



National Crime Information Center

QUICK REFERENCE CARD

License Plate File

The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) License Plate File was established in 1967 as one of the first five NCIC Files.

The purpose of the License Plate File is to aid law enforcement in recovering stolen license plates.

Although the use of the NCIC System is voluntary, participation is vital. Information must be entered into the License Plate File before it can benefit law enforcement. The complete, accurate, and timely entry and maintenance of records ensures system integrity and keeps the NCIC System free of outdated and incorrect information. It is important to remember, an NCIC hit alone is not probable cause to arrest.



Record Entry

A stolen license plate can only be entered into the NCIC License Plate File if it has a unique identifier and a theft report has been made. Only the agency holding the theft report and having primary jurisdiction over the place of actual theft may make the entry.

For NCIC purposes, motor vehicle license plates are classified in two categories: (1) regular plates and (2) special plates.

Regular Plates



- Standard 6"x12" plates issued for passenger automobiles
- Does not contain embossing, symbols, and/or abbreviations that indicate special issue

Special Plates



- All plates other than regular passenger automobile plates
- The size, color, embossing, wording, abbreviations, and symbols distinguish special plates

When creating any NCIC File record, all available data should be included even if it is not mandatory. If missing or additional data becomes available later, the record should be modified to include that additional information.

License Plate File Fast Facts

- The License Plate Number (LIC) Field can only contain alphanumeric characters.
- To avoid multiple record matches and limit the scope of the search, the license plate state should be included in an inquiry.
- If only one plate is reported stolen, in a state that requires two plates, prior to entry an agency must get the complainant's assurance that the remaining plate will not be used on a vehicle.
- License Plate File records will remain on file for the remainder of the year entered plus 4 years.

Notify Originating Agency (NOA) Field

The NOA Field can be used to support investigative leads. By opting in, the NOA Field allows the record owning agency to receive an automatic notification anytime there is a hit on their record.

Miscellaneous (MIS) Field

The MIS Field is an optional data field and although the data it contains isn't searchable with an online inquiry of the NCIC System, it is very valuable.

The MIS Field should be used when:

- Data cannot be completely entered in its designated field based on established character limits or data type restrictions
- There is not a designated field to enter the data
- Data entered in another field requires further explanation
- When otherwise required or requested by NCIC policy

Locate, Clear, and Cancel Functions

Use of the following functions is critical in keeping the NCIC System free of outdated and incorrect information.



Locate

A locate must be placed on a record when an agency that does not own the record recovers the license plate in the record.



Clear

A record must be cleared when the record owning agency recovers the license plate in the record.



Cancel

A record must be canceled when the record owning agency determines the record is invalid.

Check out the License Plate File e-Learning module in the NCIC Community on JusticeConnect accessed through the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP).

www.cjis.gov

Additional information is available in the NCIC Community of JusticeConnect or by contacting your CJIS Systems Agency.

For information regarding training, contact the NCIC Training Team:
Phone: 877-FBI-NCIC (877-324-6242) Email: ncictraining@fbi.gov

