

Live Scan System Requirement Considerations Cheatsheet

The process of confidently selecting a live scan system should start with the requirements phase. This is when a livescan specialist for a particular vendor will gather information about your requirements including the state in which you plan to operate a livescan fingerprinting system.

Configurations

- At a minimum, all live scan systems require a ten-print fingerprint scanner and a computer. The computer can be either a desktop or laptop form factor.
- Computers can be pre-installed with live scan software before the system is shipped to you.
- If you provide your own computer, make sure that your computer meets the live scan vendor's system requirements.
- Live scan systems are dedicated for fingerprinting and no other activity.

Physical Accommodations

- To comfortably take fingerprints on a 10-print scanner, clients will need to stand at a table that is at least 15-20 inches below their shoulder. It is helpful to have an adjustable table or reams of paper to raise the scanner up to accommodate taller individuals.
- The desk's or counter's surface will need room to accommodate a readable computer monitor, keyboard (or laptop), and a scanner that has a footprint of approximately 6" x 7". Both the operator and the client will need to be able to stand side-by-side.
- Some vendors can provide an all-in-one free-standing cabinet.
- If you need to move your live scan operations between different locations, you will need a portable solution (with hard case and wheels) or multiple systems.

Printer

- Most live scan records are transmitted electronically; however, "hard cards" are still accepted by the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), and some states (there may be other agencies, as well). Every state accepts the hard cards from out-of-state applicants, even if they don't accept hard cards from within their own state.
- Print-to-card means that the live scan operators can create a digital fingerprint record and print these records out onto physical fingerprint cards.
- Printers are not certified independent of live scan systems. Be sure that your live scan vendor has certified printers with their system. You can verify if a livescan vendor has FBI-certified their livescan systems with printers by visiting <https://fbibiospecs.fbi.gov/certifications-1/cpl>. Click on Fingerprint Card Printers and enter the livescan vendor's name in the "Firm" field. Vendors who are selling livescan systems with printers that have not been certified with their software are violating FBI requirements.
- While many states only require the standard FD258 hard card, many states require cards that have customizations to meet that state's requirements. If you are doing "print-to-card," make sure your vendor can print the cards you need.

Additional Equipment

Camera: In some situations, you may need (or want) to add the capability of taking photos. In many cases, a webcam will be adequate.

Signature pad: Some live scan software can capture signatures and print them on hard cards. Currently, most states do not require this functionality (handwritten signatures are still accepted), but it may be an option you want to add.

Barcode reader: Some livescan systems may have an integration with a barcode reader. Otherwise known as a driver's license reader. This enables the livescan system to import data from the driver's license into the livescan demographic fields to speed data entry.

Broadband: Because you may need to transmit transactions and receive software updates, you'll need the necessary equipment and connections to transmit digital information and data.

Certifications

- The 10-print scanners you purchase must be Appendix F certified by the FBI.
- The FBI certifies complete systems which includes software, not components by themselves.
- The printer must be FBI-certified with the software.
- If you are transmitting electronically through your state's AFIS, your vendor's system must be certified by your state.
- Not all states allow private operators to provide live scan services.
- In some states, live scan operators may need to be certified or licensed. Contact your state's Department of Public Safety, State Police, Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice (DOJ) or Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) to understand its certification process, technological requirements, and all the associated costs. A knowledgeable livescan salesperson will know what the requirements are for your state.

Training

- Two kinds of training will be needed: the basics of rolling fingerprints and use of the livescan vendor's software.
- Rolling fingerprints should not be done by the client alone. Your software vendor should be able to provide online, in-person or video training for you. It is important that you receive training for the specific livescan system that you purchased. The FBI also offers training resources that cover fingerprinting best practices.
- Be sure to evaluate any training costs that you may be charged by the vendor and how much training time is required.
- Fingerprinting can be considered an art-form with serious consequences. Hence, fingerprinting best practices should be taken seriously. The livescan vendor that you choose should offer fingerprinting best practices training that adheres to FBI guidance.

Care & Upkeep

- Fingerprint equipment is expensive and sensitive so you will need to learn how to care for your scanner. That being said, it's neither difficult or expensive to care for your machine. Your vendor can teach you how.
- Staying updated with your software maintenance and support agreements are critical. Microsoft Windows updates can "break" your application. Furthermore, some states that allow you to submit fingerprint records electronically may update their validation tables often and sometimes with bugs. If you are not current on your support plan, you need to be aware of what your livescan vendor will do for you if your software maintenance & support has lapsed and you need help.

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Call us today at +1-210-257-5615 or email sales@fulcrumbiometrics.com.