. A Social Security number whose group number does not far exceed the values on this table may well be valid. In an earlier chapter we showed you how you can confirm the group-number status of any Social Security number.

Appendix Four Independent Search Firms

International Research Service
3777 North Harbor Blvd.
Fullerton, CA 92635

VOS
PO Box 15334
Sacramento, CA 95851

Data Search
3600 American River Dr.
Sacramento, CA 95825

The Nationwide Locator
PO Box 39903
San Antonio, TX 78218

People Searching News
PO Box 22611
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33335

Appendix Five

Directory of Highway Patrol Accident Reports

Alabama

Department of Public Safety
Highway Patrol Division
P.O. Box 1511
Montgomery, AL 36192 (334) 242-4445

Alaska

Department of Public Safety
Pouch N
Juneau, AK 99811 (907) 465-4363

Arizona

Department of Public Safety
2010 West Encanto Boulevard
Phoenix, AZ 85005 (602) 262-8011

Arkansas

Department of Public Safety
P.O. Box 4005
Little Rock, AR 72204 (501) 371-2491

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California

California Highway Patrol
2611 26th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 445-7473

Colorado

Colorado State Patrol
4201 East Arkansas Avenue
Denver, CO 80222 (303) 757-9011

Connecticut

State Police Department
100 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06101 (203) 566-3200

Delaware

Division of State Police
P.O. Box 430
Dover, DE 19901 (302) 736-5973

District of Columbia

Washington Metro Police
300 Indiana Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20001 (202) 626-2000

Florida

Florida Highway Patrol
Neil Kirkman Building
Tallahassee, FL 32301 (904) 488-6517

Georgia

Georgia State Patrol
P.O. Box 1456
Atlanta, GA 30371 (404) 656-6063

Hawaii-Hawaii County

Police Department

P.O. Box 787

349 Kapiolani Street

Hilo, HI 96720

(808) 961-2211

Hawaii-Honolulu County

Department of Finance

Division of Motor Vehicles & Licensing

1455 South Beretania Street

Honolulu, HI 96814

(808) 943-3428

Hawaii-Kauai County

Police Department

3060 Umi Street

Lehue, HI 96766

(808) 245-6721

Hawaii-Maui County

Police Department

Wailuku, HI 96793

(808) 244-7811

Idaho

Transportation Department

3311 West State Street

Boise, ID 83703

(208) 334-3664

Illinois

Illinois State Police

401 Armory

Springfield, IL 62706

(217) 782-2841

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Indiana

Indiana State Police
State Office Building, Room 301
100 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204 (317) 232-8241

Iowa

Iowa State Patrol
Department of Public Safety
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319 (515) 281-5824

Kansas

Kansas Highway Patrol
200 East 6th Street
Topeka, KS 66603 (913) 296-3801

Kentucky

Justice Cabinet
State Police Headquarters
919 Versailles Road
Frankfort, KY 40601 (502) 695-6300

Louisiana

State Police
65 South Foster Drive
P.O. Box 66614
Baton Rouge, LA 70896 (504) 925-6006

Maine

State Police
36 Hospital Street
Augusta, ME 04330 (207) 289-3111

Maryland

State Police
Pikesville, MD 21208 (301) 486-3101

Massachusetts

Division of State Police
1010 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02115 (617) 566-4500

Michigan

Department of State Police
714 South Harrison Road
East Lansing, MI 48823 (517) 332-2521

Minnesota

Department of Public Safety
211 Highway Building
St. Paul, MN 55155 (612) 296-6642

Mississippi

Department of Public Safety
Highway Patrol
P.O. Box 958
Jackson, MS 39205 (601) 982-1212

Missouri

State Highway Patrol
1510 East Elm Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101 (314) 751-3313

Montana

Highway Patrol Division
303 North Roberts
Helena, MT 59620 (406) 444-3000

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Nebraska

State Patrol
State House Station
P.O. Box 94907
Lincoln, NE 65809 (402) 471-4545

Nevada

Department of Motor Vehicles
Highway Patrol Division
555 Wright Way
Carson City, NV 89711 (702) 885-5300

New Hampshire

State Police
Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301 (603) 271-3636

New Jersey

Division of Motor Vehicles
25 South Montgomery Street
Trenton, NJ 08666 (609) 292-9849

New Mexico

State Police
P.O. Box 1628
Santa Fe, NM 87503 (505) 827-5111

New York

Division of State Police
Building 22, State Campus
Albany, NY 12226 (518) 457-6721

North Carolina

Highway Patrol
P.O. Box 27687
Archdale Building
Raleigh, NC 27611 (919) 829-7952

North Dakota

Highway Patrol
Capitol Grounds
Bismarck, ND 58505 (701) 224-2455

Ohio

State Highway Patrol
660 East Main Street
Columbus, OH 43205 (614) 466-2300

Oklahoma

Highway Patrol
3600 North Eastern
Oklahoma City, OK 73136 (405) 424-4011

Oregon

State Police
1905 Lana Avenue N.E.
Salem, OR 97301 (503) 378-3720

Pennsylvania

State Police
1800 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17109 (717) 787-5517

Rhode Island

State Police
P.O. Box 185
North Scituate, RI 02857 (401) 647-3311

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South Carolina

Law Enforcement Division
955 Park Street
Columbia, SC 29201 (803) 758-3315

South Dakota

Division of Highway Patrol
118 West Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501 (605) 773-3105

Tennessee

Highway Patrol
1226 Andrew Jackson
State Office Building
Nashville, TN 37219 (615) 741-2925

Texas

Highway Patrol
P.O. Box 4087
5805 North Lamar
Austin, TX 78773 (512) 465-2000

Utah

Highway Patrol
4501 South 2700 W.
Salt Lake City, UT 84419 (801) 965-4549

Vermont

Department of Public Safety
Montpelier, VT 05602 (802) 828-2144

Virginia

Department of State Police
P.O. Box 27472
Richmond, VA 23261 (804) 272-1431

Washington

State Patrol
General Administration Building
Olympia, WA 98504 (206) 735-6545

West Virginia

Department of Public Safety
725 Jefferson Road
South Charleston, WV 25309 (304) 746-2100

Wisconsin

Enforcement Bureau & State Patrol
4802 Sheboygan Avenue
Madison, WI 53702 (608) 266-3212

Wyoming

Highway Patrol
P.O. Box 1708
Cheyenne, WY 82001 (307) 777-7301

Appendix Six

State Vital Records Offices

Alabama

Center for Health Vital Statistics
State Department of Public Health
PO Box 5625
Montgomery, AL 36103-5625

Alaska

Department of Health and Social Services
Bureau of Vital Statistics
PO Box 110675
Juneau, AK 99811-0675

American Samoa

Registrar of Vital Statistics
Vital Statistics Section
Government of American Samoa
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799

Arizona

Vital Records Section
Arizona Department of Health Services
PO Box 3887
Phoenix, AZ 85030

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Arkansas

Division of Vital Records
Arkansas Department of Health
4815 West Markham Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

California

Office of Vital Records
Department of Health Services
PO Box 730241
Sacramento, CA 94244-0241

Canal Zone

Panama Canal Commission
Vital Statistics Clerk
APO Miami, FL 34011

Colorado

Vital Records Section
Colorado Department of Health and Environment
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
HSVRD-VS-A1
Denver, CO 80222-1530

Connecticut

*Certified copies are not available from State Office.
Requests must be submitted to town where event occurred.*

Delaware

Office of Vital Statistics
Division of Public Health
PO Box 637
Dover, DE 19903

Washington, DC

Vital Records Branch
800 9th Street SW, 1st Floor
Washington, DC 20024

Florida

Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services
Office of Vital Statistics
PO Box 210
1217 Pearl Street
Jacksonville, FL 32231

Georgia

Georgia Department of Human Resources
Vital Records Unit, Room 217-H
47 Trinity Avenue SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Guam

Office of Vital Statistics
Department of Public Health and Social Services
Government of Guam
PO Box 2816
Agana, Guam 96910

Hawaii

State Department of Health
Office of Health Status Monitoring
Vital Records Section
PO Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-9984

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Idaho

Vital Statistics Unit

Center for Vital Statistics and Public Health Policy

450 West State Street, 1st Floor

PO Box 83720

Boise, ID 83720-0036

Illinois

Division of Vital Records

Illinois Department of Public Health

605 West Jefferson Street

Springfield, IL 62702-5097

Indiana

Vital Records Section

State Department of Health

2 North Meridian Street

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Iowa

Iowa Department of Public Health

Vital Records Section

Lucas State Office Building

321 East 12th Street

Des Moines, IA 50319-0075

Kansas

Office of Vital Statistics

Kansas State Department of Health and Environment

Landon State Office Building

900 SW Jackson Street, Rm. 151

Topeka, KS 66612-2221

Kentucky

Office of Vital Statistics
Department of Health Services
275 East Main Street
Frankfort, KY 40621

Louisiana

Vital Records Registry
Office of Public Health
325 Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70112

Maine

Office of Vital Statistics
Maine Department of Human Services
State House Station II
Augusta, ME 04333-0011

Maryland

Division of Vital Statistics
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
6550 Reisterstown Avenue
PO Box 68760
Baltimore, MD 21215-0020

Massachusetts

Registry of Vital Records and Statistics
470 Atlantic Avenue, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02110-2224

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Michigan

Vital Records

3423 North Martin Luther King Boulevard

PO Box 30195

Lansing, MI 48909

Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Health

Section of Vital Statistics

717 Delaware Street SE

PO Box 9441

Minneapolis, MN 55440

Mississippi

Vital Records

State Department of Health

2423 North State Street

Jackson, MS 39216

Missouri

Missouri Department of Health

Bureau of Vital Records

930 Wildwood

PO Box 570

Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570

Montana

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Vital Statistics Bureau

PO Box 4210

Helena, MT 59604

Nebraska

Bureau of Vital Statistics
Department of Health and Human Services
301 Centennial Mall South
PO Box 95065
Lincoln, NE 68509-5065

Nevada

Division of Health — Vital Statistics
Capitol Complex
505 East King Street #102
Carson City, NV 89710

New Hampshire

Bureau of Vital Records
Health and Welfare Building
6 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

New Jersey

New Jersey State Department of Health and Senior Services
Bureau of Vital Statistics
PO Box 370
Trenton, NJ 08625-0307

New Mexico

Vital Statistics
New Mexico Health Services Division
PO Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87502

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New York (except New York City)
Certification Unit
Vital Records Section
PO Box 2602
Albany, NY 12220-2602

New York City
Division of Vital Records
New York City Department of Health
125 Worth Street, Box 4
New York, NY 10013

North Carolina
Vital Records Branch
PO Box 2091
Raleigh, NC 27602

North Dakota
Division of Vital Records
Office of Statistical Services
Bismarck, ND 58505

Ohio
Bureau of Vital Statistics
Ohio Department of Health
PO Box 15098
Columbus, OH 43215-0098

Oklahoma
Vital Records Section
State Department of Health
1000 Northeast 10th Street
PO Box 53551
Oklahoma City, OK 73152

Oregon

Oregon Health Division
Vital Statistics Section
PO Box 14050
Portland, OR 97293-0050

Pennsylvania

Division of Vital Statistics
State Department of Health
Central Building
101 South Mercer Street
PO Box 1528
New Castle, PA 16103

Puerto Rico

Department of Health
Demographic Registry
PO Box 11854
Fernandez Juncos Station
San Juan, PR 00910

Rhode Island

Division of Vital Records
Rhode Island Department of Health
3 Capitol Hill, Room 101
Providence, RI 02908-5097

South Carolina

Office of Public Health Statistics and Information Systems
South Carolina Department of Health and
Environmental Control
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

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South Dakota

Vital Records

State Department of Health

600 East Capitol Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501-2536

Tennessee

Tennessee Vital Statistics

Department of Health

Central Services Building

421 5th Avenue North

Nashville, TN 37247-0450

Texas

Bureau of Vital Statistics

Texas Department of Health

PO Box 12040

Austin, TX 78711-2040

U.S. Virgin Islands

Registrar of Vital Statistics

Charles Harwood Memorial Hospital

Christiansted

St. Croix, U.S. VI 00820

(St. Thomas/St. John)

Registrar of Vital Statistics

Charlotte Amalie

St. Thomas, U.S. VI 00802

Utah

Bureau of Vital Records
Utah Department of Health
288 North 1460 West
PO Box 141012
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-1012

Vermont

Vermont Department of Health
Vital Records Section
Box 70
108 Cherry Street
Burlington, VT 05402

Virginia

Office of Vital Records and Health Statistics
State Health Department
PO Box 1000
Richmond, VA 23218-1000

Washington

Department of Health
Center for Health Records
PO Box 9709
Olympia, WA 98507-9709

West Virginia

Vital Registration Office
Division of Health
State Capitol Complex Building 3
Charleston, WV 25305

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Wisconsin

Vital Records

1 West Wilson Street

PO Box 309

Madison, WI 53701

Wyoming

Vital Record Services

Hathaway Building

Cheyenne, WY 82002

Appendix Seven

State-Regulated Businesses

Aircraft Repair
Airport
Alarm Installers
Alcohol Sales
Architects
Auctioneers
Auto Inspectors
Auto Wreckers
Automotive Repair
 Shops
Bankers
Barbers & Beauticians
Bill Collectors
Builders & Carpenters
Building Contractors
Building Wreckers
Carpet Cleaners
CPAs
Child Care & Day Care
Chiropractors
Dentists
Doctors
Movie Theaters
Notary Publics
Nurses

Electricians
Engineers
 (Professional)
Explosives Technicians
Explosive Storage
Food Processing
Fuel Dispensers
Fuel Storage
Fuel Transportation
Furniture Manufacturing
Gaming & Gambling
Garment Cleaners
Insurance Brokers
Investigators
Laboratories
Lawyers
Marriage Counselors
Mattress Rebuilders
Meat Packers
Meat Storage
Mechanics (Smog)
Mining
Real Estate Salesman
Restaurants
Scrap Dealers

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Nursing Homes	Security Guards
Oil Drilling	Service Stations
Painting Contractors	Stock Brokers
Pawnbrokers	Surveyors
Personnel Placement	Taxis
Pet Groomers	Teachers
Pest Controllers	Therapists
Pharmacists	Timbering
Pilots	Trade Schools
Plumbers	Waste (Hazardous)
Police (Private)	Waste Disposal
Polluters	Waste Removal
Process Servers	Waste Storage
Public Transportation	Water Taxis
Real Estate Broker	Weights & Measures

Appendix Eight

State Tax Records

Alabama

Department of Revenue
50 N Ripley St. (Rm 1324)
PO Box 154
Montgomery, AL 36132
Forms: 334-242-9681 Ext. 82

Alaska Department of Revenue

PO Box 110420
Juneau, AK 99811-0420
Forms/Info: 907-465-2320

Arizona Department of Revenue

1600 West Monroe
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Forms: 602-542-4260
FAX: 602-542-3756
Info: 602-255-3381

Arkansas State Income Tax

PO Box 3628
Little Rock, AR 72203-3628
Forms: 501-682-7255
Info: 501-682-7250
FAX: 501-682-1691

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California Franchise Tax Board

Tax Forms Request Unit
PO Box 307
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-0307
Forms: 800-852-5711
Fax: 916-845-0413
Info: 800-338-0505

Colorado Department of Revenue

1375 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80261
Forms: 303-232-2414
Info: 303-232-2416

Connecticut Department of Revenue

Forms Division
25 Sigourney St.
Hartford, CT 06106
Forms/Info: 860-297-5962 - 800-382-9463

Delaware Division of Revenue

820 N French Street
Wilmington, DE 19801
Forms: 302-577-3300
Info: 302-577-3300
FAX: 302-577-3689

District of Columbia

Department of Finance & Revenue
441 Fourth St. NW Ste. 400
Washington, DC 20001
Forms: 202-727-6170
Info: 202-727-6104

Florida Department of Revenue

5050 W Tennessee St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0100
Forms/Info: 904-488-6800

Georgia Department of Revenue

Income Tax Forms
PO Box 740389
Atlanta, GA 30374-0389
Forms: 404-656-4293
Info: 404-656-4071

Hawaii Department of Revenue

PO Box 259
Honolulu, HI 96809
Forms: 800-222-7572
Info: 808-222-3229

Idaho State Tax Commission

PO Box 36
Boise, ID 83722
Forms/Info: 208-334-7660
FAX: 208-334-7846

Illinois Department of Revenue

PO Box 19001
Springfield, IL 62794-9001
Forms: 217-785-3400 / 800-356-6302
Info: 217-782-3336 / 800-732-8866
FAX: 217-782-4217

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Indiana Department of Revenue

100 N Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46240
Forms: 317-486-5103
FAX: 317-233-2329
Info: 317-232-2240

Iowa Department of Revenue & Finance

Tax Forms
PO Box 10460
Des Moines, IA 50306
Forms: 515-281-7239
Info: 515-281-3114
FAX: 515-242-6040

Kansas Taxpayer Assistance Bureau

PO Box 12001
Topeka, KS 66612-2001
Forms: 913-296-4937
Info: 913-296-0222
FAX: 913-291-3614

Kentucky Department of Revenue

200 Fair Oaks
Frankfort, KY 40620
Forms 502-564-3658
Info: 502-564-4580
FAX: 502-564-3875

Louisiana Department of Revenue & Tax

PO Box 201

Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Forms: 504-925-7532

Info: 504-925-4611

FAX: 504-925-3853

Maine Bureau of Taxation

State House — Station 24

Augusta, ME 04333-0024

Forms: 207-624-7894

Info: 207-626-8475

Maryland Comptroller of the Treasury

Revenue Administration Division

Annapolis, MD 21411

Forms: 410-974-3981

FAX: 410-974-3299

Info: 410-974-3981 / 800-638-2937 (MD)

FAX: 410-974-3456

Massachusetts TPA Form Supply

100 Cambridge Street, 2nd Floor

Boston, MA 02204

Forms/Info: 617-887-6367

Michigan Treasury Department

Treasury Building

Lansing, MI 48922

Forms: 800-367-6263

Info: 800-847-7000

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Minnesota Tax Forms

Mail Station 1421

St. Paul, MN 55146-1421

Forms: 800-657-3676 / 612-296-4444

Info: 800-652-9094 / 612-296-3781

Mississippi State Tax Commission

Income Tax Division

PO Box 960

Jackson, MS 39205

Forms/Info: 601-923-7000

FAX: 601-923-7039

Missouri Department of Revenue

Divisional Support Services

PO Box 3022

Jefferson City, MO 65105-3022

Forms: 573-751-4695

Info: 573-751-4450

FAX: 573-751-7150

Montana Department of Revenue

Income Tax Division

PO Box 5805

Helena, MT 59604-5805

Forms: 406-444-0290

Info: 406-444-2837

FAX: 406-444-1505

Nebraska Department of Revenue

PO Box 94818

Lincoln, NE 68509-4818

Forms: 402-471-5601 / 800-626-7899

Info: 402-471-2971 / 800-742-7474

FAX: 402-471-5608

Nevada Department of Taxation

Capitol Complex

Carson City, NV 89710-0003

Forms: 702-687-4820

Info: 702-687-4892

FAX: 702-687-5981

New Hampshire Department of Revenue

61 S Spring Street

Concord, NH 03302-0637

Forms: 603-271-2192

Info: 603-271-2186

New Jersey Division of Taxation

Attn: Forms Distribution Section

50 Barrack Street, CN 269

Trenton, NJ 08646-0269

Forms/Info: 609-588-2200 / 800-323-4400 (NJ only)

New Mexico Taxation & Revenue Department

PO Box 630

Santa Fe, NM 87504-0630

Forms: 505-827-2260

Info: 505-827-0700

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New York Department of Tax & Finance

Taxpayer Assistance Bureau

W.A. Harriman Campus

Bldg. 8, Rm 902

Albany, NY 12227

Forms: Toll free from the US & Canada: 1-800-462-8100

Info: Toll free from the US & Canada: 1-800-225-5829

From Areas outside the US & Canada: (518) 485-6800

North Carolina Department of Revenue

PO Box 25000

Raleigh, NC 27640

Forms: 919-715-0397

Info: 919-733-4682

North Dakota Office of State Tax Commissioner

600 E Boulevard Avenue

Bismarck, ND 58505-0599

Forms: 701-328-3017

Info: 701-328-2770

FAX: 701-328-3700

Ohio Department of Taxation

PO Box 2476

Columbus, OH 43266-0076

Forms/Info: 614-846-6712

Oklahoma Tax Commission

2501 N Lincoln Boulevard

Oklahoma City, OK 73194

Forms: 405-521-3108

Info: 405-521-3160

FAX: 405-521-2035

Oregon Department of Revenue — Forms

PO Box 14999

Salem, OR 97309-0990

Forms/Info: 503-378-4988

Pennsylvania Department of Revenue

Bureau of Administration Services

2850 Turnpike Industrial Drive

Middletown, PA 17057-5492

Forms: 717-787-8094 / 800-362-2050 (PA only)

Info: 717-787-8201

FAX: 717-787-3990

Rhode Island Division of Taxation

One Capitol Hill

Providence, RI 02908-5800

Forms: 401-277-3934

Info: 401-277-2905

FAX: 401-277-6006

South Carolina Department of Revenue

Attn: Forms

Columbia, SC 29214-0402

Forms: 803-737-5085

Info: 803-737-4761

FAX: 803-737-9881

South Dakota Department of Revenue

700 Governors Drive

Pierre, SD 57501-2276

Forms/Info: 605-773-3311

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Tennessee Department of Revenue

Taxpayer Services

500 Deaderick Street

Nashville, TN 37242

Forms: 615-741-4466

Info: 615-741-2594

FAX: 615-741-0682

Texas State Comptroller's Office

Capital Station

Austin, TX 78774

Info: 512-463-4600

FAX: 512-305-9711

Utah State Tax Commission

210 N. 1950 West

Salt Lake City, UT 84134

Forms: 801-297-6700

Info: 801-297-2200

Vermont Department of Taxes

109 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05609-1401

Forms: 802-828-2515

Info: 802-828-2501

FAX: 802-828-2701

Virginia Department of Taxation

Forms Request Unit

PO Box 1317

Richmond, VA 23210-1317

Forms: 804-367-8205 / 804-367-8055

Info: 804-367-2062

FAX: 804-367-0985

Washington Department of Revenue

PO Box 47478

Olympia, WA 98504-7478

Forms: 800-647-7706

Info: 800-647-7706

FAX: 206-664-0456

West Virginia Department of Tax & Revenue

Taxpayer Services Division

PO Box 3784

Charleston, WV 25337-3784

Forms: 304-344-2068

Info: 304-558-3333

FAX: 304-558-3269

Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Forms Request Office

PO Box 8903

Madison, WI 53708-8903

Forms: 608-266-1961

Info: 608-266-2486

FAX: 608-267-0834

Wyoming Department of Revenue & Taxation

122 W 25th Street

Cheyenne, WY 82002-0110

Info: 307-777-7961

FAX: 307-777-7722

Appendix Nine Military Record Request Form

REQUEST PERTAINING TO MILITARY RECORDS				Please read instructions on the reverse. If more space is needed, use plain paper.
PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 COMPLIANCE INFORMATION The following information is provided in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(3) and applies to this form. Authority for collection of the information is 44 U.S.C. 2907, 3101, and 3103 and E.O. 9397 of November 22, 1943. Disclosure of the information is voluntary. The principal purpose of the information is to assist the facility servicing the records in locating and verifying the correctness of the requested records or information to answer your inquiry. Routine uses of the information as established and published in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(9)(D) include the transfer of relevant information to appropriate Federal, State, local, or foreign agencies for use in civil, criminal, or regulatory investigations or prosecution. In addition, this form will be filed with the appropriate military records and may be transferred along with the record to another agency in accordance with the routine uses established by the agency which maintains the record. If the requested information is not provided, it may not be possible to service your inquiry.				
SECTION I—INFORMATION NEEDED TO LOCATE RECORDS (Furnish as much as possible)				
1 NAME USED DURING SERVICE (Last, first, and middle)	2 SOCIAL SECURITY NO	3 DATE OF BIRTH	4 PLACE OF BIRTH	
5 ACTIVE SERVICE PAST AND PRESENT (For an effective records search, it is important that ALL service be shown below)				
BRANCH OF SERVICE <i>(Also show last organization if known)</i>	DATES OF ACTIVE SERVICE DATE ENTERED DATE RELEASED		Check one <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> ENLISTED	SERVICE NUMBER DURING THIS PERIOD
6 RESERVE SERVICE, PAST OR PRESENT <i>If "none," check here</i> <input type="checkbox"/>				
a BRANCH OF SERVICE	b DATES OF MEMBERSHIP FROM TO		c Check one <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> ENLISTED	d SERVICE NUMBER DURING THIS PERIOD
7 NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERSHIP (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> a ARMY <input type="checkbox"/> b AIR FORCE <input type="checkbox"/> c NONE				
d STATE <input type="checkbox"/> e ORGANIZATION	f DATES OF MEMBERSHIP FROM TO		g Check one <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> ENLISTED	h SERVICE NUMBER DURING THIS PERIOD
8 IS SERVICE PERSON DECEASED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <i>If "yes," enter date of death</i>				
9 IS (WAS) INDIVIDUAL A MILITARY RETIREE OR FLEET RESERVE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				
SECTION II—REQUEST				
1 EXPLAIN WHAT INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTS YOU NEED OR, CHECK ITEM 2, OR COMPLETE ITEM 3				2 IF YOU ONLY NEED A STATEMENT OF SERVICE, check here <input type="checkbox"/>
3 LOST SEPARATION DOCUMENT REPLACE MENT REQUEST (Complete a or b and c) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>a REPORT OF SEPARATION (DD Form 214 or equivalent) <input type="checkbox"/> YEAR ISSUED</p> <p>b DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE <input type="checkbox"/> YEAR ISSUED</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; font-size: x-small;"> <p><i>This contains information normally needed to determine eligibility for benefits. It may be furnished only to the veteran, the surviving next of kin, or to a representative with veteran's signed release (item 5 of this form).</i></p> <p><i>This shows only the date and character at discharge. It is of little value in determining eligibility for benefits. It may be issued only to veterans discharged honorably or under honorable conditions, or, if deceased, to the surviving spouse.</i></p> </div> </div>				
c EXPLAIN HOW SEPARATION DOCUMENT WAS LOST				
4 EXPLAIN PURPOSE FOR WHICH INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTS ARE NEEDED				5 REQUESTER
				a IDENTIFICATION (check appropriate box)
				<input type="checkbox"/> Same person identified in Section I <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Next of kin (relationship) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____
				b SIGNATURE (see instruction 2 on reverse side)
				DATE OF REQUEST
5 RELEASE AUTHORIZATION IF REQUIRED (Read instruction 2 on reverse side)				7 Please type or print clearly — COMPLETE RETURN ADDRESS Name _____ Number and street _____ City _____ State _____ and ZIP _____ Telephone NO. (include area code) _____
I hereby authorize release of the requested information/documents to the person indicated at right (item 7)				
VETERAN SIGN HERE <input type="checkbox"/>				
(If signed by other than veteran show relationship to veteran)				

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Information needed to locate records.** Certain identifying information is necessary to determine the location of an individual's record of military service. Please give careful consideration to and answer each item on this form. If you do not have and cannot obtain the information for an item, show "NA," meaning the information is "not available." Include as much of the requested information as you can. This will help us to give you the best possible service.
2. **Charges for service.** A nominal fee is charged for certain types of service. In most instances service fees cannot be determined in advance. If your request involves a service fee you will be notified as soon as that determination is made.
3. **Restrictions on release of information.** Information from records of military personnel is released subject to restrictions imposed by the military departments consistent with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act of 1967 (as amended in 1974) and the Privacy Act of 1974. A service person has access to almost any information contained in his own record. The next of kin, if the veteran is deceased, and Federal officers for official purposes are authorized to receive information from a military service or medical record only as specified in the above cited Acts. Other requesters must have the release authorization in item 5 of the form, signed by the veteran or, if deceased, by the next of kin. Employers

- and others needing proof of military service are expected to accept the information shown on documents issued by the Armed Forces at the time a service person is separated.
4. **Location of military personnel records.** The various categories of military personnel records are described in the chart below. For each category there is a code number which indicates the address at the bottom of the page to which this request should be sent. For each military service there is a note explaining approximately how long the records are held by the military service before they are transferred to the National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis. Please read these notes carefully and make sure you send your inquiry to the right address. Please note especially that the record is not sent to the National Personnel Records Center as long as the person retains any sort of reserve obligation, whether drilling or non-drilling. (If the person has two or more periods of service within the same branch, send your request to the office having the record for the last period of service.)
5. **Definitions for abbreviations used below.**
NPRC - National Personnel Records Center
TDRL - Temporary Disability Retirement List
MED - Medical Records
PERS - Personnel Records

SERVICE	NOTE (See paragraph 4 above)	CATEGORY OF RECORDS	WHERE TO WRITE ADDRESS CODE	
AIR FORCE (USAF)	Except for TDRL and general officers retired with pay, Air Force records are transferred to NPRC from Code 1 90 days after separation and from Code 2, 150 days after separation.	Active members (includes National Guard on active duty in the Air Force); TDRL and general officers retired with pay		1
		Reserve; retired reservist in nonpay status; current National Guard officers not on active duty in Air Force; and National Guard released from active duty in Air Force		2
		Current National Guard enlisted not on active duty in Air Force		13
COAST GUARD (USCG)	Coast Guard officer and enlisted records are transferred to NPRC 7 months after separation.	Discharged, deceased and retired with pay		14
		Active reserve and TDRL members		3
		Discharged, deceased and retired members (see next item)		14
MARINE CORPS (USMC)	Marine Corps records are transferred to NPRC between 6 and 8 months after separation.	Officers separated before 11/1/79 and enlisted personnel separated before 11/1/75		6
		Active, TDRL and Selected Marine Corps Reserve members		4
		Individual Ready Reserve and Fleet Marine Corps Reserve members		5
ARMY (USA)	Army records are transferred to NPRC as follows: Active Army and Individual Ready Reserve Control Groups About 80 days after separation. U.S. Army Reserve Troop Unit personnel: About 100 to 180 days after separation.	Discharged, deceased and retired members (see next item)		14
		Members separated before 11/1/1905		6
		Reserve; living retired members; retired general officers; and active duty records of current National Guard members who performed service in the U.S. Army before 7/1/72*		7
NAVY (USN)	Navy records are transferred to NPRC 6 months after retirement or complete separation.	Active officers (including National Guard on active duty in the U.S. Army)		8
		Active enlisted (including National Guard on active duty in the U.S. Army) and enlisted TDRL		9
		Current National Guard officers not on active duty in the U.S. Army		12
		Current National Guard enlisted not on active duty in the U.S. Army		13
		Discharged and deceased members (see next item)		14
		Officers separated before 7/1/77 and enlisted separated before 11/1/72		6
		Officers and warrant officers TDRL		8
		Active members (including reservists on duty); PERS and MED		10
		Discharged, deceased, retired (with and without pay) less than six months TDRL, drilling and non-drilling reservists	PERS ONLY MED ONLY	10 11
		Discharged, deceased, retired (with and without pay) more than six months (see next item); PERS & MED		14
		Officers separated before 11/1/03 and enlisted separated before 11/1/86 - PERS and MED		6

*Code 12 applies to active duty records of current National Guard officers who performed service in the U.S. Army after 6/10/72.
Code 13 applies to active duty records of current National Guard enlisted members who performed service in the U.S. Army after 6/30/72.

ADDRESS LIST OF CUSTODIANS (BY CODE NUMBERS SHOWN ABOVE)—Where to write / send this form for each category of records					
1	Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center Military Personnel Records Division Randolph AFB, TX 78150-6001	5	Marine Corps Reserve Support Center 10950 El Monte Overland Park, KS 66211-1408	8	USA MILPERCEN ATTN: DAPC MSR 200 Slocum Street Alexandria, VA 22337-0400
2	Air Reserve Personnel Center Denver, CO 80289-5000	6	Military Archives Division National Archives and Records Administration Washington, DC 20408	9	Commander U.S. Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center Ft. Benjamin Harrison IN 46249-5301
3	Commandant U.S. Coast Guard Washington, DC 20593-0001	7	Commander U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center ATTN: DARP PAS 9700 Page Boulevard St. Louis, MO 63132-5200	10	Commander Naval Military Personnel Command ATTN: NMPC G36 Washington, DC 20370-5036
4	Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code MMRB-10) Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps Washington, DC 20380-0001			11	Naval Reserve Personnel Center New Orleans, LA 70146-5000
				12	Army National Guard Personnel Center Columbia Pike Office Building 5600 Columbia Pike Falls Church, VA 22041
				13	The Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
				14	National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records) 9700 Page Boulevard St. Louis, MO 63132

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