

## **Why is it important to capture quality fingerprints?**

*If the quality of the fingerprint images you submit for a criminal history record background check is too low, the background check cannot be completed. Ensuring that the fingerprint images you submit are high quality helps you:*

- **Mitigate potential risks:**
  - If the fingerprint image quality of your submission for a criminal history record background check is too low, the submitted fingerprints may fail to be correctly identified with a criminal record. In such a scenario, vulnerable populations may be put at unnecessary risk. Taking steps to capture quality fingerprint images helps mitigate this risk and better protect our nation's vulnerable populations.
- **Get results quicker and with less administrative burden:**
  - If your submission for a criminal history record background check is rejected because the fingerprint quality is too low, the applicant should be re-fingerprinted, leading to longer wait times and more administrative burden for all involved. Capturing quality fingerprints the first time helps avoid these problems, meaning you get the results you need more quickly and easily.
- **Reduce inconvenience related to Rap Back Service:**
  - Enrolling an applicant in the Next Generation Identification (NGI) Noncriminal Justice Rap Back Service requires the applicant's fingerprints to be retained in the NGI. When a submission is rejected because the fingerprint quality is too low, there will be no fingerprints on file in the NGI to establish the Rap Back subscription. This problem can be significantly mitigated by taking steps to capture quality fingerprint images.

## **How do I capture quality fingerprints?**

- **Maximize use of electronic live scan fingerprinting technology whenever possible.**
  - Electronic fingerprint capture is typically easier than ink-and-roll fingerprinting and usually provides clearer images. These benefits of electronic live scan fingerprinting are significantly increased when the quality control software within the live scan device is used. For best results, live scan quality controls should always be turned on and used, with manual overrides only possible when specific conditions are met.
- **When live scan fingerprinting is not available, use the tips below to capture quality ink and roll fingerprint images.**
  - Roll fingerprint images from nail to nail (one side of finger to other side of finger) and from finger tip to just below the first joint or crease.
  - Capture the plain (flat or slapped) impressions simultaneously.
  - Ensure no fingerprint image intrudes into another fingerprint image block.
  - Print rolled images and plain thumbs vertically. Print plain (simultaneous) images at a 45 degree angle.
  - If fingers are missing, ensure they are missing in both rolled and plain impressions. Be sure there is a notation for each missing finger. Proper notations are **UP** for **missing fingers** and **XX** for **amputated fingers**.
  - Fingerprint images should not be too light (not enough ink) or too dark (excess ink or pressure).
  - Below are examples of correctly captured rolled and plain fingerprint impressions:

**ROLLED**



**PLAIN**



- **For more information, please visit:**
  - [www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/fingerprints\\_biometrics](http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/fingerprints_biometrics)