



Global Justice
Information
Sharing
Initiative

United States
Department of Justice

GLOBAL

INFORMATION QUALITY SERIES

IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF JUSTICE INFORMATION

GLOBAL INFORMATION QUALITY (IQ) SERIES PROVIDES PRACTICAL GUIDANCE ON HOW TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN AGENCYWIDE IQ PROGRAM

To assist justice agencies and their reliance on quality information, the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global), through Global's Privacy and Information Quality Working Group (GPIQWG), has published an information quality (IQ) series that provides practical guidance on how to develop and implement an agencywide information quality program. Using a progressive "step" approach, this series provides agencies with resources from beginning to end—from raising awareness of IQ, to the evaluation of the agency's information, ending with the implementation of an agencywide program.

Recent events, such as terrorist threats and catastrophic natural disasters, have revealed an increased need for cross-collaboration among local, state, tribal, and federal justice entities when personally identifiable information (PII) is shared to form the information and records that underlie justice decision making. Yet as these needs are addressed, it is also imperative that justice entities address the quality of this information. Failure to do so can result in harm to individuals, lawsuits and liability, public criticism, inefficient use of resources, spread of inaccurate information, or inconsistent actions within agencies. Further, the collection and sharing of poor quality information raises serious privacy concerns, because the two concepts are inherently linked. Quality information plays an extremely important role in the protection of the privacy rights of individuals. Both concepts influence the appropriate treatment of PII.

The Fair Information Principles (FIPs), which establish a baseline for information sharing best practices, contain what is called the "Data Quality Principle," which prescribes that "personal data should be relevant to the purposes for which it is to be used and, to the extent necessary for those purposes, should be accurate, complete, and up to date." This is, of course, the ultimate goal of any justice entity that collects and enters PII into an information system—quality information that is accurate, timely, and complete, as well as secure. However, the reality is that justice agencies come in all sizes, with varying degrees of available resources. Many agencies are short-staffed yet have to process information in a limited time frame, using disparate systems under tight budget constraints.

Global's IQ series contains a suite of products designed to meet a spectrum of IQ program needs for any size justice entity. Based on the hierarchy of products shown, the IQ series resources are as follows:

STEP ONE: EDUCATE AND RAISE AWARENESS

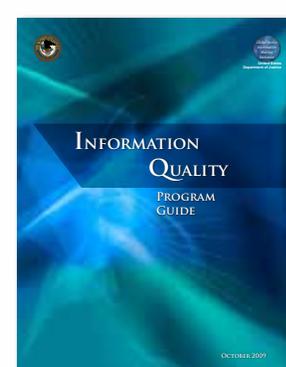
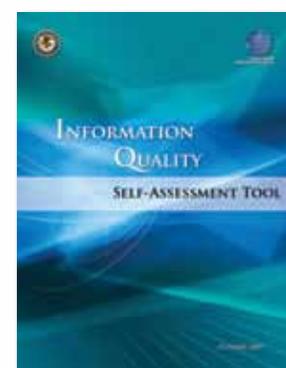
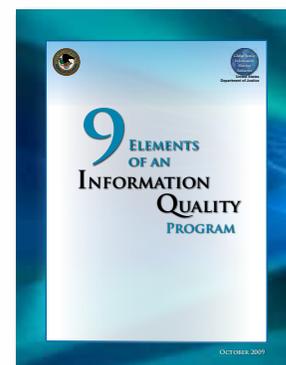
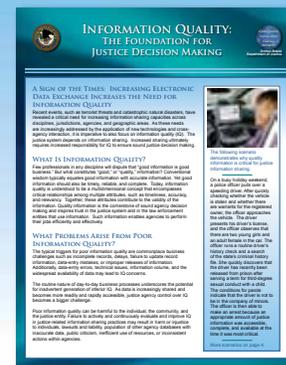
- *Information Quality: The Foundation for Justice Decision Making*
- *9 Elements of an Information Quality Program*

STEP TWO: PERFORM AN ASSESSMENT

- *Information Quality Self-Assessment Tool*

STEP THREE: DEVELOP POLICY AND AN AGENCYWIDE PROGRAM

- *Information Quality Program Guide*



Products in Step One were designed to educate administrators on the importance of allocating resources for IQ and to provide awareness information for agency personnel. The first primer, *Information Quality: The Foundation for Justice Decision Making*, is a fact sheet that illustrates the importance of justice agencies' collection, retention, and sharing of only "quality" information. It illustrates IQ as a multidimensional concept that goes beyond traditionally understood attributes of accuracy and completeness and demonstrates the critical relationships among multiple IQ attributes, such as accessibility and security. Hypothetical scenarios are presented that depict situations of good and poor information quality, as well as next steps for how agencies can improve the quality of their information. The second primer, *9 Elements of an Information Quality Program*, outlines the nine key elements needed for developing and implementing an agencywide IQ program.

For the second step in the IQ series, GPIQWG has developed and field-tested the *Information Quality Self-Assessment Tool*. Structured as a self-administered worksheet, the self-assessment tool provides practical, hands-on assistance to information systems personnel as a mechanism for the assessment, measurement, and improvement of information quality. The tool assists agencies in identifying any gaps in roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, and information technology that beget information quality problems; determines the agency's relative level of information quality; and establishes benchmarks for evaluation, improvement, and accountability. Questions are generic and can be applied to a broad range of justice events and associated information components.

This assessment tool was well-received by the agencies that field-tested it. "The Illinois State Police welcomed the opportunity to field-test the Information Quality Self-Assessment Tool," said Lieutenant Kathleen deGrasse, Privacy Officer, Illinois State Police. "We found the tool to be comprehensive, and it provided a rigorous audit of our justice information."

For the third and final step in the IQ series, GPIQWG developed the *Information Quality Program Guide*, which provides useful information on how to establish an agencywide IQ program. The guide leads practitioners through an incremental approach to implementing an IQ program by identifying and analyzing the agency's justice events and products, describing how to apply standard and customized IQ dimensions to the agency information, helping with the completion of an IQ assessment (mentioned earlier), and providing guidance on implementation and follow-up. The guide is a "one-stop shop" in that it contains all of the resources listed in Steps One through Three, with the awareness primers and assessment tool in its appendices.

Ultimately, justice agencies should use the IQ series to ensure that information in criminal justice systems is accurate, timely, complete, and secure. Such a program will, in turn, reduce the risks to public safety, reduce legal liability of justice entities, and uphold a justice entity's reputation. Good quality information inspires trust in the justice system and in the law enforcement entities that rely on this information.

All of these resources can be found online at www.it.ojp.gov/GPIQWG or www.it.ojp.gov/iq_resources. For printed copies, send requests to GLOBAL@iir.com.

ABOUT GLOBAL

The U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global) serves as a Federal Advisory Committee to the U.S. Attorney General on critical justice information sharing initiatives. Global promotes standards-based electronic information exchange to provide justice and public safety communities with timely, accurate, complete, and accessible information in a secure and trusted environment. Global is administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

DOJ's Global Advisory Committee (GAC) recommends that local, state, tribal, and federal justice decision makers make information quality a priority. GAC specifically advocates the active and continuous improvement of data and information quality efforts in all information sharing activities. The U.S. Department of Justice and Global member organizations are committed to helping you to improve information quality by providing further resources that will be made available online at:

www.it.ojp.gov/iq_resources

This project was supported by Grant No. 2009-DB-BX-K105 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.