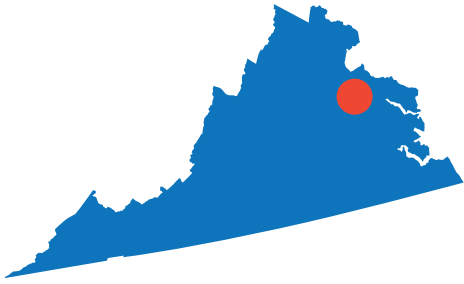


JURISDICTION

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOVARIS)



Police can search mug shots.



It's unclear if police are required to have reasonable suspicion to run a search.



Certified “examiner” status is required for fingerprint searches but not for face recognition searches.



The Northern Virginia Regional Information System (NOVARIS), located in Fairfax County, is a regional arrest data and evidence sharing system. NOVARIS’s face recognition component was acquired in 2007 and can be accessed by law enforcement in Maryland’s Prince George’s and Montgomery counties, Virginia’s Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties, and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church (015230). NOVARIS is also part of a face recognition partnership system established by the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office in Florida (015214). It is unclear how many mug shots are enrolled in the database, or if it is “scrubbed” to eliminate people who were never charged, had charges dropped or dismissed, or who were found innocent.

In its response to our public records request, Fairfax County Police indicated: “Only trained examiners who are certified and authorized to operate AFIS searches shall initiate cross-database searches within the AFIS databases,” but there is no corresponding “certified examiner” requirement for access to face recognition (014710). This suggests that the required training and certification threshold is lower for officers running a face recognition search than for those running a fingerprint search. It is unclear if reasonable suspicion is required for police to run a search.

Sources and Notes: Fairfax County Police Department (*Last updated: September 2016*). Scorecard methodology can be found in the appendix. Numerical citations, e.g. (123456) refer to official records available online at www.perpetuallineup.org.