

CRIMINAL HISTORY DATABASE: DOCUMENTATION

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) conducts practical, non-partisan research—at legislative direction—on issues of importance to Washington State. The criminal justice system in Washington State includes a number of state and local agencies. Currently, there is no integrated statewide criminal justice database; rather, the agencies maintain separate databases and transfer information electronically and manually. In order to conduct criminal justice research for the legislature, the Institute developed a criminal history database. This database is a synthesis of criminal charge information for individuals using data from the Administrative Office of the Courts' (AOC) and the Department of Corrections' (DOC) databases.

The criminal history database was originally designed to provide the Institute with a resource that could be queried in a timely fashion in order to conduct legislative-mandated research. This comprehensive database can be used to determine an offender's criminal history or to calculate recidivism.¹

Intended for Research Purposes

Since no common person identification is currently being used in these agency computer systems, the first step in compiling a personal record of criminal charges is to assign a unique identifier to each person. Each quarter, the Institute conducts a matching process using the court case number and the primary identification number from various data systems to link criminal history records. Matching on a person's name and date of birth is less reliable because of aliases, false names, misspellings, typographic errors, and inaccurate dates of birth.

While every effort is made to accurately identify persons across data sources, 100 percent accuracy is not possible. However, the Institute's criminal history database provides a reasonably accurate source of criminal charge data for aggregate reporting and analysis.

Primary Data Sources

Court case data from AOC databases are the primary source for offense data. The AOC maintains three trial court databases:

- *Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS)* is used by county clerks and includes all superior court criminal and juvenile offender case filings. SCOMIS does not include juvenile diversions, since these cases are diverted from the court to a Community Accountability Board. Although SCOMIS contains court cases dating back to 1984, the most reliable person identification information begins in 1992. However, SCOMIS data entered since 1990 are included in the database to provide two additional years of criminal history data.

¹ A common definition of recidivism is intended as an objective, outcome-based standard for measuring program success. See R. Barnoski (1997). *Standards for improving research effectiveness in adult and juvenile justice*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 97-12-1201, pg. 2.

- *District and Municipal Court Information System (DISCIS)* includes almost all district and municipal criminal traffic and non criminal traffic court cases. DISCIS person identification information is also most reliable since 1992, and only cases filed since then are included in the criminal history database.
- *Juvenile and Corrections System (JCS)* used by juvenile court administration; it contains criminal history data. We use this source of data for juvenile diversions during and after 2004. There is no need to add the referrals due to the JCS system linkage of referrals to SCOMIS juvenile cases.
- *Juvenile Information System (JUVIS)* was used by juvenile courts prior to JCS. JUVIS contained referrals with convictions or diversions since 1984. We started receiving all referrals, including non-convictions, in 1995, with the exception of King County. King County only entered referrals for convictions or diversions. Part of this data has been converted to the new JCS, a process that began in early 2005 and was completed in early 2007. The last complete extract from JUVIS was in January 2005, although we continued to get incomplete extracts during the conversion process. We use this source for referrals before 2004.
- *Offender Management Network Information Systems Project (OMNI)* includes data from DOC. OMNI contains information dating back to approximately 1984. OMNI and SCOMIS offense data are combined to obtain as complete a set of criminal charge information as is available.

Person Identifiers in the Data Sources

Person identifiers used within an agency are not 100 percent accurate and do not necessarily uniquely identify a person.²

- In 1992, the AOC began identifying offenders using a centralized person database and an AOC Person Number. This AOC Person Number is not perfect; the same person may receive two different AOC Person Numbers. In addition, all offenders involved in cases filed before 1991 were assigned a different AOC Person Number for each case. We have received an “alias” file from AOC that we use to create a unique AOC identifier that is used to create the Institute’s final person identifier.
- DOC identifies people using DOC Numbers. DOC records the Superior Court Case Number and State Identification (SID) Numbers. Person information from DOC is from the Offender Management Network Information (OMNI) System.
- JUVIS identifies juveniles using the JUVIS Control Number.
- The JCS data person identifier is the JUVIS Control Number, but it is not a unique identifier. There can be multiple JUVIS Control Numbers for a youth, and JUVIS Control Numbers are reused. Since we retain information on a youth with the original JUVIS Control Number, we have added an incremented decimal to the JUVIS Control Numbers so that if a JUVIS Control Number has been reused, it will have a unique value. We receive a “family” file with our JCS extract that contains additional identifiers used to create a unique identifier for youth in this system.

² E. Drake, L. Harmon & R. Barnoski (2007). *Washington State Criminal Records Audit for Adult Felonies: Final Report*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document No. 07-10-1901.

Linkage Steps

Figure 1 illustrates the linkage process and is also described below.

- JUVIS Static File, JUVIS Referrals with SCOMIS Case Information: As stated above, we only use JUVIS data for referrals before 2004. A onetime linkage between JUVIS and Juvenile SCOMIS was completed by first performing a person linkage and then a referral to case linkage at the offense level. We use the JUVIS Control Number and SCOMIS Case number in the person linkage using name and birthdates as a last resort.
- Juvenile SCOMIS with cases in JUVIS Static File excluded: Juvenile cases are selected from SCOMIS with any cases that are in the JUVIS Static File excluded.
- JCS Diversions: Referrals that are in the JUVIS Static File are excluded from JCS, only diversions are kept.
- Juvenile Court: The JUVIS Static File, Juvenile SCOMIS, and JCS Diversions are concatenated.
- Adult Superior Court: SCOMIS Adult (case type 1) and DOC OMNI are linked together using the DOC Person Number, State Identification Number, and Case Numbers, using the names and birthdates as a last resort.
- Criminal Superior Court: Link the Juvenile Court and Adult Superior Court data by AOC Person Number, DOC Person Number, JUVIS Control Number, and name/dob.
- Institute Criminal History Database: DISCIS data are linked with the Criminal Superior Court data to form the final Institute person data set. This linkage uses the AOC Person Number, DOC Person Number, State Identification Number, JUVIS Control Number, and name/dob. A unique Institute Identification Number (wsipid) is assigned to each individual. After each person is uniquely identified, the criminal charge information from the AOC and DOC data are combined, with redundant charges eliminated.

Figure 1. CJS Data Sources

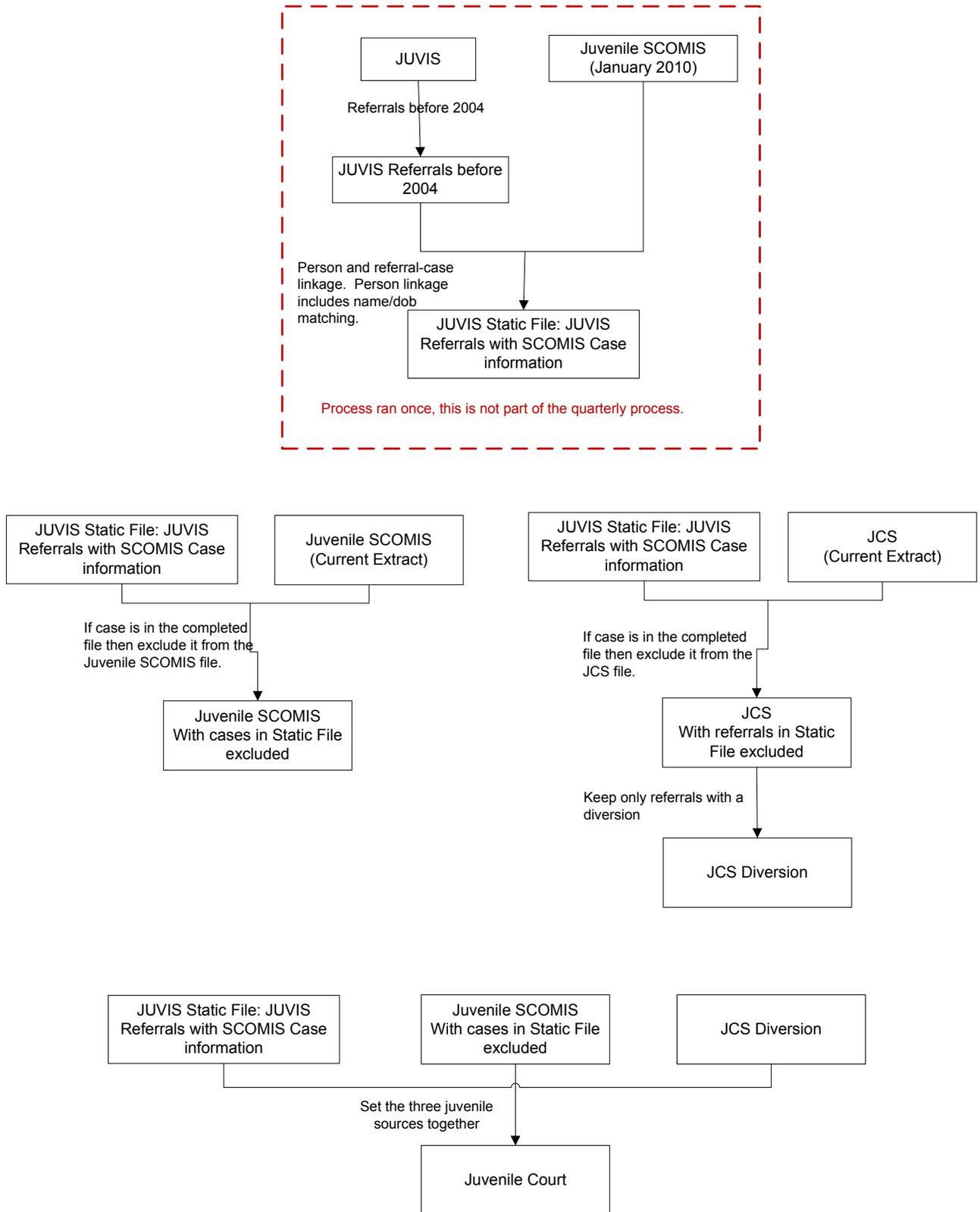
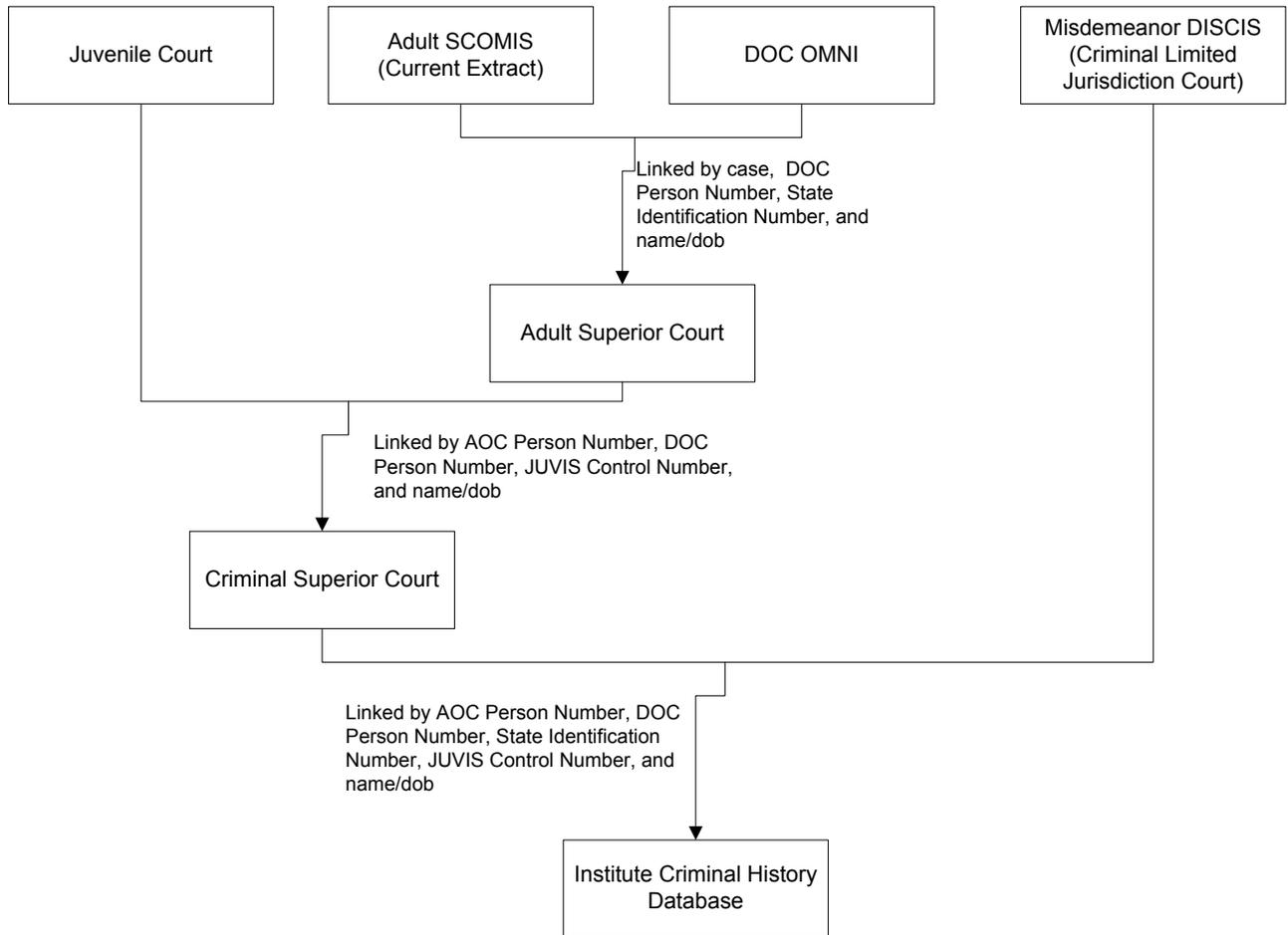


Figure 1. CJS Data Sources



Field Descriptions

The following table summarizes the data elements in the Institute Criminal History database. Offense level modifiers from SCOMIS:

VARIABLE	DATA TYPE	LENGTH
CjsAdjudicationDate	Date	10
CjsAmbiguityFlag	Numeric	1
CjsCaseDisposition	Character	3
CjsChargeNumber	Numeric	2
CjsCounty	Numeric	2
CjsCourt	Character	3
CjsCourtCaseNumber	Character	17
CjsCourtLawCode	Character	18
CjsCourtLevel	Character	1
CjsDataSource	Character	2
CjsDeferredResult	Character	3
CjsDispositionDate	Date	10
CjsDispositionType	Character	3
CjsExtractionDate	Date	10
CjsFileDate	Date	10
CjsInformationNumber	Numeric	2
CjsJuvenileDetention	Character	1
CjsJuvenileJra	Character	1
CjsLawAttempt	Character	1
CjsLawCategory	Numeric	3
CjsNewLawCategory	Numeric	3
CjsLawConspiracy	Character	1
CjsLawDescription	Character	35
CjsDomesticViolence	Character	1
CjsLawSexuallyMotivated	Character	1
CjsLawSolicitation	Character	1
CjsOffenseDate	Date	10
CjsScOmLegAgainstPers	Character	1
CjsScOmLegSerViolent	Character	1
CjsScOmLegSexOff	Character	1
CjsScOmLegViolent	Character	1
Wsipid	Numeric	8
WsippCaseSentenceDate	Date	10

CjsAdjudicationDate: Adjudication Date

Date on adjudicated cases (i.e., a decision was reached concerning guilt or innocence). This links the JUVIS adjudication date and the SCOMIS case resolution date. The DISCIS extract that we get from AOC does not contain an adjudication date. We have calculated a date by processing through all of our quarterly extracts and getting the earliest disposition date for each issue, we then took this date and used the most recent date for each case. DOC does not have a comparable date.

CjsAmbiguityFlag: Ambiguity Flag

WSIPP generated flag indicates a record had some ambiguity during the person linkage, i.e., this person might have multiple WSIPIDs in the CJS system.

CJSAMBIGUITYFLAG	DESCRIPTION
1	Known ambiguity

CjsCaseDisposition: Case Level Disposition

Because a case may have multiple charges with multiple dispositions, we use a hierarchy to determine the case level disposition. The order of the hierarchy is: JRA, DET, CON, DEF, and DIV. CjsDispositionType is used to determine the CjsCaseDisposition. For the JRA and DET types, we use CjsJuvenileJra and CjsJuvenileDetention flags in conjunction with the CjsDispositionType to determine CjsCaseDisposition. The possible values are described in the table below:

CJSCASEDISPOSITION	DESCRIPTION
AMD	Amended
CHV	Change of venue
CON	Convicted
DEC	Decline of Jurisdiction
DEF	Deferred (youth admits guilt, one year of supervision is required)
DET	Convicted and sentenced to detention
DIV	Diverted (juvenile only)
DIS	Dismissed
FAP	Forward Adult Procecuton
FIL	Filed
JRA	Convicted and sentenced to JRA
NCR	Non-criminal
NGD	Not guilty
NGI	Not guilty by reason insanity
SUS	Suspended
UNK	Unknown
VAC	Vacated

CjsChargeNumber: Offense Number

A number created by the Institute associated with each charge (numbering offenses [also referred to as charges, or referrals] within a CjsInformationNumber). Not available for charges from DOC or JUVIS.

CjsCounty: County

A numeric code identifying the county in which the offense was adjudicated.

CJSCOUNTY	COUNTY
1	Adams
2	Asotin
3	Benton
4	Chelan
5	Clallam
6	Clark

CJSCOUNTY	COUNTY
21	Lewis
22	Lincoln
23	Mason
24	Okanogan
25	Pacific
26	PendOreille

7	Columbia
8	Cowlitz
9	Douglas
10	Ferry
11	Franklin
12	Garfield
13	Grant
14	GraysHarbor
15	Island
16	Jefferson
17	King
18	Kitsap
19	Kittitas
20	Klickitat

27	Pierce
28	SanJuan
29	Skagit
30	Skamania
31	Snohomish
32	Spokane
33	Stevens
34	Thurston
35	Wahkiakum
36	WallaWalla
37	Whatcom
38	Whitman
39	Yakima
0, 40, 50, 95-99	Non-County

CjsCourt: Court

A court level code followed by a court code.

SCOMIS: "S" followed by the two digit SCOMIS court code that is the county.

DISCIS: three character DISCIS court code.

JUVIS: "J" followed by the two digit juvenile court district code.

CjsCourtCaseNumber: Court and Case

Combination of court code followed by the court case number to uniquely identify each court case.

For JUVIS and JCS charges, which could not be linked to a SCOMIS case, a court and case number was constructed as a "J" followed by the JUVIS Control Number, the adjudication date, and the referral sequence number from JUVIS or the referral number from JCS.

Similarly, for a DOC charge, that could not be linked to a SCOMIS case, a court and case number was constructed as a "D" followed by the DOC Number, Sentence Date, and DOC Commitment Number.

CjsCourtLawCode: Law Number

Either state RCW (first three characters equal "*SW" for State Wide) or local law code recorded for the offense. Additional information may be found at the Washington State Legislature Revised Code of Washington (RCW) web site:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx>

CjsCourtLevel: Court Level

Code of court level at which the charge was adjudicated.

S = Superior Criminal Court

J = Superior Juvenile Court

D = District Court

M = Municipal Court

P = Parking Bureau

X = Limited Jurisdiction Court (District or Municipal)

CjsDataSource: Data Source

Source of data for the charge.

CJSDATASOURCE	DESCRIPTION
jv	JUVIS
sc	SCOMIS
js	JUVIS and SCOMIS
jc	JCS
di	DISCIS (includes Seattle's MCIS)
so	SCOMIS and Department of Corrections OMNI
om	Department of Corrections OMNI

CjsDeferredResult: Deferral Disposition for DISCIS Charges

In DISCIS after the defendant meets the criteria of a deferred prosecution the disposition gets changed from deferred (“DEF”) to dismissed (“DIS”). For our studies we want to count these as convictions, even if they are later dismissed. We retain the CjsDispositionType value of “DEF” for any charge that has had a deferred prosecution. The variable CjsDeferredResult will have values of “DIS” (dismissed) or “CON” (conviction) for these two outcomes of the deferred prosecution.

CjsDispositionDate: Case Disposition Date

Recorded date the sentence was determined for the charge. Juvenile courts and courts of limited jurisdiction refer to this as the disposition date; superior courts refer to it as the sentencing date.

CjsDispositionType: Disposition Type

The disposition of each charge has been categorized into one of the following codes. There are two juvenile dispositions, DET (detention) and JRA (Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration) that have changed over time. Please see [CjsCaseDisposition](#), [CjsJuvenileDetention](#), and [CjsJuvenileJra](#) for more information.

CJSDISPOSITIONTYPE	DESCRIPTION
AMD	Charges Amended
APP	Appealed
BND	Bound Over
CHV	Change of venue
CON	Convicted
DEC	Declined (juvenile only)
DEF	Deferred (youth admits guilt, one year of supervision is required)
DET	Convicted and sentenced to detention
DIV	Diverted (juvenile only)
DIS	Dismissed (no action, prosecutor dismissed)
FAP	Forward to adult prosecution
FIL	Filed, not yet resolved
JRA	Convicted and sentenced to Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA)
NCR	Not criminal case
NGD	Not guilty
NGI	Not guilty insanity
SUS	Suspended (person absconds, appeals charges, or prosecutor issues a stay)
VAC	Vacated

CjsExtractionDate: Extract Date

Date on which the data was extracted from the AOC or DOC database.

CjsFileDate: Case Filing Date

Date the case was filed in court. For JUVIS charges that could not be linked to a SCOMIS case, the filing date is the date the case was referred to juvenile court.

CjsInformationNumber: Information Number

For SCOMIS charges only, a number that indicates whether this was an original charge (having an information number of one [1]), or an amended charge.

CjsJuvenileDetention: Juvenile Disposition Detention Flag

As of 2004, the DET CjsDispositionType is no longer available. We use the SCOMIS sentence detention flag to determine DET dispositions at the case level. A value of “Y” indicates that at least one conviction associated with the case was a detention sentence.

CjsJuvenileJra: Juvenile Disposition JRA Flag

As of 2004, the JRA CjsDispositionType is no longer available. We link to the JRA data to determine JRA dispositions at the case level.³ A value of “Y” indicates that at least one conviction associated with the case was a sentence to JRA.

CjsLawAttempt: Offense modifier of Attempt

This field was determined from SCOMIS charge level flags or from the offense law code. It has a value of “Y” or blank.

CjsLawCategory: Washington State Institute for Public Policy RCW Category

An Institute-created categorization of offenses conforming to the definition developed for the legislature. Local limited jurisdictions, as well as state RCW codes, are categorized.

³ Automated Client Tracking System (ACT).

CJSLAWCATEGORY	TYPE	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY
0	Non-Criminal		
1	Non-Criminal	Parking (IP)	
2	Non-Criminal	Traffic Infractions (IT)	
3	Non-Criminal	Non-traffic Infractions (IN)	
4	Criminal Traffic (CT)	Criminal Traffic (CT)	
5	Criminal Non-traffic	Criminal Non-traffic	
6	Criminal Miscellaneous	Sentence Violations	Sentence Violations
7	Criminal Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous	Fish and Game
8	Misdemeanor	Miscellaneous	Sex Offender Fail to Register
9	Misdemeanor	Miscellaneous	Bail Jump
13	Misdemeanor	Alcohol	Interlock Violations/Aid & Abet DWI
14	Misdemeanor	Alcohol	Miscellaneous Alcohol
15	Misdemeanor	Alcohol	DUI/DWI
16	Misdemeanor	Other	Miscellaneous Criminal
17	Misdemeanor	Other	Criminal Conduct
18	Misdemeanor	Other	Cruelty to Animals
19	Misdemeanor	Other	Escape
20	Misdemeanor	Drug	Drugs
21	Misdemeanor	Drug	Possession
22	Misdemeanor	Drug	Deliver
30	Misdemeanor	Property	Other
31	Misdemeanor	Property	Trespass
32	Misdemeanor	Property	Destruction
33	Misdemeanor	Property	Auto Theft/Vehicle Prowl
34	Misdemeanor	Property	Theft/Fraud/Larceny
35	Misdemeanor	Property	DV Related
36	Misdemeanor	Property	Fire setting
40	Misdemeanor	Weapon	Weapon
41	Misdemeanor	Weapon	Firearm
51	Misdemeanor	Sex	Prostitution
52	Misdemeanor	Sex	Other
53	Misdemeanor	Sex	Child sex
61	Misdemeanor	Assault	Other
62	Misdemeanor	Assault	School
63	Misdemeanor	Assault	Harassment/DV Petition
64	Misdemeanor	Assault	Assault
65	Misdemeanor	Assault	Assault DV Related
70	Felony	Other	Other
71	Felony	Other	Animal Cruelty
72	Felony	Other	Escape
73	Felony	Other	Sex Offender Fail to Register
80	Felony	Drug	Other
81	Felony	Drug	Possession
82	Felony	Drug	Deliver
90	Felony	Property	Other
91	Felony	Property	Trespass
92	Felony	Property	Destruction
93	Felony	Property	Auto Theft/Vehicle Prowl
94	Felony	Property	Theft/Fraud/Larceny
95	Felony	Property	DV Related
96	Felony	Property	Burglary Except First Degree
97	Felony	Property	Arson Except First Degree
100	Felony	Weapon	Weapon
101	Felony	Weapon	Firearm
110	Felony	Assault	Other
111	Felony	Assault	Dom Violence (minus Assault)
112	Felony	Assault	Assault
113	Felony	Assault	Assault DV Related
120	Felony	Violent-Property	Extortion
121	Felony	Violent-Property	Burglary First Degree
122	Felony	Violent-Property	Arson First Degree
123	Felony	Robbery-Kidnap	Kidnapping
124	Felony	Robbery-Kidnap	Robbery
131	Felony	Sex	Other Sex
132	Felony	Sex	Child Sex (including Child Rape)
133	Felony	Sex	Rape
141	Felony	Homicide	Manslaughter
142	Felony	Homicide	Murder

CjsLawConspiracy: Offense modifier of Conspiracy

This field was determined from SCOMIS charge level flags or from the offense law code. It has a value of “Y” or blank.

CjsLawDescription: Law Description

Text description for CjsCourtLawCode.

CjsDomesticViolence: Offense flag of Domestic Violence

This field was determined from SCOMIS and DISCIS charge level flags. It has a value of “Y” or blank.

CjsLawSexuallyMotivated: Offense modifier of Sexual Motivation

This field was determined from SCOMIS charge level flags or from the offense law code. It has a value of “Y” or blank.

CjsLawSolicitation: Offense modifier of Solicitation

This field was determined from SCOMIS charge level flags or from the offense law code. It has a value of “Y” or blank.

CjsNewLawCategory:

This field has the same categories and descriptions as CjsLawCategory. We are in the process of revising our CjsLawCategory field; the new field CjsNewLawCategory contains the new values for data sources SCOMIS, DISCIS, and OMNI. We have made some corrections to this category and have also changed our rules on how this value gets coded. There are law codes that are classified as felony or misdemeanor depending on information that has not been provided in the law code. In the past, if the offense was in DISCIS we coded it as a misdemeanor and if it was in SCOMIS we coded it as a felony. We now have coded these ambiguous offenses as misdemeanors. We have not applied these changes to the JCS and JUVIS data sources, it can therefore only be used for adult cases.

CjsOffenseDate: Offense Date

Recorded date of the offense.

Wspid: Washington State Institute for Public Policy Person ID

Developed by the Institute to identify each person and tie his or her charge records together. The wspid changes with each update to the criminal history data.⁴

WsippCaseSentenceDate: A WSIPP Created Case Level Date

This is a case level date variable created by WSIPP. It is created from the CjsAdjudicationDate, CjsDispositionDate, and CjsFileDate variables. For each of these variables the first non-missing value for each case was determined. The WsippCaseSentenceDate is set to one of these dates based on a hierarchy, if the CjsDataSource is ‘di’ (DISCIS) then the hierarchy is to use the adjudication date first but if it is missing then use the disposition date but if it is missing then use the file date. If the CjsDataSource is not ‘di’ then the hierarchy is different, use the disposition date first but if it is missing then use the adjudication but if it is missing then use the file date.

⁴ The Wspid database is completely re-generated each quarter, and thus the Wspid for the same person changes from one quarter to the next. Therefore, the Wspid from one quarter cannot be used to link individuals in subsequent quarters.

CjsScOmLegAgainstPers: Crimes against person flag

Has a value of "Y" or blank. WSIPP created field from SCOMIS and OMNI charge information using the criteria described in the Washington State Legislature site:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.411>

CjsScOmLegSerViolent: Serious violent offense flag

Has a value of "Y" or blank. WSIPP created field from SCOMIS and OMNI charge information using the criteria described in the Washington State Legislature site:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.030>

CjsScOmLegSexOff: Sex Offense flag

Has a value of "Y" or blank. WSIPP created field from SCOMIS and OMNI charge information using the criteria described in the Washington State Legislature site:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.030>

CjsScOmLegViolent: Violent Offense flag

Has a value of "Y" or blank. WSIPP created field from SCOMIS and OMNI charge information using the criteria described in the Washington State Legislature site:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.030>