

# Washington State Process Control Number (PCN) Guidelines

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## Introduction

A process control number (PCN) is a unique tracking number assigned to each criminal arrest. The purposes of the PCN are as follows:

- Links the arrest event to the disposition.
- Facilitates the electronic submission of disposition information to the Washington State Patrol (WSP).
- The PCN from the disposition report is used to locate the corresponding arrest(s) in the criminal history record information (CHRI) database known as the Washington State Identification System (WASIS).

The PCN is automatically assigned by the livescan device. When the arrest record is electronically transmitted to the WSP, the PCN is entered along with the arrest information. The PCN is forwarded by the fingerprinting/arresting agency to the appropriate prosecutor or court for entry into the Judicial Information System (JIS) or the Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS). When the PCN is entered by court staff into JIS/SCOMIS, it triggers an electronic disposition, which is sent electronically to the WSP. There, it either automatically updates WASIS or is diverted for manual intervention by WSP staff. If the transaction requires manual intervention, WSP staff use the PCN to locate and update the submitted disposition. If no charges are filed or the case is dismissed prior to prosecution or processing by the court, the Prosecutor's Office shall send a disposition report containing the PCN to the WSP.

Agencies that do not have a livescan device must use a PCN packet. PCN packets are also provided to agencies when they install a new livescan device to use in the case of a power outage, the individual has poor quality fingerprints, or manual processing of the fingerprint cards is required. The ink method is used to complete the fingerprint card and to place the flat impressions on the bottom of the disposition form. A PCN packet typically consists of two pre-stamped fingerprint cards, one disposition form, and twelve additional PCN labels. A PCN label is to be attached to each additional document and forwarded to the appropriate prosecutor or court for entry into JIS or SCOMIS. CHRI is updated when the disposition is forwarded to the WSP with the PCN.

When using the manual (ink) method of fingerprinting a subject, the agency will mail one fingerprint card to the WSP. All manual fingerprint card submissions are converted to electronic format by the WSP and forwarded to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) electronically. If the record is transmitted electronically to the WSP, there is no need to mail a hard copy of the fingerprint card. In either method, the agency may retain a fingerprint card for their file. A disposition report form is also completed by the arresting/fingerprinting agency and sent to the appropriate county prosecutor or court.

## Benefits of Using the PCN

- Facilitates the electronic transmission of disposition to WASIS.
- PCN links the arrest to its disposition.

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- Updates criminal history automatically with little or no human intervention.
- Provides accurate and complete CHRI by increasing the number of arrests with dispositions on file.
- Reduces manual or redundant paper handling by capturing court dispositions electronically.

**PCN entered into JIS/SCOMIS = an arrest with a disposition**  
**An arrest with a disposition = zero (0) audit compliance reports**

## Using the PCN

- **Criminal Arrests and Warrant Arrests Within the County**
  1. Subject is arrested.
  2. Subject is booked and fingerprinted.
    - a. PCN is assigned at the livescan device or during the manual fingerprinting process (using PCN packet).
    - b. PCN is printed on disposition report.
    - c. Court case number is assigned, if available.
  3. PCN is forwarded to the appropriate prosecutor or court via the disposition report or other agreed-upon means.
  4. If no charges are filed, the prosecutor makes the appropriate notation on the disposition report form and sends it to the WSP for entry into WASIS.
  5. If diversion, the disposition report is forwarded to the diversion clerk who manages the diversion.
    - a. If the case goes through diversion, the disposition report is forwarded to the WSP as diversion completed.
  6. If charges are filed, the disposition report is forwarded to the county clerk who enters the PCN into JIS/SCOMIS. The paper disposition report can be destroyed; please do not mail paper dispositions reports to the WSP after the PCN is entered into JIS/SCOMIS.
  7. Electronic disposition with the PCN and court case number is sent to the WSP when a case resolution code is entered into JIS/SCOMIS.
  8. Based on the PCN, the correct arrest event in WASIS is updated with the disposition.
  9. If a case is modified later, a new disposition is electronically submitted to the WSP from JIS/SCOMIS.

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- **Out of County Warrant**

1. Subject is arrested on an out of county warrant; this case will not be heard in the county making the arrest.
2. Subject is booked and fingerprinted.
  - a. The warrant number and/or court case number and the offense are entered in the appropriate fields (same for livescan and manual fingerprinting process).
  - b. PCN is assigned at the livescan device or during the manual fingerprinting process.
  - c. Enter the disposition of “Out of County Warrant or Released No Charge” in the appropriate field. This disposition closes the arrest warrant and will not generate a subsequent disposition audit. **Note:** Normally when the subject is returned to the county issuing the warrant, a new booking event will occur.
  - d. **Alternate process:** If “Out of County Warrant or Released No Charge” was not utilized at time of fingerprinting, enter the warrant and/or case number into the disposition report and mail or e-mail to the WSP.

Disposition reports can be forwarded electronically to [dispositions@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:dispositions@wsp.wa.gov) or mailed to the Identification and Criminal History Section, PO Box 42633, Olympia, WA 98504-2633.

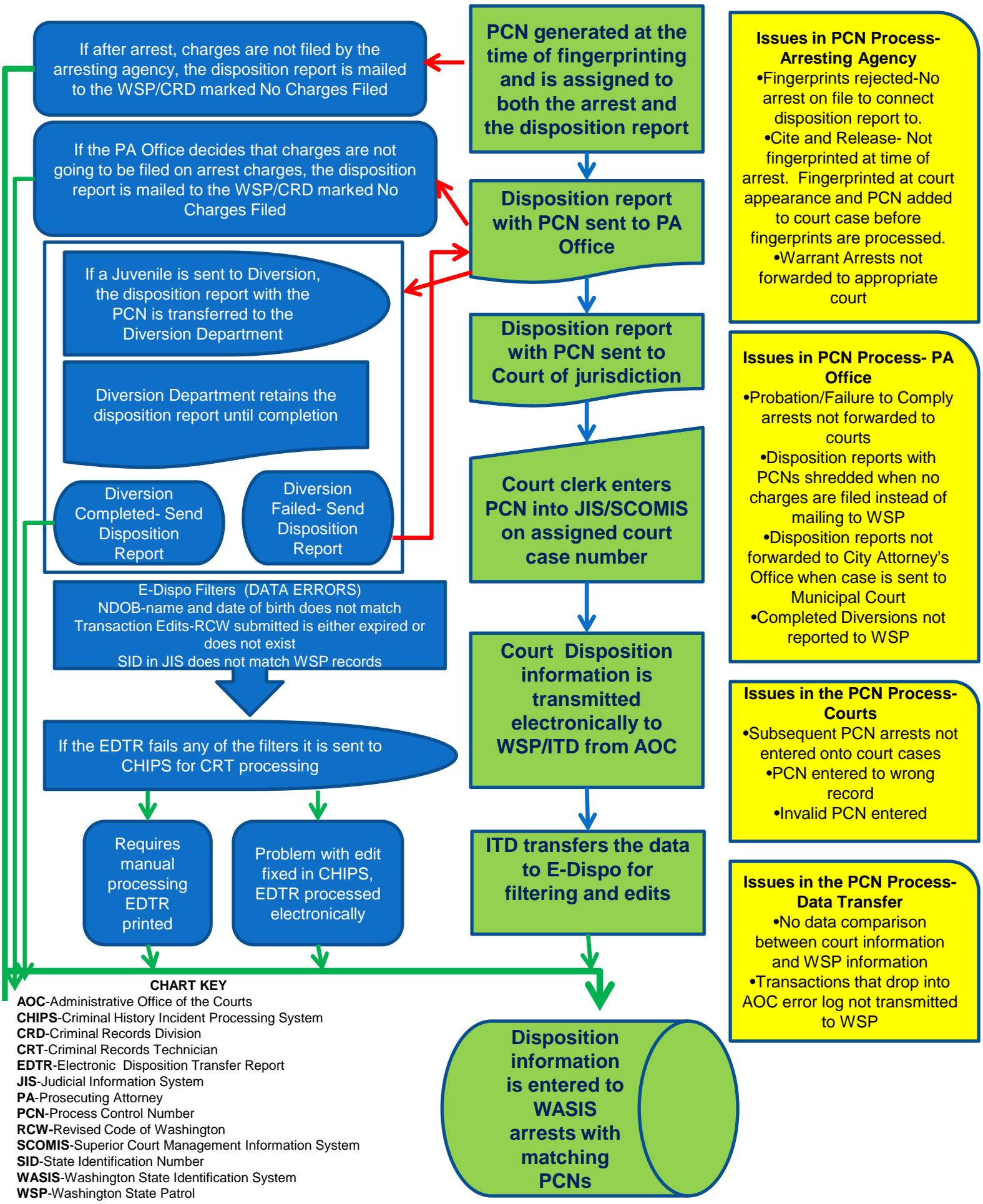
## Relevant Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Statutes

Criminal Arrests	RCW 43.43.735 and 740
Disposition	RCW 10.98.090
Audit Compliance Report	RCW 10.98.100

# CHALLENGES

# PCN PROCESS

# ISSUES



**Issues in PCN Process- Arresting Agency**

- Fingerprints rejected-No arrest on file to connect disposition report to.
- Cite and Release- Not fingerprinted at time of arrest. Fingerprinted at court appearance and PCN added to court case before fingerprints are processed.
- Warrant Arrests not forwarded to appropriate court

**Issues in PCN Process- PA Office**

- Probation/Failure to Comply arrests not forwarded to courts
- Disposition reports with PCNs shredded when no charges are filed instead of mailing to WSP
- Disposition reports not forwarded to City Attorney's Office when case is sent to Municipal Court
- Completed Diversions not reported to WSP

**Issues in the PCN Process- Courts**

- Subsequent PCN arrests not entered onto court cases
- PCN entered to wrong record
- Invalid PCN entered

**Issues in the PCN Process- Data Transfer**

- No data comparison between court information and WSP information
- Transactions that drop into AOC error log not transmitted to WSP

- CHART KEY**
- AOC-Administrative Office of the Courts
  - CHIPS-Criminal History Incident Processing System
  - CRD-Criminal Records Division
  - CRT-Criminal Records Technician
  - EDTR-Electronic Disposition Transfer Report
  - JIS-Judicial Information System
  - PA-Prosecuting Attorney
  - PCN-Process Control Number
  - RCW-Revised Code of Washington
  - SCOMIS-Superior Court Management Information System
  - SID-State Identification Number
  - WASIS-Washington State Identification System
  - WSP-Washington State Patrol

**Disposition information is entered to WASIS arrests with matching PCNs**