

# MNCIS Government Access through MPA

## Instructions for Government Access

### POLICIES & NOTICES

Important! Please Read!

- **UNOFFICIAL RECORDS.** The information available on MPA is provided as a service and is not considered an official court record. The Minnesota Judicial Branch does not certify MPA records or search results, and is not responsible for any errors or omissions in the data found on MPA. Certified civil judgment search results may be obtained from court administration
- **MPA SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.** Background checks should be conducted through the BCA Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system, which you can access at 1430 Maryland Avenue East in St. Paul or call 651-793-2400 for information. The BCA's CCH system links prior criminal history through fingerprints to verify the identification of the individual. MPA cannot provide this level of verification.
- **CAUTION: NAME SEARCHES CAN BE UNRELIABLE.** Use caution in evaluating MPA data, as the person for whom you have searched could have the same name, birth date, or other identifiers as another individual. Even if you believe your search has returned the correct match, and the information appears to be about the person for whom you have searched, remember that:
  - two or more people can have the same name and birth date; and
  - criminal offenders frequently use aliases, including the names of others.
- **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE** for understanding the meaning of the case record information that you view through MPA and for the appropriate and lawful use of such information. If you have any questions regarding the meaning of case information on MPA, please ask court administration. You are also responsible for determining whether any case record information previously obtained from MPA is still accurate, current and complete.
- If you see any **ERRORS** on MPA, please notify court administration.
- **HOURS OF OPERATION:** Core hours of operation are from 7:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The system is also available from 5:30 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. Monday through Friday, holidays, and weekends except during scheduled or emergency maintenance.
- **IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT JUDGMENT CREDITOR DISPLAY ERRORS IN JUDGMENT SEARCHES CONDUCTED PRIOR TO 08/08/2007. THIS ERROR CAUSED SOME CREDITOR NAMES TO DISPLAY INCORRECTLY IN JUDGMENT SEARCH RESULTS.** If you used the "Judgments Search" screen of this site to conduct a search for a person, please be advised that the creditor name may have been incorrect. We are unable to determine when this problem started. Any questions about search results from MPA should be verified via the register of actions or the Court Administrator (see also UNOFFICIAL RECORDS, above). We regret any inconvenience this error may have caused.
- **IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT JUDGMENT SEARCH ERRORS CONDUCTED FROM 06/15/2007 TO 08/08/2007. THIS ERROR MAY HAVE CAUSED INACTIVE AND SATISFIED JUDGMENTS TO NOT BE RETURNED IN SEARCH RESULTS.** If you used the "Judgments Search" screen of this site to conduct a search for inactive or satisfied judgments during this period, please be advised that your search may have resulted in "no matches returned" or missing judgments when, indeed, the individual or business may have had inactive or satisfied judgments of record. This issue affects only the MNCIS Public Access (MPA) system and does not affect searches conducted by and/or certified to by court staff because court staff perform searches through a software application (Odyssey Assistant) that was not affected. Any questions about search results

from MPA should be verified via the register of actions or the Court Administrator (see also UNOFFICIAL RECORDS, above). We regret any inconvenience this error may have caused.

- **IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT JUDGMENT SEARCHES CONDUCTED BETWEEN 02/01/2005 AND 08/04/2006.** If you used the “Judgments Search” screen of this site to conduct a judgment search between 02/01/2005 and 08/04/2006, please be advised that, depending on how the search was conducted, a software defect may have prevented complete results from being returned.

Searches Using Individual Names, Conducted Between 02/01/2005 and 08/04/2006. If you used the Judgments Search screen to conduct a search during this period using an individual name, a software defect may have prevented complete results from being returned. For example, if you conducted a search for "John M. Smith," and some time after entry and docketing of the judgment there was another case (civil, criminal, etc.) filed in any MNCIS county anywhere in the state and staff determined the other case was associated with this individual and the current party name was updated, e.g., from John M. Smith to John Michael Smith, then it is possible that the search results would not have included the previous judgment.

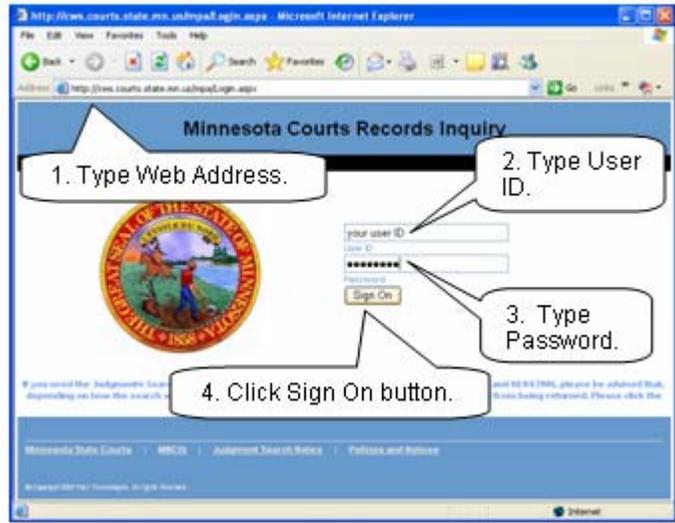
Searches Using Business Names, Conducted Between 03/15/2005 and 05/11/2005. If you used the Judgments Search screen to conduct a search during this period using the “business” category and a business name, a software defect may have prevented complete results from being returned. For example, if you conducted a search using the “business” category and typed in the name “Smithtown, Inc.,” and there was a money judgment against Smithtown, Inc., the search results would have indicated that no records were found.

It is important to note that these errors affected only certain Judgment Searches conducted using the MNCIS Public Access (MPA) system. They did not affect the party or case searches under the Civil, Family and Probate Records screen on MPA. They also did not affect Judgment Searches conducted by and certified to in writing by court staff, because court staff conduct their searches through an application that was not affected. We regret any error that this inconvenience may have caused.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CASE INQUIRY

### Log On

1. Open Internet Explorer and type the web address <http://cws.courts.state.mn.us/mpa> into the Address bar.
2. Press Enter. The Login Screen will appear (shown right).
3. Type your assigned User ID and Password.
  - User ID is **not** case sensitive
  - Password is case sensitive
4. Click the Sign On button (or press Enter).

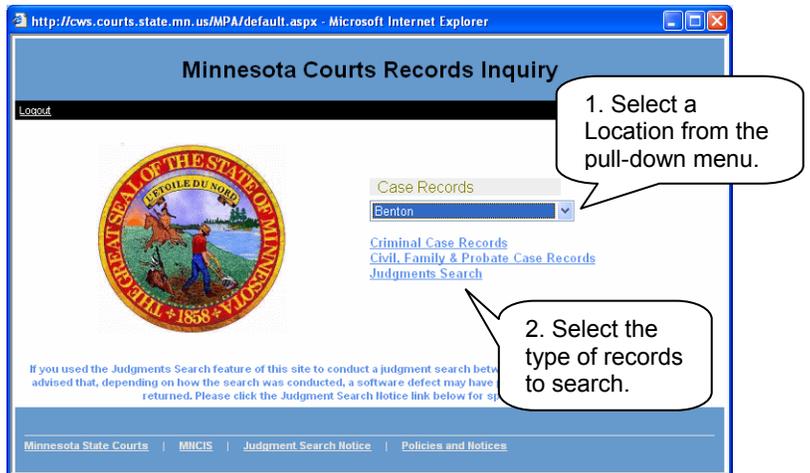


### Select Location and Type of Search

1. On the Case Records search menu screen (shown at right), from the pull-down menu, select an available location\* in which you wish to search or select the location of “All MNCIS Sites - Case Search” to perform a single search against all locations available in the pull-down menu.

\* Some locations in the pull-down menu represent an entire county, while other locations in the pull-down menu represent a single physical location or department within a county. For example, the location of

“Benton” represents the entire county of Benton, while the location of “St. Louis-Hibbing” represents the physical location of Hibbing within St. Louis County, or the location of “Hennepin Civil” represents the Civil Department only of Hennepin County. If you wish to perform your search within a multi-physical location or multi-department county, you have the option to pick each physical location or department individually, or select the option that includes the county name followed by “- Case Search” to perform your search against all physical locations or departments within that county.



EXAMPLES of Location Searches	Search Results
Benton	Represents the entire county of Benton
St. Louis-Hibbing	Represents the physical location of Hibbing within St. Louis County
Hennepin Civil	Represents the Civil Department <b>only</b> of Hennepin County
St. Louis - Case Search	Represents the physical locations of Duluth, Hibbing, and Virginia within St. Louis County

**Important Notes:**

- To check the current status of MNCIS and to see a list of counties on MNCIS to date, please refer to the MNCIS Implementation Progress web page: <http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=1684>.

- The pull-down menu (explained above) contains a list of all the current counties on MNCIS (either entire counties or single physical locations or departments within a county). Remember that you are performing a search against just these current MNCIS counties and not against all counties statewide.
2. Click the respective hyperlink of the records for which you would like to search.
- **Criminal Case Records:** Searches all non-confidential criminal records by defendant name, case number, or attorney name.
  - **Civil, Family & Probate Case Records:** Searches all non-confidential civil, family, and probate records for an individual or business by party name, case number, or attorney name.
  - **Judgments Search:** Searches all judgments by individual or business name.

## Perform Search

Please note that required fields are shown in Red and have a plus sign (+) next to them. All other fields are considered optional.

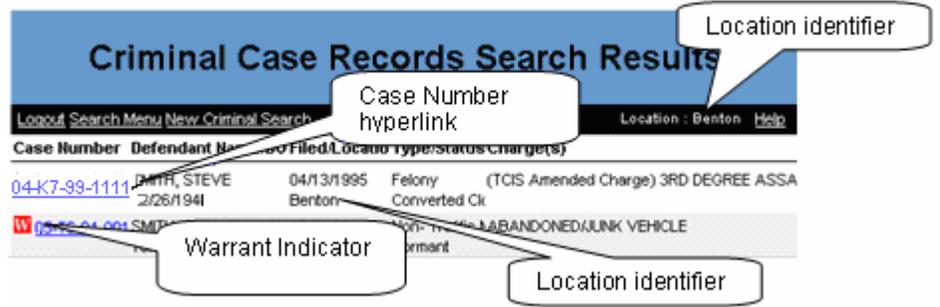
Searching Tips	Examples
<p><b>Wildcard Searches:</b> You may perform wildcard searches using an asterisk in the First, Last, or Middle Name fields in both defendant/party name and attorney name searches.</p> <p>The MPA search engine looks for records that exactly match the information that you enter into the fields. Using the wild card asterisk in place of punctuation and full names may help to include records that could be missed if more exact criteria were used.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You have the entire last name, but only the first letter of the first name. Enter the last name and type an asterisk after the first letter of the first name to search all records with a last name of “Example” that have a first name starting with the letter “J.”</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="870 856 1373 1033" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>+ Party</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Individual <input type="radio"/> Business</p> <p><b>+ Last Name</b> <b>+ First Name</b> Middle Name</p> <p>Example J*</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You are unsure of the spelling of the last name. Enter the first name and as much as you know to be correct of the last name. Place an asterisk after the last name to represent the portion you are unsure of. This will search all records with a last name starting with “Exa” and a first name of “Jason.”</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="870 1230 1373 1407" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>+ Party</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Individual <input type="radio"/> Business</p> <p><b>+ Last Name</b> <b>+ First Name</b> Middle Name</p> <p>Exa* Jason</p> </div>
<p><b>Names Are Not Case Sensitive:</b> You may enter first, middle, and last names in uppercase, lowercase, or a combination of both (upper-lower). The search does not care and will return the same results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All uppercase:</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="870 1507 1373 1684" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>+ Party</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Individual <input type="radio"/> Business</p> <p><b>+ Last Name</b> <b>+ First Name</b> Middle Name</p> <p>EXAMPLE JASON</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Upper-Lower:</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="870 1738 1373 1915" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>+ Party</b> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Individual <input type="radio"/> Business</p> <p><b>+ Last Name</b> <b>+ First Name</b> Middle Name</p> <p>Example Jason</p> </div>





- **If records are found** matching your search criteria, the Search Results screen will appear displaying a list of case numbers and general case information. Use the information to verify that the case satisfies your search.

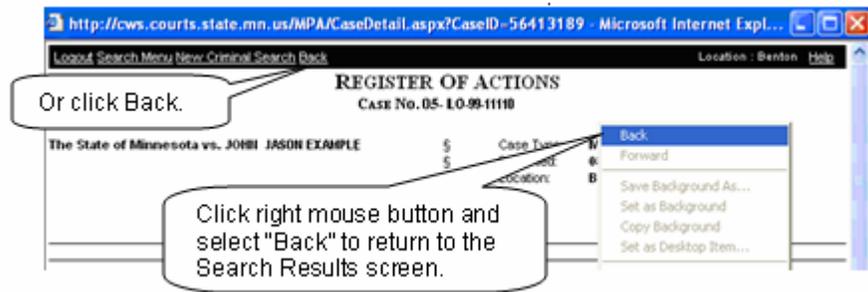
- If a party on the case has a warrant, a warrant indicator icon will appear in front of the case number.



**Note:**

Be attentive to the Location of your search results, especially for searches performed against a multi-physical location county, multi-department county, or when using the "All MNCIS Sites - Case Search" option. The Location identifier appears in two specific places on the Search Results page: On the black menu bar at the top of the page and on each case in the "Filed/Location" or the "Case No./Location Entered/Docketed" column. In the example above, the user has performed a Criminal Case Search using Benton County as the location.

- **To display the case Register of Actions**, click the case number hyperlink. Once at the case Register of Actions, click the right mouse button and select "Back" to return to Search Results page. (Or, click Back on the black toolbar or the browser's Back button, if available.)



**Note:**

The information displayed on the Search Results page varies depending on the type of search performed. See the table below for more information.

Search Result Information Displayed
<b>Criminal Case Records Search Results:</b> Case number, defendant name and date of birth, filing date and location, type and status of the case, and charge(s).
<b>Civil, Family &amp; Probate Case Records Search Results:</b> Case number, style (case title), filing date and location, type and status of the case.
<b>Judgments Records Search Results:</b> Case number and location, judgment entry and docketed dates, debtor(s) and creditor(s) name, and may display other judgment details including the original dollar amount, principal amount, status and type.

- Click the Search Menu hyperlink to return to the Search Menu screen.
- Click the New (type of) Search hyperlink to perform another search of the same type.

- **If too many records are found** matching your search criteria, the screen shown below will appear displaying a list of the first 200 matches, general case information, and a message stating “Too many results to display. First 200 matches listed below.” **It is important to note that you are not viewing the entire list.**

- Click the New (type of) Search hyperlink to perform another search of the same type and narrow your search criteria.



## Logout

Logout in one of the following ways:

### Method One:

1. Close the browser:
    - Click the “X” icon in the upper right-hand corner.
- OR**
- From the File menu, select Close.

### Method Two:

1. Click the Logout hyperlink located on the black bar on the left side of the menu bar. The Sign On screen appears.
2. Close the browser in one of the manners described above (in Method One).

