

# NC BLET Fingerprinting & Photographing Study Guide

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## 1. Legal Basis for Fingerprinting and Photographing

- **N.C.G.S. 15A-501 & 15A-502:** Governs fingerprinting and photographing.
    - **G.S. 15A-502** specifies that individuals charged with felonies or certain misdemeanors may be fingerprinted and photographed if they are arrested, convicted, or committed to a detention facility.
    - **Exceptions:** Fingerprints and photos are generally not allowed for Class 2 or 3 misdemeanors under Chapter 20, or for certain juveniles.
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## 2. Reporting Requirements

- **Disposition Reporting:**
    - Reports of case dispositions (outcomes) must be sent to the **State Bureau of Investigation (SBI)** within **60 days** after the final court outcome.
    - **G.S. 15A-1381 & 15A-1382:** Defines “disposition” and requires reporting to the SBI for certain felony convictions.
  - **Juvenile Fingerprinting and Photographing:**
    - Juveniles transferred to adult court or in custody for specific serious offenses may be fingerprinted and photographed.
    - If a juvenile is found delinquent of a felony, their fingerprints are sent to the SBI and added to the **Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)**.
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## 3. Retention and Destruction of Fingerprints

- **Retention:**
    - Fingerprints of juveniles are not public records and must be properly formatted for submission to the SBI and FBI.
    - Juvenile fingerprints may be destroyed if no charges are filed within one year, probable cause is not found, or the juvenile is not adjudicated delinquent.
  - **Destruction:**
    - Fingerprints and photos must be destroyed upon certain conditions, such as if the case is dismissed or the juvenile is not found delinquent of a qualifying offense.
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## 4. Special Cases for 16-17-Year-Olds

- **Juvenile Delinquency and Chapter 20 Offenses:**

- Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds who commit indirect contempt or state law violations (excluding motor vehicle violations) are processed as juvenile delinquents.
  - Violations of **Chapter 20** (motor vehicle offenses) are processed as adult offenses for 16- and 17-year-olds.
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## 5. DNA Collection

- **DNA Collection Process:**
    - DNA is collected via cheek swab, with specific documentation required for each sample.
    - Individuals providing a DNA sample receive a written notice detailing expungement procedures.
    - DNA records are stored in the State DNA Databank.
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## 6. AFIS and Fingerprinting Systems

- **AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System):**
    - AFIS stores fingerprints and enables matching and retrieval.
    - Primarily contains ten-print arrest cards but also includes certain applicant and juvenile prints.
    - Live-scan devices improve the quality and speed of fingerprint submission, with electronic transmission providing results in less than 30 minutes.
  - **Submission Protocols:**
    - Fingerprint cards should be completed and sent to the SBI promptly.
    - Live-scan devices are available in all NC sheriff's offices and facilitate quicker, higher-quality prints.
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## 7. Fingerprinting Techniques and Guidelines

- **Equipment and Procedures:**
    - Essential tools include printer's ink, roller, inking plate, and cardholder.
    - **Rolled Impressions:** Each finger is rolled from nail to nail for a complete print.
    - **Plain Impressions:** Taken by pressing fingers without rolling, used to verify accuracy.
  - **Error Correction:**
    - Poor fingerprints may be corrected with cover tabs, white labels, or by retaking the fingerprints. If necessary, take two sets and submit the best one.
    - **Mandatory Fields:** Certain information must be completed on each fingerprint card (e.g., name, date of birth, arrest charge) for retention by the SBI.
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## 8. Fingerprint Classifications

- **Types of Fingerprint Patterns:**
    - **Arch:** Plain arch and tented arch.
    - **Loop:** Ulnar and radial loops.
    - **Whorl:** Includes plain, central pocket loop, double loop, and accidental.
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## 9. Criminal History Records

- **Retention and Expungement:**
    - Records are maintained indefinitely unless ordered removed by expungement.
    - Expungement orders require a certified copy to be sent to the arresting agency and the SBI for record removal.
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