This discussion is on whether States should share criminal databases?  Should a database of people paroled or released for crimes be made public? Why or why not.

If you can’t do the time, don’t do the crime. A simple, well-known idiom defined by one source as “One should not carry out an action if they are unwilling to handle the consequences” (see Resource 5). While most focus on the immediate consequences of crime, they may fail to consider the post-effects and difficulties affiliated with a new entry on their criminal record. These records are used for a variety of reasons, including background checks for “employment, housing, universities, loans, or…rights in order to vote or own a firearm” (see Resource 3). Undoubtedly, a criminal record could also be the source of much embarrassment if brought to public knowledge.

Online sources indicate that criminal records can cross state lines, thus allowing States to share records with each other. Some of these records are committed to a federal repository which is publicly accessible to all states. Modernly, it’s becoming more common to share criminal records over country borders too. Starting at age 14, an individual may request their own criminal record. A private individual can generally access another’s records if proper release is given.

I personally believe that the current system in place provides a good balance between public and private access. (I’m sure it’s in no-wise perfect, but from my limited research and possibly arrogant viewpoint, it attempts to reach a medium.) I think it’s important for organizations, such as employers, to have access to these records. I also believe it’s important for these same organizations to forewarn or ask permission from the individual before acquiring their records. While it’s true that old crimes long past may close many doors of opportunity, it can also show that someone with a rough past has made strides to improve their character.

Resources:

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criminal_records_in_the_United_States>
2. <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/question-criminal-record-check-another-person-28151.html>
3. <https://www.recordgone.com/articles/updating-record-public-vs-private-databases.htm>
4. <https://www.dmv.org/articles/how-criminal-records-affect-employment/>
5. <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/if_you_can%27t_do_the_time,_don%27t_do_the_crime>



