



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

March 12, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FROM: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

SUBJECT: Improving State Information Sharing with Federal Bureau of Investigation
(FBI) Criminal Justice Information Systems

As you know, the FBI's national criminal justice information systems assist law enforcement officers in performing their duties more safely and provide information necessary to help protect the public. The effective leadership of the FBI in creating these systems is one of the most important advancements in the history of law enforcement. These systems, however, are only as good as the information our federal, state, local, and tribal partners make available to you. Without accurate, complete, and timely reporting, law enforcement lacks the tools necessary to do its job. Additionally, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which processes firearms-related background checks, uses this same information to determine whether a firearms transaction can proceed or must be denied. When the NICS has access to full information, we can identify individuals who are prohibited by law from possessing firearms, while allowing law abiding citizens to obtain firearms in a timely manner.

I have reached out to state governors and attorneys general to underscore the importance of collecting and sharing full criminal justice-related information—including arrests and final case dispositions—and to request that they examine their State's process for collecting and making information available to the national criminal justice systems. I have asked that state representatives reach out to the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division with information on any challenges the FBI can assist in resolving. Further, it is essential that relevant mental health determinations by state and local officials are accessible to the NICS system. We cannot allow an individual who is prohibited from possessing firearms to pass a background check simply because information was not made available to you. The FBI has always led in supporting state information-sharing efforts, both by providing assistance to States and by helping to identify jurisdictions that are not providing information to the state and federal systems. This is an important time to lift the system to a higher level.

Accordingly, I direct the FBI to enhance its outreach efforts and provide support to States that want to improve their information-sharing and to identify jurisdictions that are not reporting arrests to their state repositories. In addition, I direct the FBI to identify States and localities that it determines are not adequately making mental health records available to the NICS.

Memorandum from the Attorney General

Subject: Enforcing Federal Law Against Prohibited Persons Attempting to Purchase
Firearms

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These actions will help support federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement, as well as strengthen the firearms background check system. Working together, we will help keep America safe.