

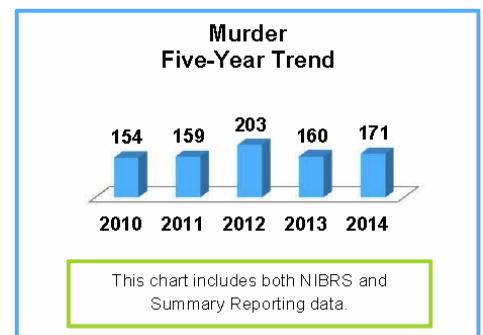


## **Newsbriefs from the WASPC CJIS Department**

### **The Importance of Data Quality**

Each year, the WASPC CJIS Department begins preparation for the state and FBI annual crime reports by reviewing the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and Summary Reporting System (SRS) databases for missing monthly reports and data validation errors. Recently, these preparation efforts have started earlier to give agencies more time to submit the missing data or correct the errors - it's a time-consuming process for everyone. We recommend agencies submit their reports on a monthly basis rather than wait and try to "catch up" at the end of the year, especially if there are several errors that must be corrected.

One area which causes the most difficulty for CJIS staff to research and which receives the highest level of media scrutiny is the Crimes Against Persons: specifically Homicide. We encourage agencies to enter as much detail as possible immediately after the incident and remember to follow-up with more details as soon as they become available - this includes officer-involved Justifiable Homicide. When citizens know something happened in their jurisdiction, they expect to see it in reflected accurately in the state and FBI annual crime statistic reports. 🌟



### **Why Do We Collect Uniform Crime Reporting?**

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program in the State of Washington is voluntary except for two state legislative mandates: domestic violence (DV) (pursuant to 10.99.030) and malicious harassment (hate) crime (pursuant to 36.28A.030) must be reported. Fortunately, the majority of the 269 local, state, and tribal law enforcement agencies in our great state understand the value of reporting crime statistics to the state and FBI. As of July 2015, 232 agencies (86%) are up-to-date on submitting their data either electronically by the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) method or by the older Summary Reporting System. Those agencies that haven't submitted in 2015 may have submitted data in the past but now have staffing issues, are undergoing records management systems upgrades, or have chosen not to participate in the program at this time. So, why do we collect UCR?

According to the FBI's website, the national UCR Program was conceived in 1929 by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and in 1930, the FBI was tasked with the responsibilities of collecting, publishing, and archiving the uniform crime statistics. The FBI oversees the definitions, data elements, and guidelines for participant states and states must follow the FBI's guidelines for federal submission. States can add their own data elements for state-level collection: Washington State has the DV indicator, one additional offense for Violation of No Contact or Protection Order, and an additional bias motivation of Anti-Sensory Disability. *Because local, state, tribal, or federal jurisdictions across the nation respond to incidents or investigate crimes under different ordinances, statutes, and penal codes, the UCR codes provide a standard for crime trend measurement and analyses.*

There are financial incentives for submission of UCR data in Washington State: the State Treasurer's Office uses crime statistics to calculate the state criminal justice assistance funding pursuant to chapter 82.14 RCW and some state and federal grants require UCR participation; in addition, agency accreditation lists timely UCR submission as a standard. 🌟

## Tips and Reminders

- Beginning January 1, 2016, the national UCR Program will add the offense of Animal Cruelty to the NIBRS as a Group A offense and as a Crime Against Society. This includes a new UCR offense code of 720 and four (4) new data values for Data Element 12, Type of Criminal Activity. *It is your responsibility to notify your records management system vendor to update your NIBRS tables with these new codes.* Details were sent on April 30, 2015, in a State UCR Program's listserv e-mail.
- To subscribe to the State UCR Program's listserv, visit the website at <http://mailman.listserve.com/listmanager/listinfo/wucr-nibrs>. This listserv is available to law enforcement personnel only for the purpose of discussing UCR, NIBRS, or crime statistic-related issues. This is a discussion-type service for subscribers to share knowledge and experiences or ask questions of one another.
- For those interested in history, Washington State was certified by the FBI to officially collect and submit NIBRS data in December 2006. Before Washington became a state on November 11, 1889, it was a territory called Columbia (named after the Columbia River); however, it was renamed Washington when granted statehood so it wouldn't be confused with the District of Columbia. Hmmmmm.
- As of December 4, 2014, 227 agencies are NIBRS certified; 36 counties are 100% NIBRS certified. Congratulations! On the national level, there are 33 states that are certified to submit NIBRS to the FBI - 15 are 100% NIBRS states. In Spring 2015, the FBI announced they will be working toward eliminating the Summary Reporting System (SRS); however, no end date has been set. It's anticipated Washington State will be 100% NIBRS well before the FBI's deadline.
- Please remember to call CJIS at (360) 486-2380 before delivering archived sex offense case files; the office closes at 4:00pm. Guidelines for submitting these files can be found on our website: <http://www.waspc.org/sex-offense-document-imaging>
- If you have problems, issues, or questions related to your records management system (RMS), contact your local agency administrator or your RMS vendor Help Desk. For problems, issues, or questions regarding WASPC's NIBRS program or FBI UCR definitions, phone or e-mail WASPC CJIS (360) 486-2380 or [cjis@waspc.org](mailto:cjis@waspc.org).

<p><b>WASPC</b>  <b>CJIS Department</b>          3060 Willamette Drive NE          Lacey WA 98516          (360) 486-2380  <a href="mailto:cjis@waspc.org">cjis@waspc.org</a></p>		<p><b>State Reporting Deadline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Preceding month's data is due by the 15th.</b></li> <li>• <b>If the 15th falls on the weekend or a holiday, the deadline is extended to the next business day.</b></li> </ul>
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<p>To locate the CJIS Department Programs on the new WASPC website, go to <a href="http://www.waspc.org">www.waspc.org</a>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click on "Programs, Projects &amp; Services"</li> <li>2. Hover over "Crime Statistics (NIBRS)" to open the webpage options or click to find the repository links and staff contact information</li> <li>3. Click on which page you'd like to visit: Statistics &amp; Reports; Training, Manuals, &amp; Reference; Sex Offender Document Imaging; or CJIS Newsletters &amp; Listserv</li> </ol>	
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