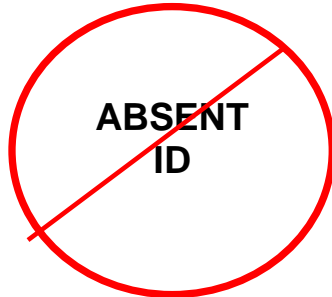


## APSIN ID: Facts and Frequently Asked Questions



In 2009, audit reports showed that:

**66% of criminal defendants were missing an APSIN ID** in the court's case management system

**57% of the APSIN ID numbers were wrong** on criminal judgments (often due to confusion of APSIN ID with Driver's License ID)

### Facts

- **The APSIN ID is critical to effective, electronic exchange of data about criminal defendants** because it allows information about a person in one system to be matched to information about that same person in another system.
- **The APSIN ID must be included on all criminal charging documents, judgments and orders of dismissals.** See Criminal Rules 3, 7, 32 and 43
- **The APSIN ID uniquely identifies each person with a record in the Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN).** Some events that result in a person having an APSIN record include (but are not limited to):
  - Arrest/citation
  - Criminal charge (referral for prosecution, court filing)
  - Criminal fingerprinting
  - Admission to a correctional facility
  - Criminal charge disposition
  - Issuance of a driver's license or state identification card by DMV
  - Background check for employment/licensing
- **The APSIN ID cannot be longer or shorter than seven digits** and cannot contain any letters, only numerals. For example:

0000123	valid APSIN ID
123	not a valid APSIN ID
12345678	not a valid APSIN ID
A123456	not a valid APSIN ID

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. Is there any exception to the requirement to provide the defendant's APSIN ID on every criminal charging document?**

**No.** The defendant's APSIN ID must be included on every criminal charging document, whether it is a citation, complaint, indictment or information. (See Criminal Rules 3 and 7.)

### **Q. Who has an APSIN ID?**

**Every person with a record in APSIN must have an APSIN ID – that means every person with a criminal record in Alaska is assigned an APSIN ID, as well as every person who has an Alaska driver's license or state identification card issued by DMV. If a person does not have an APSIN record by the time a criminal charging document is ready to be filed, then the law enforcement agency involved with the case must create one. (Refer to the list of "triggering events" on the first page of this document for a more comprehensive list of events that can result in creation of an APSIN ID.)**

### **Q. Do businesses and organizations charged with a criminal also need an APSIN?**

**Yes.** When a business or other organization is charged, the charging officer or prosecutor must obtain an APSIN for the business or organization. Any agency with APSIN access can create an APSIN ID for business or organization just like they do for a person. If the agency does not have APSIN access the agency must contact the Department of Public Safety for assistance in obtaining an APSIN ID number for the business.

### **Q. Where do I find the defendant's APSIN ID?**

**Law enforcement and prosecution agency employees find it in APSIN.**

### **Q. What if I need to file a charging document but don't have access to APSIN?**

**You must contact someone with APSIN access, such as a dispatcher, and ask that person to get the defendant's APSIN ID for you.**

### **Q. What if I can't get the APSIN ID because APSIN is "down" when I need to fill out the charging document?**

**You will need to wait until APSIN is available to complete and file a charging document.** Note: Although APSIN is briefly unavailable for scheduled maintenance on Sunday mornings, the Department of Public Safety is

migrating to a new system that will eliminate that maintenance/down time by the end of 2009.

**Q. What if I can't find the defendant in APSIN?**

**If you can't match the defendant to an existing APSIN record, then you must create a record in APSIN for the defendant.** Contact your supervisor or your agency's APSIN contact person if you need assistance.

**Q. Why is the APSIN ID so important?**

**It is the only reliable identifier common to all criminal defendants in Alaska.** Names, dates of birth and even social security numbers are subject to change, may be shared by more than one person, and are often based on "self-report" and therefore difficult to verify.

APSIN is structured to help users search for and identify persons based on comparison of names, dates of birth, physical characteristics, biometric identifiers (e.g., fingerprints) and other data. Although it is not perfect, the APSIN search/match process is the most effective way to establish a defendant's identity. When misidentification is discovered (for example, through fingerprint comparison), the Department of Public Safety has procedures in place to consolidate or otherwise correct the affected APSIN IDs, including pointers and documentation of changes.

**Q: Why is the need for the APSIN ID being addressed now?**

**Having the APSIN ID in court records is a key to automating exchange of data between courts and other criminal justice agencies.** As agencies automate exchange of information between computer systems it becomes more important to have a concise, consistent identifier so that information is matched to the correct person's record. For example, the court is working to make bail conditions available (electronically) to law enforcement agencies based on a query of court records using the defendant's APSIN ID. Queries based on names and other identifiers take longer and are less reliable. Using a common identifier makes the queries easier to do and reduces the changes of mismatches due to name changes, misspellings, missing data, etc.

**Q. Why can't we just use the Alaska Driver's License number instead?**

**Not all defendants have an Alaska driver's license** (or Alaska state identification card issued by DMV, for a person without driving privileges).

**Q: Isn't the APSIN ID the same as the Alaska Driver's License (ADL) number?**

**No.** Until October 4, 1997, the numbers were the same, assigned by a single computer system shared by DPS and DMV. Since then, newly created APSIN and Driver's License identifiers have been assigned by different agency computer systems and are therefore separate and distinct identification numbers.

**Q. If I see a 7-digit number labeled, "APSIN ID/ADL" or "OL/ID" can I assume that it means the person's APSIN ID is the same as his or her driver's license number?**

**No.** You cannot assume that a 7-digit number is the APSIN ID unless it is clearly labeled as such. It may be the driver's license number or the APSIN ID; they may be the same or different numbers. If the identification number is not explicitly labeled, then the only way to determine whether it is the APSIN ID is to query APSIN.

**Q: If a document shows an APSIN ID with fewer than 7 digits, how do I enter it into a computer system that requires a 7-character value for the APSIN ID?**

The correct way to enter the APSIN ID on a document is to write all 7 digits on the form. If you know that the number represented is the correct APSIN ID and the person completing the form omitted zeroes from the APSIN ID, add leading zeroes (to the left, at the beginning of the number). Never add trailing zeroes to the right, at the end of the number. For example:

123 would be: 0000123 (never change it to 1230000)  
1230 would be: 0001230 (never change it to 1230000)

**Q. What if there is no place on a form to put the APSIN ID or the form has only one space for APSIN ID/Driver's License?**

- Handwrite the label, "APSIN ID" followed by the APSIN number.
- Then handwrite the label, "Driver's License" followed by the driver's license number. Include the state that issued the driver's license.
- If you cannot legibly handwrite this information on the form, use another piece of paper. Do not assume that a driver's license is an Alaska driver's license unless it is labeled as such.
- Do not assume that whoever looks at a form you fill out will know what state issued the driver's license if you don't write it on the form.
- **Notify your supervisor and/or the person responsible for your agency's forms of the need to correct/replace forms that do not explicitly label**

**and have space for the APSIN ID, driver's license number, and driver's license state for a defendant.**

- **Forms identifying defendants should distinctly display the APSIN ID, Driver's License Number and Driver's License State as follows:**

APSIN ID:	<u>0123456</u>	
Driver's License Number:	<u>0234567</u>	DL State: <u>AK</u>

**Q: Is it truly a problem not to include the APSIN ID?**

**Yes. It creates extra work for others and makes criminal records less reliable.**

- Failure to provide the APSIN ID when a charge is initiated means that someone else "downstream" has to backtrack, manually research, and provide (or correct) the ID.
- Processes that could have been completed automatically based on a match involving the APSIN ID instead require manual "exception processing".
- Information may be incorrectly associated with the wrong person.
- In the worst case scenario, a record subject escapes consequences or is unjustifiably deprived of a right or privilege because information is applied to the wrong person's record.

**Q: How will compliance be monitored?**

1. **The court will send a Deficiency Notice to any agency that files a charging document without the defendant's APSIN ID.**
2. **The court will publish a monthly report showing the number/percentage of case filings entered into its case management system (CourtView) with the APSIN ID.** Our goal is to have the APSIN ID in CourtView for 100% of each month's new criminal case filings.