



## **UNIFORM CRIMINAL RECORDS ACCURACY ACT**

*Adoption of the act will improve the accuracy of criminal history records*

The **Uniform Criminal Records Accuracy Act** (UCRAA) is designed to improve the accuracy of criminal history records, commonly called a rap sheet. Accurate rap sheets are critical to the integrity of our criminal justice system, and for the fair and honest treatment of citizens. Accuracy is critical to law enforcement when deciding to make an arrest, to grant or set bail, and when sentencing. Accurate rap sheets are essential when determining a person's eligibility for employment, housing, credit, licensing and other opportunities. The act imposes duties on law enforcement agencies and courts to ensure the accuracy of criminal history record information they collect, store, and disseminate. States should adopt the act for the following reasons:

- It is comprehensive and applies to state and local officials and entities responsible for the administration of justice.
- It requires the collection of biometric information, such as finger prints, for purposes of identification, when permitted or required by law. Without biometric information dispositions of reported arrests cannot be matched in state or federal criminal history repositories resulting in incomplete and inaccurate records.
- It requires prosecutors and courts to report the disposition of an arrest to the state's central repository including when the person is not charged, charges are dismissed, or the person is acquitted. The failures to report such dispositions, or to report them without identifying biometric information, are the largest single causes of erroneous records.
- It imposes a duty on "contributing justice agencies" to maintain accurate criminal history records and correct errors regardless of how the error was discovered. It limits dissemination of criminal history record information for use only as *required or permitted* by other law of this state and requires these agencies to maintain a log of disclosures.
- It establishes the right of the subject of a criminal history record to obtain a copy, and seek and obtain correction of errors. It provides remedies to individuals injured by violations of their rights under the act.
- It creates a state *mistaken-identity-prevention registry* to prevent mistaken arrests due to similar names or other factors. It enables an individual to obtain official certification that that they are not the person with the criminal record. The certification is prima facie evidence and may be used by the individual when stopped by police as well as when seeking employment, housing or other opportunities.
- Central repositories must establish procedures to promote the confidentiality and security of criminal-history-record information. An appropriate state official or office shall require periodic audits to verify compliance with this act.

For further information about the UCRAA, please contact ULC Legislative Program Director Katie Robinson at [krobinson@uniformlaws.org](mailto:krobinson@uniformlaws.org).