

# ECHARGING SERVICE

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

## The Gap

The criminal charging process involves a variety of records management systems which require duplicate data entry as information is amended or updated. These systems are usually not designed to pass information and documents to other systems, and no system can pass authorizations and approvals – such as an electronic signature. They generate paper documents that are merely hand-delivered and re-entered in another agency’s system. In the worst situations, paper documents are transported by police officers. Similar data duplication and re-entry problems exist with DWI arrest forms.

This leads to a lot of unnecessary travel, paper, legwork, and duplicate data entry, with resulting lost efficiency, data accuracy, and data links that waste physical and human resources. These data accuracy and data integration problems also create public safety risks as key pieces of information are “lost” inside the system, not accessible by those who need 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 an eCharging service that serves as a “broker” between individual data systems – passing incident reports, complaints, citations, 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 and complete criminal justice information, and more efficient use of human and financial resources.

## About the Project

The eCharging system:

- 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 a prosecutor, officer, or judge signs 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.

## Timeline

March-November 2009  
 Completed pilot deployments in St. Louis, Kandiyohi, Carver, and Olmsted counties

2010  
 Statewide deployment begins

2014  
 Statewide deployment complete