

Nationwide Corrections Images and Information Exchange over Nlets - NCIEN

Funded by the National Institute of Justice and the Dept of Homeland Security, Science & Technology Directorate

Summary:

Law enforcement (LE) and public safety officers need data maintained by correction facilities to protect the public, as well as for their own safety. In the 1994 National Recidivism Study of Released Prisoners, an estimated 67.5% of released prisoners were arrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor within three years.

Nlets users will utilize Department of Corrections (DOC) photos to help Identify (ID) individuals who encounter the criminal justice system, to prevent identity fraud, and to assist LE in locating persons of interest. The electronic availability of DOC photos helps improve the efficiency of the justice system by improving the ease with which Law Enforcement (LE) can ID an individual. This functionality will also provide users with information concerning an individual's status under the supervision of DOC, the supervising agency, and the expected date of release from supervision. This information can be useful in determining whether certain unlawful acts may be a violation of an individual's conditions of supervision.

Overview:

The purpose of the NCIEN project is to make correction photos available to LE and public safety officers over the Nlets network.

Some states have implemented access to correction photos to LE in their own states, but resource constraints prevent making this information available to other states. Using Nlets will ensure the information is provided to those who need it regardless of what jurisdiction makes the inquiry.

Correction photos will include pictures of inmates, and, where possible, images of scars, marks, and tattoos, all of which will be supplemented with supervision requirements. Currently, state and local jail systems collect a myriad of information including photos; however, this information is not available to the roadside officer. As a result, LE agencies are handicapped in their ability to protect and serve.

Development of image standards that will be enforced at the Nlets message switch therefore making it unnecessary for each participating state to modify their infrastructure to accommodate corrections photos from other states.

Objectives:

The NCIEN project began with Phase One of a larger, long-term effort to expand corrections photo exchanges nationwide. Phase One involved implementing corrections photo sharing in up to three states. Phase One objectives included:

- Implemented NCIEN capabilities in up to three states. This included the capability to exchange inmate photos, which, at a minimum, will include inmate entry or exit images; and may include images of scars, marks, and tattoos where it is technically/financially feasible.
- Creating image standards limited to image size and resolution that can be implemented within Nlets' infrastructure.
- Updating existing technology.

Benefits:

Public safety employees will be provided the capability to share corrections images within and outside their jurisdictions which, in turn, provides the following benefits:

- Immediate, positive identification
- Access by participating states to photographs of current and previously incarcerated offenders. These photos can be useful for subjects involved in current criminal investigations that may not hold a driver's license.
- Immediate access for LE to offender photographs in interstate searches for escapees or wanted persons.
- Potential access to other corrections agency photographs by corrections agencies in states lacking centralized or integrated systems.

It will also provide real-time notification to probation officers about the offender's LE contact. This instantaneous communication between probation and LE is critical to enhancing public safety, and, ultimately, making our communities safer. This system will help enhance the safety of LE officers and help probation officers effectively use the traffic stop as another data point on their offenders.