

SAMPLE LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS TO GATHER

RECORD	RELEASE	WHERE / HOW TO GET THEM	RECORDS TO ASK FOR & CONTENT
Adoption	Yes (may need subpoena and/or court order)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ County Adoption Agencies ▪ Department of Social Services ▪ Private Adoption Agencies ▪ Court files from court in which the adoption occurred <p>NOTE: Requests should be made to the California Department of Social Services, in addition to the specific Adoptions Branch or the licensed public or private adoption agency that handled the adoption. The laws governing disclosure are the same for both, but you may get more from one.</p>	
Ambulance / Paramedic	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact public and private companies 	
Autopsy Reports/ Coroner		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available from the County the report was generated in, usually only need to provide proof of death 	Autopsy report Coroner's final investigation report Photographs Raw notes & data
Burial / Cremation	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cemetery & Funeral Homes 	Funeral cards often have names of family member Look at headstone for info and at surrounding stones for family members
Census Records	Public after 72 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ancestry.com ▪ National Archives and Records Administration ▪ Available at many University Libraries & main branches of public libraries, and historical societies ▪ Abstracts for 1790-1960 available on-line http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/index.html 	Records contain family address, immigration status, employment status, languages spoken, ethnicity, names and ages of all members in the household.
Court Files	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ County Superior and Municipal Courts (may be merged) – there are usually multiple branches within each county ▪ Appellate Courts 	County Court Files: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Civil ▪ Criminal (felonies and misdemeanors) ▪ Traffic

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United States District Courts <p>NOTE: Archived USDC CA court files are stored at the San Bruno NARA office. You must court search, get a file, location & accession number for each case file, and then make an appointment at NARA to view the cases. [www.nara.gov/regional/sanfranc.html]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Probate ▪ Small Claims ▪ Family Law ▪ Unlawful Detainers, Temporary Restraining Orders (TRO's) ▪ Domestic Relations ▪ Mental Health <p>United States District Court (USDC) Files:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bankruptcy Records ▪ Civil Suits (including civil rights claims by inmates against jail guards, class action suits, cases re. police brutality, etc.) ▪ Criminal cases (including federal crimes like bank robbery & drug trafficking)
Criminal History Reports		Differs by state (check www.publicrecordsources.com Check their home page for login information)	Many states offer criminal background searches on individuals for a fee
Driver's Records	Usually not	Try the Department of Motor Vehicles office in the state you need and explain you need the information for legal purposes. California DMV records are confidential, but most other states' are not.	Photograph Identifying information Driving history (arrests and moving violations) Vehicle Licensing Information Application (In California it's called a DL-44)
Employment	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get list of employers from the Social Security Administration's Detailed Earning Report (DEQYs) - see social security records. ▪ Request from each employer 	May contain income, work accidents, performance evaluations, attendance, initial application, insurance information, and lists of home addresses and dependants.
Fire Department Records		Contact the local Fire Department.	They are often the first ones to respond to 911 calls and may have records that have absolutely nothing to do with fires.
Immigration – INS Records		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immigration & Naturalization Records: http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/085.html 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Check Ancestry.com, NARA, historical societies, and libraries for immigration records 	
Jail Records	Yes	Call or go to the Jail—each one is different. Many have off-site archives.	Medical, psychiatric, transportation logs, visiting (attorney and general) logs, booking files, and general custody records may have to be separately requested.
Juvenile Criminal Records	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ California Youth Authority (CYA) ▪ California Archives http://findaid.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf1j49n4h9 ▪ Juvenile Court Records (Usually requires a court order) ▪ Juvenile Court Camps & Schools - County agencies that are separate from CYA 	<p>CYA Educational Records are maintained separately. Send request to:</p> <p>Department of the Youth Authority Education Services Branch 4142 Williamsborough Drive Sacramento, CA 95823-2088 Telephone: 916-262-1500 Fax: 916-262-1510</p> <p>GED Records - State GED Office California Department of Education P.O. Box 710273 Sacramento, CA 94244-0273 Telephone: 916-327-0037</p> <p>NOTE: Search for a local Youth Law Center that can serve as a resource; they often track the various services and agencies that are serving young people in the community</p>
Law Enforcement Records	Yes, sometimes it must be Notarized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police ▪ FBI ▪ Border Patrol/INS ▪ Sheriff ▪ Highway Patrol 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State Department ▪ US Marshalls 	
Medical Records	Yes (and it must be HIPAA compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitals (Sweep entire city) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - www.ahd.com (American Hospital Directory) ▪ Private Doctors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - American Medical Association on-line search www.ama-assn.org/aps/amahg.htm - Doc Finder – links to many state licensing agencies http://www.docboard.org/docfinder.html ▪ Dental ▪ VAMC (Veterans Administration Medical Center) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Veterans Health Administration Facilities Directory: www.va.gov 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prenatal (get doctor's name from birth certificate) ▪ Birth Records (get doctor's name from birth certificate) ▪ Clinics (Research city & county public clinics) ▪ Emergency Room Records (often kept separate from other records) ▪ Drug & Alcohol Abuse Treatment / Recovery Program Records ▪ Mental Health Records (often have to be specifically requested, even when getting other records from the same hospital/clinic) ▪ Involuntary Commitments (5150's) – need to be specifically requested
Military Records		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Personnel Records Center 9700 Page Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63132 ▪ VA Claims Folders – contact regional storage facility & have folder sent to local VA Office ▪ National Archives and Records Administration ▪ Separation papers – public information available in County Recorder's Offices; gives all the information necessary to request records above <p>NOTE: A fire in 1973 destroyed many records compiled before 1960, but a Records Reconstruction Unit will assemble whatever records are available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Personnel Record Center (archived Personnel and Medical records) ▪ Civilian Personnel Records (for dependents of military personnel) ▪ Medical Records - VAMC (for Veterans - see listing under medical records)
Newspapers & Periodicals	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Newspaper clipping services ▪ College & University Libraries (can often search their holdings on-line) 	Ask librarians and archivists for indexes; most old newspapers were not indexed, although many historical societies have gone back and created their

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main Public Libraries ▪ Historical Societies ▪ Newspapers often keep their own archives 	own indexes.
Passport Records	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research & Liaison Branch 1111 19th Street NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20524 	Passport records & application
Prison Records	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact individual prison & the state's Department of Corrections. In California the prison retains the records. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CDC Inmate Locator: (916) 445-6713 - Inmate Locators for other states: www.corrections.com/links/state.html - Federal Bureau of Prisons, Inmate Information: http://www.bop.gov/iloc2/LocateInmate.jsp ▪ Files from prior incarcerations (under different CDC numbers) are maintained at the CDC archives in Vacaville ▪ Inmates on Parole: files are kept at the CDC's Parole & Community Services regional office ▪ State Departments of Correction (phone numbers for all states): http://www.bmom.net/prison.htm ▪ National Archives and Records Administration has old inmate case files from all over the country (the San Bruno location has Alcatraz & Hawaii prison records) 	<p>Make separate requests for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central File (C-File) ▪ Education Records ▪ Medical File ▪ Psychiatric File <p>Be sure to ask if the inmate has had any retired CDC inmate numbers and get all of those records as well. The CDC Inmate Locator can usually tell you the county the inmate was convicted out of and the case number, which makes it far easier to find their records.</p>
Psychiatric/Psychological/Mental health Records	Yes (and it must be HIPAA compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make sure to include in your hospital sweep request letters that you want any and all mental health/psychiatric/psychological records and testing results. ▪ Make specific requests to individual facilities 	
Probation	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ County Probation Department 	

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Records			
Professional License Searches	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bureau of Behavioral Science Examiners – Locate psychologists, licensed clinical social workers & marriage, family and child counselors ▪ BMQA (Board of Medical Quality Assurance)- Locate physicians and psychiatrists ▪ California Consumer Affairs & Licensing: http://www2.dca.ca.gov 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gun Permits ▪ Private Investigator Licenses ▪ Auto Repair Dealers ▪ Doctors ▪ Pharmacists ▪ Security Guards <p>Inquire about complaints, license status, and education background.</p>
Property Records	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ County Assessor, Clerk or Records Office (usually in the same building as the court) 	<p>You can trace land ownership records to determine family's economic standing, relationships, property value, etc.</p>
School Records	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact each school American School Directory www.asd.com ▪ Contact every School District (same web site as above) ▪ Also check with the Historical Society, local history museums, the Main Public Library and the Clerk/Recorder's Office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transcripts, attendance, standardized testing, teacher's notes ▪ Psychological testing ▪ Counseling ▪ Medical Records ▪ Special Education / Learning Disability records ▪ Adult Education / GED ▪ School census records ▪ Student Attendance Review Boards (differs by district) <p>NOTE: Ask specifically about family and home information sections—they may be considered confidential and not be included among the records you receive! For example, Los Angeles Unified School District records have a Section 17 entitled "Significant Information" that contains home information and is not sent unless you specifically request it in your letter.</p>

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Snitch Records		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Los Angeles County District Attorneys Office has a computerized system to track witnesses in felony cases - JILIT/HABLIT/PIMS (Prosecution Information Management System) ▪ Check other counties for similar information. 	
Social Security Records	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All requests should be sent directly to your local SSA office. They will then forward our requests to the necessary departments. If they are unfamiliar with these requests, you may need to make relationships with the staff and supervisors. ▪ SF Requests should be addressed to: Lillian Faga (<i>contact may be out of date</i>) 939 Market St., 3rd Floor San Francisco, CA 94103 ▪ A number of offices have allowed us to make copies of the case files using their machines, but ask us to provide the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEQY – Yearly income (requires a special SSA release, Form-SSA-7050) ▪ DEQY (Detailed Earnings Query) – lists all legal employers and income (requires a special SSA release, Form-SSA-7050) ▪ Case Files (Disability Records, SSI) – can be a wonderful source of information, often including school & medical records on several family members ▪ Application for a Social Security Number – can be requested on all deceased persons; lists parents, date of birth, address and employer. https://secure.ssa.gov/apps9/eFOIA-FEWeb/internet/main.jsp
Social Service Agencies	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public – get from county Department of Social Services ▪ Private – contact each agency ▪ Child Protective Service Records in California may require Declaration in Support of Access to Juvenile Records (WIC § 827/828) 	<p>Sample public agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AFDC / Welfare ▪ Foster Homes ▪ Intervention ▪ Child Protective Services ▪ Head Start ▪ Meals on Wheels <p>Sample private agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Catholic Social Services ▪ Salvation Army ▪ Big Brothers ▪ Boys Club ▪ Juvenile Shelters (private)

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Vital Records		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get vitals from the state vital registry or county clerk/recorder ▪ Check for on-line resources through the state's vital record web site and library sites, as some states have indices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - http://vitalchek.com/listphone.asp - http://www.ancestry.com - http://www.vitalsearch-ca.com (For CA) <p>NOTE: In most states these are public records, but not in all. For states where they are not public records you can usually speak with a supervisor and explain why you need the records and then get access. Also check libraries, historical societies, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Birth Certificates ▪ Death Certificates (will list funeral director & tell you if an autopsy was performed) ▪ Marriage Certificates ▪ Marriage Applications (they often include valuable information of the witnesses) <p>NOTE: Many states have <u>confidential sections</u> on their vitals that you should ask for.</p>
Voter Registration Records		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ County departments 	<p>Has full name, last known address and party affiliation.</p> <p>NOTE: You may be able to pull the precinct voter lists from past elections and see whether an individual has voted and their signature on the voting rolls.</p>
Weather Reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-line sources (http://www.weatherunderground.com/) 	<p>Reports of weather conditions on days of crime.</p>
Workers Compensation Records		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain from the local Workers Compensation Board 	<p>Should include medical records.</p>

General Resource / Research Agencies

Genealogical Archives

- On-line Resources: www.ancestry.com/search/ - everything you could possibly think of and more including: vital & church records, military records, census records, and the social security death index.

- Cyndi's List of Genealogical Sites on the Internet: <http://www.cyndislist.com/> - Comprehensive links for a broad range of genealogical topics, including international searches, military history, and culturally-specific resources.
- Mormon Church - on-line & local centers
- Local Libraries & Universities – see below
- National Archives and Records Administration – see below

Historical Societies & Libraries

- Main Public Libraries – Often have local history rooms with old yearbooks, phone books, newspaper clippings, photographs & genealogical materials.
- California State Libraries: searchable on-line catalog (www.library.ca.gov) - They have everything you could ever think of and so much more! (i.e. Grand Jury Reports, government publications, etc.)
- Sutro Library in San Francisco – specializes in out-of-state resources
- University Libraries – loads of resources including newspapers & magazines, genealogical indices, dissertations, and government publications
- Local Libraries – often have local history rooms with newspapers, genealogical resources, yearbooks, photographs, phonebooks & very helpful librarians
- Historical Societies – variety of resources including genealogical material, local government reports, newspaper clippings, old maps, photos, etc.
- California Archives - <http://www.ss.ca.gov/archives/archives.htm> or <http://findaid.oac.cdlib.org/>

National Archives & Records Administration (www.nara.gov)

- Archived USDC case files (see court files)
- Naturalization records
- Prison records
- Native American records (on microfilm)
- African American Records (on microfilm)
- Federal Land Records
- US Census Records & Mortality Schedules
- Military Service Records (Revolutionary War; Post-Revolution, 1784-1811; War of 1812; Indian Wars; Mexican War; Civil War (Union & Confederate); US Regular Army; Misc. Pension & Burial Records (widow applications, etc.)