

What is NICS?

As required by law, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) conducts background checks on people who want to own a firearm or explosive.

When a person tries to buy a firearm, the seller, known as a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL), contacts NICS electronically or by phone. The prospective buyer fills out an [ATF form](#), and the FFL relays that information to the NICS. The NICS staff performs a background check on the buyer. That background check verifies the buyer does not have a criminal record or isn't otherwise ineligible to purchase or own a firearm under state or federal law.

How does information that would disqualify a buyer from obtaining a firearm get reported by Texas court officials to NICS?

- District clerks and county clerks report the disposition of **criminal cases** through the Texas Department of Public Safety's (DPS) *Electronic Disposition Reporting* portal in its Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) site, which serves as the state's computerized criminal history system.
- District clerks and county clerks report **prohibiting mental health adjudications and commitments** through the Texas DPS's *NICS Indices Entry (NIE)* portal in CJIS. (See Texas Mental Health Reporting Table.)

If a clerk does not have any activity to report for a month, a "Zero Activity" Report is required for the month.

- Clerks or relevant courts report convictions for fine-only **(Class C) assaults involving family violence** through the Texas Department of Public Safety's *NICS Indices Entry* portal in CJIS.

Information submitted on felony convictions, mental health adjudications and commitments, and Class C family violence assault convictions is forwarded to the FBI for inclusion in its NICS Indices to conduct background checks.

Texas NICS Mental Health Reporting Table

*Note: It is the **signed court order or receipt of a mandate** from an appellate court reversing the order in the cases below that trigger the reporting requirement.*

Cases to Report	Case Status	Patient Status	Facilities	Report Due
1. Mental Health or Intellectual Disability Commitments – Adults and Minors (Including Minors Involved in a Case of Delinquent Conduct or Conduct Indicating a Need for Supervision (Juvenile Case))				
a. Court-Ordered Mental Health Commitments (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 574 or Family Code, Chapter 55)	Order for court-ordered inpatient commitment signed & filed	Court-ordered temporary or extended inpatient mental health commitment	State hospitals, private hospitals, Veterans’ Affairs hospitals, etc.	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
	Order granting relief from a firearms disability signed (HSC §574.088)	May petition for relief from firearms disability if furloughed or discharged from court-ordered mental health services	N/A	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
b. Commitment to Long-Term Residential Care (Health and Safety Code, Subchapter C, Chapter 593 or Family Code, Chapter 55)	Order for commitment signed & filed	Intellectually disabled	State supported living center or ICF-IID component of the Rio Grande Ctr	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
	Order granting relief from a firearms disability signed (HSC §574.088)	May petition for relief from firearms disability if furloughed or discharged from court-ordered mental health services	N/A	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
2. Guardianships of an Adult				
Court Appointed Guardian of Incapacitated Adult (Estates Code, Title 3)	Order appointing permanent or temporary guardian signed & filed	Incapacitated adult who lacks mental capacity to manage his/her affairs, requiring guardian of the person, estate, or person and estate	None specified	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
	Order granting relief from firearm disability signed (EC §1202.201)	May petition for relief from guardianship if guardianship was terminated because the person’s capacity was completely restored	N/A	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
3. Criminal Cases – Adults (17 years or older) or Juveniles (under 17 years of age) Certified as an Adult				
a. Incompetency to Stand Trial (Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 46B)	Order of determination of incompetency to stand trial; order extending previously ordered commitment	Found incompetent to stand trial, including mental illness or intellectual disability – released on bail or committed to treatment facility or jail-based competency restoration program	Outpatient or jail-based competency restoration program, mental health facility, or residential care facility	Within 30 days of court order to NICS
b. Acquittal for reasons of insanity or lack of	Final acquittal disposition reflecting	Insanity or lack of mental responsibility	Regardless of order for	Within 30 days of

mental responsibility (Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 46C)	insanity or lack of mental responsibility		inpatient treatment or residential care	court order to NICS and within 5 days of disposition (to CJIS)
4. Reversal of Order by Appellate Court				
Reversal of order	Mandate issued by appellate court	N/A	N/A	Within 30 days of receipt of mandate from appellate court by clerk

Do Not Report	
1. Guardianship of minors	4. Commitments orders for temporary or extended outpatient mental health services
2. Orders for emergency mental health detentions, admissions, or warrants; order of protective custody (mental health)	5. Applications for court-ordered inpatient mental health services that are transferred to another county to re-file or to hear your original filing
3. Voluntary mental health commitments	6. Court-ordered inpatient chemical dependency or alcohol services
7. Juvenile cases of delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision unless commitment to inpatient mental health treatment or long-term residential care is ordered under Ch. 574 or 593 of the Health and Safety Code or Ch. 55 of the Family Code	