



eCharging Fact Sheet

The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) developed an electronic charging, or eCharging, service to facilitate the movement of information between individual data systems in law enforcement, prosecution, courts and the state.

The gap

The criminal charging process involved a variety of records management systems which required duplicate data entry as information was amended or updated. These systems were often not designed to pass information and documents to other systems and no system could pass authorizations and approvals – such as an electronic signature. They generated paper documents that were hand-delivered and re-entered into another agency's system. In some cases, paper documents were transported by police officers. Similar data duplication and re-entry problems existed with DWI arrest forms.

This led to unnecessary travel, paper, legwork and duplicate data entry, with resulting lost efficiency, data accuracy and data links that wasted physical and human resources. These data accuracy and data integration problems also created public safety risks as key pieces of information that could be “lost” inside the system, not accessible by those who needed them to make decisions about whether a subject passes a background check, or to make sentencing decisions based on the subject's prior criminal history.

The solution

The BCA created the eCharging service that serves as a “broker” between individual data systems – passing incident reports, complaints, citations, search warrants and DWI administrative forms – including the underlying data and signatures – between law enforcement, prosecutors, state executive branch agencies and the courts. The net result is improved public safety due to more accurate, timely and complete criminal justice information and more efficient use of human and financial resources.

About the product

eCharging is deployed statewide. The system improves the criminal justice process in several ways.

- Reduces or eliminates re-entry of criminal justice data
- Reduces or eliminates costs to transport documents between agencies and lost time for officers and court personnel
- Creates greater accuracy in incident and charging data
- Uses innovative electronic signature methods
- Allows agencies to track a document's activity as it moves through the system, sending notifications when an officer, prosecutor or judge has signed a complaint
- Integrates with each agency's records management system
- Creates a criminal complaint within the eCharging system
- Integrates with state court electronic filing services
- Eliminates need to print documents for signatures and provides the service in a secure environment, fully compliant with data practices laws and Minnesota court rules
- Determines appropriate DWI form set using a short question list and locates prior offenses using an interface with the state driver vehicle records system
- DWI form computes revocation and plate impound dates based on data sets
- Integrates breath test results into the DWI form set (blood and urine tests will also be sent to eCharging soon)

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