



Do It Yourself Background Checks in South Florida

Utilizing public record databases to find civil, criminal, or traffic violations in South Florida has become a bit easier with the release of an updated list of online resources. Locating and identifying civil litigation, criminal record or traffic infraction history is but a click away. Access to resources relating to inmates, those on probation, parole or community control, sex offenders or missing children, in addition to stolen property or vehicles, is readily available as well.

“In today’s society, comprehensive background checks are a necessity,” private investigator John Sinks of [Comprehensive Investigative Solutions](#) in Boca Raton told [South Florida Reporter](#). “A background check is basically an investigative report on an individual. It typically includes a criminal history and credit check, educational credential verification, sex offender and public records check, or any combination of reports.”

Suggested below are some of the free or low-cost options available when conducting background research in South Florida. In no way are they exhaustive and – according to Sinks – a professional investigator should be consulted when conducting more than a cursory search.

Basic background checks

- **Florida Department of Law Enforcement** – For a modest fee of \$23.00, you can obtain an individual’s reported criminal history record in the state of Florida. Sealed or expunged information will not be included in this report.
- **Broward County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.
- **Miami-Dade County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Miami, Florida.
- **Monroe County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Key West, Florida.
- **Palm Beach County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in West Palm Beach, Florida.
- **Collier County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Naples, Florida.
- **Charlotte County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Punta Gorda, Florida.
- **Glades County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Moore Haven, Florida.
- **Hendry County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in LaBelle, Florida.
- **Lee County court records** – Search civil, criminal and traffic courts through the Clerk’s office in Fort Myers, Florida.

Sex offenders

- **Florida Offender Alert System** – Sign up to receive an email alert when a sex offender moves into your neighborhood.
- **Florida Sex Offender Registry** – Locate registered sex offenders by name, city, address or zip code in the state of Florida.
- **Sex offender screen names** – Check a computer screen name or email address to determine whether it’s linked to a registered sex offender in Florida.
- **National and other state sex offender registries** – Search the national database or select an individual state to view a particular offender registry.

Wanted and missing persons

- **Florida Missing Children Search** – Search for a missing or endangered person directly at the state Missing Children Information Clearinghouse.
- **Missing Persons Search** – Search for a missing person directly with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.
- **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children** – Search several national resources for missing children.
- **Wanted Persons Search** – Search for felony or misdemeanor warrant information as reported to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.
- **Wireless Amber alerts** – Sign up for free wireless Amber alerts directly to your cell phone.

Jail and state prison inmates

- [Florida Department of Corrections](#) – Search for inmates currently incarcerated or recently released, as well as those on probation, parole, community control or other form of non-custodial release.
- [Broward County Jail inmates](#) – Search for inmates currently incarcerated in Broward County.
- [Miami-Dade County Jail inmates](#) – Search for inmates currently incarcerated in [Miami-Dade County](#).
- [Monroe County Jail inmates](#) – Search for inmates currently incarcerated in Monroe County.
- [Palm Beach County Jail inmates](#) – Search for inmates currently incarcerated in Palm Beach County as well as those released within the last 12 months.

Stolen property

- [Florida Crime Information Center](#) – Search for information on whether a vehicle, vehicle parts, boats, license plates, decals, guns and other items were reported lost or stolen in Florida.
- [VINCheck](#) – Search the National Insurance Crime Bureau database to see if a vehicle has been reported stolen.

“Pre-employment background checks are an important and necessary part of our hiring process,” Xavier Mitjavila, told [South Florida Reporter](#). “There have been times that applicants have been less than truthful in disclosing background issues. After a cursory search, we engage a professional private investigator to complete the process in a more thorough fashion.”