UCE (Universal Criminal Extract) Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction	The UCE (Universal Criminal Extract) is a comprehensive XML extract that provides criminal court activity to stakeholders that do business with the court and need to know and apply the information to their systems for operational purposes.
Accessing the UCE	Files are transmitted via SFTP to approved organizations with a legal agreement on file. Agencies that would like to receive the files may complete a bulk data application: Bulk Data Application
Documentation related to the UCE	Documentation related to the UCE can be found in the UCE Documentation Portal: UCE Documentation Portal Additionally, the dictionary files are sent with every transmission.
Reporting problems with the UCE	If you have problems with the files (files not on SFTP, xml not matching xsd, SFTP credentials not working, etc.) please email helpcenter@nycourts.gov. If you have issues with the data quality for a given docket/case (e.g., you know a case is disposed but our records don't reflect that, the NYSID is incorrect, etc.) please complete this form: Criminal Data Quality Issues Please note that we offer business hours support, so if a ticket/issue is submitted after hours or on a weekend, it will be addressed the next business day.

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General File Questions and Answers

1. How do I access the files?

   Via SFTP hosted by OCA.

   (Certain partners in New York City may elect to receive the files from OTI [NYC Office of Technology and Innovation].)

2. I am having trouble accessing the SFTP.

   Please check your firewall rules and confirm that others at your organization are also experiencing the same issue. We also have had better luck with WinSCP than FileZilla when accessing the files. If those avenues fail, please email OCA's Help Center: helpcenter@nycourts.gov

3. Why are there so many folders in the SFTP?

   All folders for all counties for which the UCE is generated exist on the same SFTP server. However, access is only granted for the counties for which you are entitled/ stated in your legal agreement.

4. When I click on a folder, I get an error saying, "Access denied".

   You are only able to access the counties for which your agency has an active [signed] legal agreement.

5. What are the file naming conventions?

   Dictionary files *(sent once per file send time, i.e., seven times per day):*
   YYYY-MM-DD_sendletter folder
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_E)
   Containing: YYYY-MM-DD_sendletter_Dictionary.0001.zip
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_E_Dictionary_0001.xip)
   Then within the zipped folder:
   YYYY-MM-DD_Dictionary_0001.xml
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_Dictionary.0001.xml)
   The number will always be 0001.

   Incremental Data Files *(sent seven times per day, see below schedule):*
   Each county is contained in its own folder.
   YYYY-MM-DD_County_sendletter.zip
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_Bronx_D.zip)
   Then within the zipped folder:
   YYYY-MM-DD_County_sendletter_incrementednumber.xml
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_Bronx_D_001.xml, 2023-06-27_Bronx_D_002.xml)

   Full Data Files *(created upon request [with notice], see question 7):*
   Each county is contained in its own folder.
   YYYY-MM-DD_County.zip
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_Bronx.zip)
   Then within the zipped folder:
   YYYY-MM-DD_County_incrementednumber.xml
   (e.g., 2023-06-27_Bronx_001.xml, 2023-06-27_Bronx_002.xml)

6. How often are incremental files sent?

   Seven times per day, including weekends and holidays:

   File A 7 AM
   File B 9 AM
   File C 11 AM
   File D 1 PM
   File E 3 PM
   File F 5 PM
   File G 7 PM

7. How often are full files created?

   Full files (files containing all UCE records for a given county) are created on demand. Please email helpcenter@nycourts.gov to request us to create the full files. Please allow thirty days from the date of your request for us to generate them.

8. What are the file size limits?

   On average, we will send a maximum of 1,100 dockets for each county for each file send. (So, for example, a max of 1,100 dockets in the B file for Bronx, 1,100 dockets in the B file for New York, etc.)

   This means that when we need to push out large-scale data fixes, legislatively mandated changes, etc. you will see a steady volume of 1,100 dockets per county per send for a much longer duration. If we are pushing out large scale data fixes and there are some issues generating files, the next set of files may temporarily exceed the maximum of 1,100 dockets.

   Please note that updates made by the courts (e.g., a new appearance was scheduled, a warrant was vacated, etc.) will be prioritized so you will still receive those in a timely manner.

   Full files have a maximum number of 25,000 dockets per file.

   Because a docket can get large depending on number of appearances, charges, outcomes, motions, etc., there is no prescribed limit on how big a given docket can get; we transmit what we have.

9. What is the difference between the “Full” files and the “Incremental” files?

   Full files contain all docket activity up to a certain date, with the docket represented only once within the universe.

   Incremental files are sent seven times per day, and a docket can be updated multiple times per day. (If the court does additional data entry, etc.)

10. Do I need the “Full” files?

    The only reasons to use those files are:
    - To seed your system initially to then subsequently start using the incremental files
    - Your files get corrupted and you need to delete everything and reload. (So you’d wipe everything out, seed yourselves initially with the full files and then start using the incremental files again.)

11. Do I have to download the files on the schedule in which OCA posts them?

No, you may download the files on whatever schedule makes the most sense for your organization. However, due to the incremental nature of the files, they MUST be applied in order. (E.g., File A must be applied before File F, in case there was an update to the docket during the day. File 001 should be applied before file 002 in the same file send.)

12. How long are files retained on the SFTP site?

    Sixty (60) days.

13. By what time are the files guaranteed to be on the SFTP, given the send schedule above?

    95%+ of the time, 15 minutes after the scheduled time above would be safe. However, if we are encountering issues with the load (whether it's a problem with the data or a network issue), the load could be delayed. Our processes will try to SFTP the files again every 15 minutes.

14. Why are there so many records being sent?

    If a docket has been updated, it will be sent. So, if a system change causes a change to the docket, it will be sent. We can't restrict to appearances only from that date, because data entry could occur later, a motion could have been filed, data could have been updated, etc.

15. How will I know if a file has been sent?

    OCA will send a file at each transmission time (A-G) even in low volume periods (weekends, holidays) and even if there are zero dockets included in the file.

    If you do not see a file after its scheduled transmission time, is possible that there was a problem on OCA's end. See question 16 below.

16. What if OCA didn't produce a file for a given time?

    If there was a problem at OCA's end during the creation of a given file and it does not get produced, those dockets will appear on the subsequent feed. (E.g., File B did not get created. All records that should have been contained in File B are now included in File C [along with all records that would normally be sent on file C.]) As per the usual practice, if you apply the files in order of receipt, you will be applying them in the correct order.

    You do not need to notify us if you did not receive a given file send because the records will be included on the subsequent file. If there is a larger-scale issue, we will email the UCE extract recipients to let them know and let them know of an expected date/time of resolution.

Data Questions

17. How can I tell what changed when I receive a docket/ case again?

    You can build checks in place to examine each element OR you can do a full replacement on the docket. The dockets have persistent keys so you can always match back.

    We strongly recommend that you do a full replacement on the docket, so you do not have to build change detection.

18. What is a deleted docket?

    A deleted docket is one that you must purge from your system. It may have been sent due to erroneous data entry (e.g., a duplicate), a docket of a type that should not have been sent, or some other factor. Per the agreement between OCA and your organization, you are required to destroy these dockets.

19. When will a docket be deleted?

    The docket that is coming through as a deleted docket could have shown up at any point prior to the current file send.

20. Do I need to do date compares for deleted dockets?

    No. Since a deleted **DocketID** will never be reused, any time you get a deleted docket, you can delete it without doing any date compares.

21. How do I tell if a docket/case has an open warrant?

    Dockets with open warrants will have a “True” value in the **IsWarranted** element.

22. How do I tell if a docket/ case has had a warrant returned, vacated, or deleted?

    Detailed warrant information can be found in the **Warrant** node for warrant activity.

    If a warrant was created in error (e.g., the court put a warrant on the wrong docket), you will receive a **Deleted Warrant once,** at the time the warrant was deleted. After that, the deleted warrant information will no longer be sent, as it should have been deleted from your system.

    (E.g., There is an active warrant on a docket. The court deletes it at 10 AM on a given date. At 11 AM, the UCE file contains a DeletedWarrant for that WarrantID. The court has subsequent activity on the docket the following day. When the docket is sent the following day, it will NOT have a DeletedWarrant node present for that warrant, as the delete information was already communicated.)

23. Do we need to delete a warrant if it shows up as a delete?

    Yes. Delete the warrant if we send it to you as a delete. Just to be clear though, a warrant is tied to only one docket, and the **WarrantID** is unique across dockets regardless of county/court.

    Also, if you do full replacement of dockets, you will remove the deleted warrant from your system just by nature of replacing the docket and its contents, so you may not need to consume the DeletedWarrant node.

24. Why would a warrant be deleted?

A warrant may be deleted when it has been expunged by the court or entered in error.

25. Since OCA encourages us to do full replacements of dockets, why do you send deleted warrants? You don't send deleted appearances, etc.

    OCA uses the UCE to communicate warrant information to NYPD. To make this communication as clear as possible, we send the deleted warrant. If you do a full replacement of dockets each time you receive them, you do not need to use the DeletedWarrant node.

26. How are seals populated?

    Seals are applied at the charge level. Some charges may be sealed whereas others may not be.

27. How is the docket level seal calculated?

    The docket inherits the lowest level seal. (E.g., There are two charges on the docket, one is sealed 160.50, the other is not sealed. The docket will not have a seal.)

28. How do I tie to data from the legacy feed ("DSH")?

    Use the **CRIMSIdentifiers** node. (This contains the **CRIMS county Code**, **CRIMS ID**, and **Dseq**. You must use all three.)

29. How do I find out the final docket disposition?

    Look at the **HighestUCMSDispoOutcome** element.

30. How do I know what the top charge is on the docket?

    Under the **Charge** node, there are fields that have true/false values:
    - **IsArrestTopCharge**
    - **IsArraignmentTopCharge**
    - **IsDispositionTopCharge**
    - **IsCurrentTopCharge**
    - **IsConvictionTopCharge**

    Depending on the point in the case you are looking at, you can interrogate one of those fields.

31. Why are there appearance dates in the future?

    These files contain all appearances, including future scheduled appearances.

32. How can I tell if a charge sentence is consecutive or concurrent?

    As a general rule, if there are multiple sentences on a docket and the consecutive and concurrent flags are not used, they are assumed to be concurrent.

    The true/false flags **ISConsecutive** and **IsConcurrent** may also be referenced.

33. How is the top charge calculated on the UCE?

    Ranking from most severe to least severe:
    F (in order A,B,C,D,E)
    M (in order A,B,U)
    V

I

If there is a tie and one is a DCJS charge (in the coded laws file) and the other is not (e.g., forced charge, local charge), the DCJS charge is considered the top charge.

If there is a tie (on weight and severity) and both charges are either DCJS charges OR forced/local charges, it is alphabetical by the **LawTitle*** then the **ArticleSection**
(***LawTitle** is only used in the calculation if the charges are DCJS charges.)

34. The DSH had a docket disposition of "ACD" and a next date, at which time the feed indicates the case has been dismissed and sealed. How does this work on the UCE?

    At the end of the day on the Dismiss and Seal date, an automatic process in UCMS does the following:

    (1) Writes an Outcome of: "Dismissed by ACD" to the Charge(s)

    (2) Seals the Charge(s) 160.50.

    At that time, the seal date will be populated in the charge elements (and the docket level seal/ seal date will also be applied if applicable.) There is no corresponding appearance for this activity.

35. How do I find related dockets?

    Dockets will flow in a chain order on the UCE.
    For example, if a criminal docket (docket prefix 'CR') gets held for the grand jury (docket prefix 'HGJ') and is then indicted (docket prefix 'IND'), the HGJ docket will have the **DocketID** of the criminal docket in the **OriginatingDocketReference** field. The IND docket will have the **DocketID** of the HGJ docket in the **OriginatingDocketReference** field.
    In some instances, the **NonUCMSOriginatingDocket** field will be populated instead of the **OriginatingDocketReference**

36. What does it mean when a docket is prefixed with "HGJ"?

    The HGJ (Held for Grand Jury) case type is created as a placeholder when docket(s) get transferred up from the City/District/Criminal Court to be heard in the Grand Jury. This case type can and will be used as the origin if an Indictment comes out, or even if an SCI is filed instead. The need for the Supreme/County Courts to create the HGJ is due to certain outcomes only being allowed on that case type, such as No True Bill or Return to Criminal Court.

37. Some dockets are not linked to subsequent dockets.

    Supreme Courts had the option of finishing out their CRIMS cases in CRIMS as opposed to UCMS through summer 2022.

    So, if the Supreme case never made it into UCMS/ into the UCE, there will be no linkage available there.

    If the court converted the Supreme case to UCMS, the linkage would be present on the Supreme docket.

    (All cases initiated on or after the court's UCMS go-live date will have the proper linkage.)

38. Some legacy docket numbers don't make sense.

When a docket is converted from CRIMS to UCMS the **legacy docket number** field populates automatically with the CRIMS docket number.
HOWEVER- there is also a screen where end users can type in whatever they want.
(This was developed because UCMS succeeded legacy systems other than CRIMS too, AND sometimes the CRIMS dockets were so old/defective that they could not be fully converted so the clerk would have to enter parts of the docket that didn't successfully convert over.)
In some instances, you will see something that is clearly not a legacy docket number; it was entered into that field.
If you are able to link by the CRIMS identifiers (**CountyCode**, **CRIMSID**, **Dseq**), that would reduce your dependency on a field where there is occasional free text.

39. Define the rules around determining imprisonment docket level sentences.

There are a LOT of rules around these.

Important to note: If there is a fine with an imprisonment alternative, we typically do not factor these imprisonment durations into any summary stats.

(Fine with imprisonment alternatives are represented as **Fine ($*dollar amount*/*duration of alternative jail sentence* – due MM/DD/YYYY)**)

Excluding fines with imprisonment alternatives:

- If there are multiple sentences on a docket and the consecutive and concurrent flags are not used, they are assumed to be concurrent.
- UCMS does not let you sentence to a charge with more than 1 count, so the counts would be broken out into "ChargeA1", "ChargeA2", "ChargeA3", etc. and they would add whatever sentence to each. It is up to the clerk to determine/ indicate which ones should be consecutive.
- If a clerk enters consecutive or concurrent sentences in UCMS it is a free text field. This is why you may see docket numbers, charge numbers, or other unusual values.
- An enhancement to UCMS is being planned where, data entry staff will be required to enter the correct charge (if on the same docket) if concurrent or consecutive, or the correct docket number (concurrent or consecutive with another docket).
- Regarding concurrent dockets/ cases once this change is made:
    - The original sentence on the first docket will not be changed, but the newer docket will reflect the linkage.

        Example:

        Docket/case IND-00001-22/001 has a conviction charge for 5 years imprisonment, convicted on 1/1/2022

        Docket/case IND-00200-22/001 has a conviction charge for 5 years Imprisonment, convicted on 1/30/2022, to run concurrent with docket/case IND-00001-22/001.

        Docket/case IND-00200-22/001 will have a IsConcurrent = True and ConcurrentWithDocket = IND-00001-22/001

        Because IND-00001-22/001 was sentenced on 1/1/2022 and at the time the judge did not know it would be a concurrent sentence, **IsConcurrent** = False and there will not be data for **ConcurrentWithDocket**

(The same rules would apply with consecutive sentences.)

40. What are SAMS dockets?

New York City has a Summons Application Management System ("SAMS") where summonses are recorded. Some of these get pushed out on the UCE because we need a way to notify NYPD if there is a warrant on the docket. **Not every summons docket is pushed to partners on the UCE.** (Please see question 24)

41. How can I identify SAMS dockets?

Look at the **<SourceSystem>** element. It will say "SAMS" if it is a SAMS docket.

42. What types of SAMS dockets are included on the UCE feeds?

ONLY dockets that meet at least one of the below criteria are on the feed:

- Was ever warranted
- Has a conviction for a VTL
- Has had a civil judgment ordered

Therefore, any stats you might try to gather from summons data will be incomplete.

43. Are there plans to include additional SAMS dockets on the UCE?

No. If you would like an aggregate report on summons data, please contact OCA's Court Research department.

44. How do SAMS dockets differ from UCMS dockets on the UCE?

There is significantly less information on the SAMS dockets. The purpose of these on the UCE is to communicate warrant information to NYPD, so there has been less focus on other fields.

45. What specific fields of data are not included for SAMS dockets?

JudgeAssignedReference

Appearance:

CalendarNumber

VirtualLoginType

IsCourtReporterPerson

46. There are some cases that were open in CRIMS/ that we received on the DSH but we have not received them on the UCE.

The UCE is based on activity. So, if a docket has had no activity in a while (e.g., there is an open warrant but the defendant has not been produced), it will not appear on your extract. However, if a court date is scheduled, there is a change to a charge, etc., then the docket or case will be converted to UCMS and subsequently will appear on the UCE. (The CRIMS docket number will appear in the legacy docket number field.)

47. Why do some of the CRIMSIDs and Dseqs differ from what we have been sent on the DSH?

The UCMS to CRIMS docket transmissions (which are what fed the DSH) were messy at times, particularly when it came to CRIMS IDs and CRIMS Dseqs.

One of the problems is that we will send extract partners a docket number on a given CRIMS ID/dseq, and then in a subsequent feed it will be sent with a different CRIMS ID and/or dseq, and the old one is retired, never to be used or communicated to extract partners again.

If you always applied the latest CRIMS ID and CRIMS Dseq from the DSH, it should match. But if you just kept everything under the first CRIMS ID and CRIMS Dseq, it will not always match.

This is an issue for CRIMS-originating dockets/cases, so as time goes by it will be less of an issue.

48. The volume on the legacy docket node is much lower than we would expect.

The legacy docket number field is only used when the docket originated in CRIMS. Here are the go-live dates of the NYC courts in UCMS:

Court	Go Live Date
Queens Criminal Court	1/3/2017
Richmond Criminal Court	1/2/2018
Kings Criminal Court	6/18/2018
New York Criminal Court	3/25/2019
Bronx Criminal Court	1/27/2020

Court	Go Live Date
Kings Supreme Criminal Court	1/4/2021
Richmond Supreme Criminal Court	5/24/2021
Bronx Supreme Criminal Court	10/12/2021
New York Supreme Criminal Court	10/12/2021
Queens Supreme Criminal Court	10/12/2021

Dockets created on or after the go-live dates will NOT have a legacy docket number. The docket number will be in the docket number field.

However, we include the CRIMS Cty, CRIMS ID, and CRIMS dseq on the files so you can more easily link the current data to the older data.

Only dockets that originated in UCMS or SAMS or were converted to UCMS from CRIMS are on your feed; it does not go back to the beginning of time.

One DocketID can only be associated with one Docket Number.

49. How do I track the District Attorney who attended an appearance?

In lower court, District Attorney information is not captured routinely.

In Supreme & County Courts, a specific ADA is assigned to the case. You can find this in the **Attorney** node by looking at **Representation** = ‘District Attorney’. There is an assignment start date and an assignment end date, so if a different ADA gets assigned to the case later, you will have that information.

If the assigned ADA does not attend a specific appearance (e.g., they are sick, etc.) and/or if another ADA (e.g., from the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor) stands up at an appearance, this is not reported in the UCE.

50. How are consolidated dockets communicated on the UCE?

    UCMS is charge based as opposed to docket based, so you will need to look at the ChargeOutcomes node. The OutcomeHighlight will indicate the charge was consolidated with another docket, and the ChargeOutcomeAdditionalInfo will include information (Under the ChargeOutcoeConsolidatedInto node) including the DocketID, court, and docket number of the docket with which the charge was consolidated.

51. Why is the SentenceItemAdditionalInfo/Registration sparsely populated for vehicle type/plate number/VIN details?

    Very few courts use these fields. Similar to how the DSH “included” vehicle information on record type 12, the UCE also has space for those elements but courts rarely use them.

52. Are documents included on the UCE feed?

    No. The UCE does not transmit any documents or images. Only the data elements associated with a filing are included. For example, if a motion is e-filed, the UCE will contain the motion filing date, motion type, motion status, and other related fields after the court enters the motion into UCMS. However, the document itself is not transmitted through the UCE.