The proliferation of data-driven criminal legal system operations has created millions of criminal records each year in the United States. Governed by permissive transparency laws, these data have become a valuable source to data brokers, but we know little about the accuracy or consequences of these practices. This empirical study analyzes the integrity of criminal record data as it is collected and aggregated by local criminal justice agencies, then released as a valuable data commodity. Study design is mixed methods, consisting of quantitative analyses of approximately 2,400 criminal history events on official New Jersey state rap sheets for 104 participants, which are then tracked across digital platforms: public electronic court dockets, mugshot websites, people search websites, and data brokerage databases. Quantitative data are contextualized by qualitative interviews with all 104 participants. Findings show that data quality issues that originate in state data systems increase across private data platforms, illustrates reliability issues for research that relies on “official” criminal record data, and raises questions about due process and informational privacy harms for people who have a criminal record.

PLACE  Zoom and In-Person. Zoom registration link on our website. In-Person: Room 244, Berkeley Law | Masks required.
TIME  12:45 – 2:00pm.
INFO  https://www.csls.berkeley.edu

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