

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10888



Introduced by **Representative AGATHA "AGAY" CRUZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Government should not require citizens to prove twice what it can securely verify once.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Clearance and the National Police Clearance remain separate processes despite their overlapping purpose of checking an applicant against government-held criminal records.

For citizens who would otherwise be required to secure both clearances, this means separate applications, fees, travel, waiting time, and administrative requirements. These burdens weigh particularly heavily on jobseekers, workers, and applicants who must travel to clearance centers or take time away from work. A single clearance can reduce these costs and transactions while preserving the integrity of criminal records verification.

This bill therefore establishes a Unified Criminal Records Clearance System under which a single clearance may satisfy requirements for both an NBI Clearance and a National Police Clearance. Rather than creating another central repository, the measure relies on secure interoperability: the NBI and the Philippine National Police (PNP) retain custody and responsibility for their respective records while the System verifies the information necessary to issue one clearance.

The reform also benefits government. Interoperability can reduce duplicative processing, make better use of existing systems and personnel, improve coordination between the NBI and the PNP, and allow government resources to be directed toward verification, records accuracy, and service delivery rather than repetitive transactions. This approach is consistent with the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018, which promotes interconnectivity among government agencies, and the E-Governance Act, which advances interoperable government systems and integrated frontline services.

This measure does not diminish legitimate law-enforcement functions, background investigations, or specialized clearances required by law. It simply replaces unnecessary duplication with a more efficient and coordinated government process.

For citizens, this means fewer transactions, lower costs, less travel and waiting time, and less red tape. For government, it means greater efficiency, better coordination, and more effective use of public resources. Where government can securely verify the necessary records once, citizens should need only one clearance.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of the Unified Criminal Records Clearance Act is earnestly sought.


AGATHA "AGAY" CRUZ
Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan

The official stamp is circular with a double border. The outer border contains the text "BULACAN" at the top and "FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT, PROVINCE OF BULACAN" at the bottom. The inner border contains the names of the towns: "TALASTAS • SOCAVE • GUIGUINTO • PANALIPATAN". In the center of the stamp, the word "AGAY" is written in large, bold, stylized letters.

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10888

Introduced by **Representative AGATHA “AGAY” CRUZ**

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A UNIFIED CRIMINAL RECORDS CLEARANCE SYSTEM,
HARMONIZING THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION CLEARANCE
AND THE NATIONAL POLICE CLEARANCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Unified Criminal Records
2 Clearance Act.”
3

4 **Section 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is the policy of the State to provide efficient,
5 accessible, secure, and citizen-centered government services by eliminating unnecessary
6 duplication in documentary requirements and promoting the responsible interoperability
7 of government information systems.
8

9 Towards this end, the State shall establish a unified criminal records clearance
10 system that enables a person to obtain a single clearance satisfying requirements for both
11 a National Bureau of Investigation clearance and a National Police Clearance, while
12 preserving the respective mandates and custody of records of the concerned agencies and
13 protecting the rights to privacy and due process.
14

15 **Section 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:
16

17 (a) *National Police Clearance* refers to the national clearance issued by the Philippine
18 National Police through the National Police Clearance System or its successor
19 system;
20

21 (b) *Source Records* refer to records lawfully collected and maintained by the
22 National Bureau of Investigation or the Philippine National Police and which
23 may lawfully be considered for criminal records clearance purposes;

(c) *Unified Criminal Records Clearance (Unified Clearance)*, refers to the official clearance issued after verification against relevant Source Records of the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police; and

(d) *Unified Criminal Records Clearance System*, refers to the interoperable system established under this Act for the application, verification, processing, issuance, and authentication of the Unified Clearance.

Section 4. *Unified Criminal Records Clearance System.* – The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), in coordination with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), shall establish and maintain a Unified Criminal Records Clearance System, hereinafter referred to as the System.

The NBI shall serve as the lead operational agency, while the PNP shall ensure the secure and timely availability, through interoperable means, of relevant records within its lawful custody. The DICT shall provide or prescribe the technical, interoperability, and cybersecurity standards necessary for the implementation of the System.

The System shall principally operate through secure interoperability and shall not require the creation of a separate central repository duplicating the criminal, investigative, biometric, or other Source Records maintained by the NBI and the PNP.

The NBI and the PNP shall remain responsible for the accuracy, maintenance, correction, security, retention, and lawful disposition of their respective Source Records.

Section 5. *Application and Issuance of the Unified Clearance.* – An applicant may apply for a Unified Clearance through an authorized NBI or PNP clearance center, an appropriate government digital platform, or such other authorized channel as may be prescribed in the implementing rules and regulations.

An applicant shall not be required to file separate applications with the NBI and the PNP. A valid Unified Clearance shall satisfy a requirement for an NBI clearance, a National Police Clearance, or both. No government office or agency, employer, recruitment or placement entity, educational institution, business, or other person or entity shall require a separate NBI clearance or National Police Clearance from a person presenting a valid Unified Clearance for the same transaction or purpose.

Nothing in this Act shall dispense with a security clearance, court certification, or other specialized clearance expressly required by law for a distinct purpose, or prohibit a background investigation otherwise authorized or permitted by law.

Section 6. *Relevant Records.* – The System may query and verify Source Records

1 lawfully authorized for use in criminal records clearance, including outstanding warrants
2 of arrest and other relevant judicial processes, criminal cases formally filed before the
3 proper courts, final judgments of conviction, records necessary to establish the identity of
4 an applicant, and such other records as may be expressly authorized by law.

5
6 The authority to query or verify a Source Record under this Section shall not, by
7 itself, authorize its disclosure in the Unified Clearance.

8
9 A blotter entry, raw intelligence information, anonymous report, unverified
10 complaint, or arrest record unsupported by a formally filed criminal case shall not, by
11 itself, be disclosed or represented in the Unified Clearance as a criminal finding, pending
12 criminal case, or conviction.

13
14 A pending criminal case, when lawfully disclosed, shall be accurately identified as
15 pending and shall not be described or represented as a conviction or finding of guilt.

16
17 Nothing in this Section shall prevent the NBI or the PNP from lawfully collecting,
18 maintaining, and using records within their respective mandates for investigation,
19 intelligence, law enforcement, or other purposes authorized by law.

20
21 **Section 7. Records Matches; Correction and Review.** – A preliminary match
22 between the identifying information of an applicant and a Source Record shall not be
23 reflected in the Unified Clearance unless the NBI or the PNP, as appropriate, has verified
24 the identity of the applicant and the current status of the matched record. An applicant
25 shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to contest mistaken identity; present
26 competent proof concerning the status of the matched record; request the correction or
27 updating of inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated information; and seek administrative
28 review of a clearance determination.

29
30 No additional clearance fee shall be imposed solely for resolving a records match
31 or correcting an error attributable to a government agency.

32
33 **Section 8. Data Privacy and Security.** – The processing of sensitive personal
34 information necessary for the implementation of this Act is hereby authorized solely for
35 the purposes expressly provided herein and shall be subject to Republic Act No. 10173,
36 otherwise known as the “Data Privacy Act of 2012,” Republic Act No. 12254, otherwise
37 known as the “E-Governance Act,” and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

38
39 Only information reasonably necessary and proportionate for identity verification,
40 records matching, clearance determination, authentication, correction of records, system
41 security, and auditing may be processed through the System.

42
43 The NBI, PNP, and DICT shall implement appropriate organizational, physical,
44 and technical safeguards against unauthorized access, use, alteration, disclosure, or loss

1 of information.

2
3 The System shall not provide a publicly searchable database of the criminal
4 records, biometric information, personal information, or clearance histories of applicants.

5
6 **Section 9. Form, Validity, and Authentication of the Unified Clearance.** – The NBI
7 and the PNP shall prescribe a uniform format, standardized terminology, and period of
8 validity for the Unified Clearance. The period of validity shall balance the need for
9 reasonably current records with the policy of minimizing unnecessary repetitive
10 applications and costs.

11
12 The Unified Clearance shall contain only such personal and clearance information
13 as is reasonably necessary for its legitimate purpose and shall accurately reflect the legal
14 status of any record lawfully disclosed therein.

15
16 The Unified Clearance may be issued in digital or physical form and shall provide
17 a secure means by which its authenticity and validity may be verified. The verification
18 mechanism shall disclose only the minimum information necessary to establish that the
19 clearance is genuine, valid, and corresponds to the person presenting it, unless broader
20 disclosure is otherwise authorized by law.

21
22 **Section 10. Fees and Statutory Exemptions.** – A single reasonable fee may be
23 collected for the processing and issuance of the Unified Clearance, in an amount to be
24 prescribed by the NBI and the PNP, in consultation with the Department of Budget and
25 Management, subject to applicable laws, rules, and regulations: *Provided,* That such fee
26 shall be commensurate with the reasonable cost of providing the service. No separate NBI
27 clearance fee and National Police Clearance fee shall be collected from an applicant for
28 the same Unified Clearance.

29
30 A qualified first-time jobseeker under Republic Act No. 11261, otherwise known
31 as the “First Time Jobseekers Assistance Act,” shall be entitled to obtain the Unified
32 Clearance without payment of fees or charges, subject to the requirements and limitations
33 prescribed under said Act. Other exemptions, privileges, or fee waivers granted under
34 existing laws for an NBI clearance or National Police Clearance shall likewise apply to the
35 Unified Clearance.

36
37 **Section 11. Transition and Implementation.** – The NBI, PNP, and DICT shall
38 implement the System in phases to ensure technical reliability, records accuracy,
39 cybersecurity, data protection, and continuity of public service.

40
41 During the transition period, the NBI and the PNP may continue issuing their
42 respective clearances in areas or service channels where the System is not yet operational.

43
44 The System shall be implemented nationwide within two (2) years from the

1 effectivity of the implementing rules and regulations. Upon implementation of the System
2 in an area or service channel, separate NBI and National Police Clearances shall no longer
3 be required therein for purposes covered by this Act.

4
5 **Section 12. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation
6 of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the NBI, PNP, DICT, and
7 other concerned agencies, as may be applicable. Eligible components of the System may
8 be funded from the E-Government Interoperability Fund and other lawful funding
9 sources.

10
11 Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of
12 this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

13
14 **Section 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within one hundred twenty
15 (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the NBI and the PNP, in coordination with the
16 Department of Justice, Department of the Interior and Local Government, DICT, and
17 National Police Commission, and after consultation with the National Privacy
18 Commission, Anti-Red Tape Authority, Department of Budget and Management, and
19 other relevant agencies and stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules and regulations
20 necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

21
22 **Section 14. Separability Clause.** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
23 unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in
24 full force and effect.

25
26 **Section 15. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
27 administrative orders, rules and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with
28 or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

29
30 **Section 16. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
31 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

32
33 *Approved,*