

Basic Data Entry

Before adding new information, you will want to do use one of i-Plow's many *search options* to see if it has already been entered. Of course, searching *by name* and *by case number* is something you will do frequently. However, you should know that you can search just about anything in i-Plow by taking advantage of our [Universal Search](#) feature. Sometimes, it may be an interruption that causes you to use these search options. The [History](#) feature and [Bookmarks](#) are useful ways to navigate back to where you started. If you would like to reduce the amount of clicking on menu options, you can create your own keyboard [Shortcuts](#). Sometimes, you might find it convenient to [Browse](#) through cases that all meet some condition you specify.

After you verify that the defendant is not already in the database, you will [Add a Name](#) to get started. Along with the name, you will be adding the defendant's address and telephone number(s). Of course, you can [change phone or address](#) any time you want, confident that the old information will be retained in the [Address and Phone Number History](#). You can also change the [name](#) or [remove](#) it entirely.

You can [Add a Case](#) as soon as the name has been added. The defendant's address appears on every window, and you can click on it to add or modify personal information. The beginning case status of *all* cases is UNDEFINED.

At this point you are ready to [Add Assessments](#), at which point the case becomes subject to automatic changes in [Case Status](#). You can also [Cashier a Receipt](#), even though you have yet to Establish a Plan.

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When it comes time to [Establish a Plan](#), you will be able to either let i-Plow do the math (implicit plan) or spell out by installment how much the defendant will pay, which could be varying amounts. Depending on your policy regarding payments, your plan will be either flexible or rigid. Another thing that depends on local policy is [Community Service](#), which some collectors manage.