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Adults Matter Too: An Examination of State Adult Missing Persons Policies and Procedures to Implement a Best Practices Handbook

Hunter Smith

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Adults Matter Too:
An Examination of State Adult Missing Persons Policies and Procedures
to Implement a Best Practices Handbook

by

Hunter Smith

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Approved by:

Marie Danforth, Ph.D., Thesis Advisor,
School of Social Science and Global Studies

Kristi Johnson, M.S., Thesis Co-Advisor,
School of Criminal Justice, Forensic Science and
Security

Brenda Rowe, Ph.D., Director,
School of Criminal Justice, Forensic Science and
Security

Joyce Inman Ph.D., Dean
Honors College

ABSTRACT

The most recent estimates put the number of active missing person records at 97,127. Over the past eight years, child active records have decreased by 2,530, while adult active records have increased by 14,696. While there is no clear explanation for this trend, a common theory is that there are multiple federal and state laws requiring the entry of missing people under the age of 2; however, very few, if any, extend to adults. Additionally, there is a lack of standardization across available policies and procedures for where these cases should be reported, the time frame for doing so, and what information needs to be collected.

To address these issues, 10 law enforcement and medicolegal officials were interviewed, in conjunction with the synthesis of current information available, to create a handbook for use in these types of investigations. The purpose of this handbook is to improve success rates of finding and/or identifying adult missing and unidentified persons. This is achievable through two methods. The first involves using this handbook as a training aid for law enforcement agencies to educate their officers on the proper questions to ask, what databases can be utilized, and what resources are available to them. The second is the use of this handbook by law enforcement personnel as a resource and field guide throughout the investigation process. Finally, this handbook will be distributed to law enforcement nationwide, and it is hoped that it will aid with missing person casework and increase awareness of the issue.

Keywords: missing persons, unidentified, adult, NamUs, policies, NCIC

DEDICATION

To the missing and unidentified.

May this research bring you one step closer to home and may you get the proper identification, respect, and investigative care that you deserve. You are not just a statistic, we are looking for you, never give up on hope.

To the families of the missing and unidentified.

May this research provide you comfort that there are people in this world dedicated to reuniting you with your loved ones. We will not stop until every person and all unidentified remains are accounted for. “Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today.” – Thich Nhat Hanh

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
DOJ	Department of Justice
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
MEPA	Missing Endangered Person Advisory
NA/AN	Native American/Alaskan Native
NamUs	National Missing and Unidentified Persons System
NCIC	National Crime Information Center
NCMEC	National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

CHAPTER I: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Every year hundreds of thousands of people are reported missing in the United States alone. In an effort to combat this outstanding issue, more progressive missing person laws have been implemented; however, most of these laws only pertain to children. This has led to a lack of investigative effort for adult missing persons as adults can legally leave without telling another person as established in the 1995 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *McIntyre v. Ohio Elections Commission* (Chakraborty, 2020). Similar issues for adult missing persons have been seen in the UK, Canada, and Australia and these countries have more research on the issue as compared to the US. Therefore, this research can be used as an analog for predicting similar outcomes in the US. Similar to the US, the majority of the UK's outstanding missing persons cases (75%) are adults (Bonny et al., 2016). In addition, it has been found that adults are more likely to be missing for longer periods of time (Newiss, 2005), and are more likely to be found dead than children (Home Office, 2011). This data presents law enforcement with clear statistics that adults need to have more progressive and rigorous investigative standards. When adults are missing for an extended period of time, there is potential for these to become unidentified remains cases. These are arguably harder to investigate and are more costly as DNA testing and genealogy are needed in order to provide the best chances for an identification (Reid et al., 2023).

Current research into adult missing persons all note similar struggles such as lack of research, lack of accurate data, the need for more standardized policies, difficulties with police risk assessment, and increased need for allocation of police resources (Bonny

et al., 2016; Chakraborty, 2020; Hawk, 2014; Newiss, 2005). While many of these studies comment on the issues with law enforcement bias against adult cases, it is important to note that because these cases are so varied, timely, and costly, law enforcement must have discretion when investigating. Therefore, implementation of state guidelines and procedures must allow for deviation to provide the best use of investigative effort and resources. To achieve this, policy and procedures for these investigations should include input and collaboration from law enforcement in order to create a product that is useful and extensive.

So as to provide a solution to the lack of standardization, ease of access to data, and limited research in the field of adult missing and unidentified persons, this research aims to fill the gaps in the literature, provide easy to use guidelines for law enforcement, and create a library of information to further aid them with these investigations from continued reading, grant writing, and conferences. In order to best fill the gaps in the literature as well as to thoroughly evaluate what current policies and procedures are being used, a representative sample of law enforcement agencies and medicolegal experts were interviewed from 10 states. These law enforcement agencies are located in both large cities (such as Dallas (TX) Police Department) as well as small cities (such as Ocean Springs (MS) Police Department). This collection method would create further understanding if agency size played a factor in output of investigative measures. Further, governmental websites such as the Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and local law enforcement's webpages were used to supplement the information gathered in the interviews as well as provide additional resources for the handbook. The intended outcome for this research is that by providing a single and easy to use

information stream for all aspects of adult missing person investigations, there will be a greater awareness of the discrimination in adult missing person cases as well as increase the solvability of these cases. Finally, by providing easy access to the current databases that are available for use both federally and in each state, law enforcement will be more likely to use the resources available. This, in turn, will enhance the accuracy of case reporting and further boost the solvability of missing and unidentified person cases.

Literature Review

Statistics and Complexity

The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) implemented a Missing Person File in 1975 and the Unidentified Person File in 1982. These files were created in order to provide law enforcement with a way to report these cases while also providing a way for these cases to be cross-referenced against each other (Haglund, 1993). Each year a statistical report is published in accordance with the Crime Control Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-647, 104 Stat. 4789 and Suzanne's Law, in order to provide a summary of reports of missing children and those who are under 21 years of age (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2023). Of the eight current published reports spanning from 2015-2022, an average of 595,715 missing person reports are filed each year in the United States (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016-2023). While this number may seem large, it is important to note that this number is not the total number of people who have gone missing in the given year; rather it is just entries into the system and may contain repeat occurrences.

Of the cases entered, on average, 69.2% are 17 years of age or younger (child) and 30.8% are 18 years of age or older (adult). In addition to the number of cases entered

on a yearly basis, NCIC also maintains the number of active cases. These cases consist of reports of people who have been found but never removed from the system and reports of those currently missing. Each year, the number of cases that are not resolved at the end of the year are added to the previous year total. As of 2022, there are 97,127 active reports in the NCIC database, 68.6% of which are adults reported missing (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2023). Statistically it is expected that there should be a higher number of active adult cases in the United States, given that 78.3% of the population is 18 years of age or older (United States Census Bureau, 2023). However, with the much larger amount of child cases entered on a yearly basis, the percentage of child cases would lead one to expect a higher proportion of cases. Further analysis of the active case entry trend gave insight into this unexpected data. It was observed that from 2015-2022, child active cases have decreased by 2,530 while adult active cases have increased by 14,696. While these statistics do not fully encompass all missing person cases and do not account for factors such as reporting laws, they highlight a disconnect amongst law enforcement when it comes to investigating and successfully locating adult missing persons.

While the exact reason for this disparity is unclear, some theorize that because adults are legally allowed to “go missing,” many local law enforcement agencies tend to devote their resources towards other priorities (Hawk, 2014). Others theorize that because there is no federal mandatory reporting law for adults like there is for children, the policies and procedures for the investigation of these cases vary widely from state to state. Some states may require reporting, while others leave it up to each local jurisdiction, which has led some agencies to establish a wait period before taking a report (Fernandes-Alcantara, 2019). This lack of understanding of why adults are more likely to

be missing long-term stems from the current lack of research. The small amount that does exist heavily focuses on countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. However, because these countries are experiencing similar difficulties when investigating adult missing persons (Bonny et al., 2016), the research being conducted there can provide further insight into the issue in the US.

The research conducted in the countries focuses on the reasons as to why an adult missing person case is more complex than a child. When a missing person is reported to an agency, the determination for immediate response is left up to investigator discretion. The determination for the response level is often based on factors such as the narratives of the reporting party, the circumstances surrounding the disappearance, knowledge from property searches, and professional experience (Bonny et al., 2016). However, with this discretion it is possible for there to be errors in the risk assessment of cases. Increased understanding of the psychological factors that may drive an adult to go missing can provide more information for the investigator to establish an accurate determination. Bonny et al. (2016) indicated three main themes as to why an adult may go missing: dysfunctional, escape, and unintentional. Dysfunctional characterizes individuals who may have a mental health issue. Escape characterizes individual seeking asylum from scenarios that make them feel forced to leave or from domestic violence. Unintentional characterizes those who are lost, missing as a result of another person's decisions, and/or are reported missing mistakenly (Bonny et al., 2016).

Each of these themes create increased complexity to adult missing person cases as opposed to child missing person cases. This is because children (17 and under) are not legally allowed to leave the care of their parents, making their routine often predictable

and unchanging (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2011). Therefore, when there is any significant deviation from this routine, investigators have an easier starting point for investigation and there is an increased sense of urgency. Further research into the common behaviors associated with the three themes can help to establish what complexities may arise in adult cases. Dysfunctional adult missing cases increase the complexity of investigation because the person is often alone and is walking aimlessly (Bonny et al., 2016) which may make it more difficult for an investigator to predict where they would go. Escape adult missing cases increase the complexity of investigation because the person may intentionally be avoiding the police and tend to travel aimlessly (Bonny et al., 2016) which may make it more difficult to locate the individual. Unintentional adult missing cases are the least likely to create further complexity for the investigation as often these individuals are not trying to conceal their whereabouts through use of their phone or public transport (Bonny et al., 2016). However, unforeseen circumstances may contribute to unique sets of circumstances that require more complex investigations, such as a person becoming lost accidentally, or being under the influence.

Family Interactions

In addition to the issues surrounding the number of missing adults and the complexities of these cases, the repercussions that a missing person has on the family creates other concern for the family's wellbeing and their relationship with law enforcement. The term 'ambiguous loss' has been more commonly used to describe the feelings that the family of the missing person is experiencing. There are two forms of ambiguous loss. The first characterizes the feelings of a family when the person is

missing but the family still keeps them present in their minds. The second characterizes the feelings of a family when the person is physically present, but not psychologically present, such as in the case of severe brain trauma (Wayland et al., 2015).

While there is little research on the long-term effects that ambiguous loss can have on the mental and physical health of the family, the effects of hope and ambiguity might provide further understanding of its effects. Hope in these experiences can be demonstrated in two ways: hope for the individual's safe return and the ability to tolerate the loss, should the remains be found (Wayland et al., 2015). Often these experiences transition from one to the other such that initially there is hope that the person will return safely, but over time this turns to hope that the person's location/body will be found so that they may have closure. While there is arguably no closure in these investigations until the person's body is physically discovered, hope can be a tool that the "left-behind" can lean on to live with this loss (Wayland et al., 2015). Therefore, it has been argued that people need hope in order to deal with the emotional turmoil of these events and allow for self-discovery (Boss, 2010). If hope can play an important part in processing the impact of a missing person, then the sources, or lack thereof, that perpetuate hope in missing person investigations need to be explored further.

Much of the hope that is experienced during these cases is generated intrinsically (Clark, 2007); however, extrinsic factors such as spirituality, cultural viewpoint, and law enforcement action play a major part in the perpetuation or dissolution of hope. When examining the role that spirituality plays in fostering hope, it is argued that cultivating a deeper spiritual life can aid with the process. This is because the family is less focused on the loss and instead establishes a more hopeful viewpoint on life (Wayland et al., 2015).

Of course, spirituality may also be abandoned in these cases as the family may question their belief in a higher being for enacting this ambiguous experience. When examining the impact of cultural viewpoint on hope, specifically in the US, families are often criticized for exaggerating and lingering on their loss when they are unable to find closure (Boss, 2010). Instead of continuing to push the concept of ‘closure’ for the family, we should introduce the creation of a paradox in where that person can be both absent and present (Boss, 2010), such that although the person is not physically there, the family can still hold them in their hearts and keep their memory of the individual alive. This can help the family to emotionally move forward while also still retaining a reasonable expectation of hope for the return of the individual.

Finally, the impact of law enforcement action on hope is derived from the interaction between the family and the investigator/agency. Sometimes when a family member goes missing, the family feels that something is not right, as evidenced by unusual behavior exhibited by their missing family member. When they attempt to articulate this to law enforcement, a lack of articulation may lead some investigators to dismiss these cases citing the ‘right-to-go-absent’ (Parr and Stevenson, 2015). This indifferent attitude and hesitancy to believe witnesses who cannot properly articulate the circumstances by law enforcement is argued to perpetuate these feelings of ambiguous loss (Parr and Stevenson, 2015). Therefore, this lack of trust that law enforcement will investigate a case to the best of their ability may stunt hope for the family.

By understanding the concept of ambiguous loss and how it can affect the family, it can provide justification for the importance of the investigation of all missing person cases to completion. The complex nature that hope plays within these cases, and its

potential for helping the family to move forward, needs to be further researched.

However, by providing the family with spiritual advisement and/or counseling that can challenge the cultural taboo of ambiguous loss, the fallout from a missing individual can be more easily contained. Further, because of the implications for how law enforcement receive, investigate, and follow up with the family, investigators should factor in the farther reaching impacts of a missing person and how it could affect a larger community of people. Thus, the importance for properly taking the time to investigate and to maintain contact with the family so that they feel relevant can be argued.

Unidentified Remains

In addition to the issues surrounding adult missing person investigations, it is important to understand the issues surrounding unidentified remains. At any given time, there are approximately 40,000 unidentified remains held by medical examiners and coroners across the country (Ritter, 2007). However, only about 15 percent have been entered into the NCIC database (Ritter, 2007) and about 38 percent have been entered into NamUs. This deficit stems from the lack of requirement for unidentified remains to be entered into NCIC, neglect of the importance of the remains by cities and counties, and from numerous law enforcement agencies that lack the understanding or resources for the databases used for case entry (Ritter, 2007).

To add to the issue of the sheer number of cases, there is a lack of legal requirements for expertise to be used when examining human skeletal remains. Only 19 of the 50 states have laws that stipulate if/when an anthropologist should be involved with these cases in order to provide accurate expertise, and only two states have state-funded laboratories, expert forensic anthropologists, and established protocols for

handling of human remains (Carter et al., 2022). This vast variety of laws, or lack thereof, discerning the proper protocols and expert analysis guidelines for handling of unidentified remains, could lead to the potential for these remains to be improperly handled and/or improperly identified based on unsound analytical techniques (Carter et al., 2022). Recommendations for aiding with unidentified remains cases most often included the need for standardization of terminology, time frame for disposal, and accurate documentation of the remains (Reid et al., 2023).

When assessing the standardization of terminology, the matter of ‘unclaimed’ versus ‘unidentified’ is heavily dependent based on the laws governing that state, country, or region. Some countries use the words interchangeably whereas others denote the difference. Unclaimed in some areas may describe where the body is identified but the next of kin are either unable to be located or do not want the body. This contrasts unidentified which describes those remains for whom the identity cannot be determined and, therefore, no next of kin can be contacted (Reid et al., 2023). The use of these words interchangeably can create situations where there is not an accurate count for how many sets of remains are unidentified currently. In terms of time frame for disposal, legislation for declaring a body unidentified ranges from 48 hours to 30 days. Some note that after 30 days where there is no confirmation of identity, the case was treated as cold (Reid et al., 2023). This, coupled with a lack of accurate and thorough documentation, may lead to remains not being properly stored or may create situations in which the remains are distributed elsewhere, and the chain of custody may falter creating issues for identification in the future.

Current Guidelines

In order to fully understand the gaps in the system for investigation of missing adults, it is important to examine the current guidelines and resources available regarding missing and unidentified persons. Currently, there are more federal and state legislature that mandates the reporting and investigation of missing children than there are for adults. Two of these child legislations are arguably the most important for examining what should/could be mandated for adults. The first is the National Child Search Assistance Act of 1990. This act requires that all law enforcement entities in the US must enter information about missing children under age 18 into NCIC. Additionally, it created standards for state reporting requirements, ended waiting periods before reporting, and created a liaison for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) (Volunteers in Police Service Program, 2010). The second is the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006. This act amended the previous act by requiring law enforcement to enter missing child cases into NCIC within two hours of the report (Volunteers in Police Service Program, 2010). Both acts immediately ended waiting periods and required mandatory entry of missing children into the NCIC database. This does two things. First, it ensures that no matter the circumstances a report is being taken and that child is federally recognized as missing. Second, by mandating entry into NCIC, it allows for the collaboration of every law enforcement agency by unifying a reporting system. Therefore, federal legislation similar to these but for adults can ensure that all adult cases are reported and investigated equally regardless of the circumstances.

These federal legislations heavily contrast what is currently being legislated for adults. Currently there are no federal laws similar to that of the child cases. Instead, the

federal government has attempted to play a role in these cases by passing acts that expand resources for the finding of adults with cognitive and developmental disabilities such as The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-322) and The Missing Americans Alert Program Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-141) (Fernandes-Alcantara, 2019). Additionally, Kristen's Act (P.L. 106-468) was enacted in 2000 to establish grants that would help to create national clearinghouses for adults and help provide law enforcement with assistance with these cases. However, this act was only funded from 2002-2006 (Fernandes-Alcantara, 2019). Volunteers in Police Service Program (2010) mentions the creation of the National Center for Missing Adults (NCMA); however very little additional information can be found regarding the center and its outcomes. Finally, NCIC does not require the entry of unidentified remains, which further creates issues of documenting and identifying these individuals (Rodriguez et al., 2022).

In contrast to the lack of federal acts, 36 states have now passed laws mandating reporting of missing adults and entrance of them into federal and state databases. Seven of these states, as noted by Chakraborty (2020), mandate entry into NamUs, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, which serves as a centralized repository and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases across the United States. Further, it aids investigators in solving long-term missing and unidentified persons cases and was created to assist in the investigation process as well as offer free forensic services to aid with identification (National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, n.d.). However, NamUs suggests that their system is best utilized for cases open for 180 days (National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, 2023) and therefore is more

commonly utilized for long-term missing persons which further decreases the number of law enforcement officials who utilize the database.

In addition to the federal and state laws that have been created in an attempt to aid with the lack of standardized missing person protocols, several public and private entities (including law enforcement) have created departmental policies and handbooks.

However, much of these are focused on two population groups: children and Native American/Alaskan Native people (NA/AN). NCMEC has created a law enforcement policy and procedure for reporting missing and abducted children. This universal handbook provides tailored procedures that should be complete by each of the personnel during an investigation of a missing child as well as procedures for the specific scenarios during the case (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2011). The Department of Justice (DOJ) has a dedicated resource basket for law enforcement that includes items such as a community response plan, what alerts are available, and what databases can be used (Department of Justice, 2023). Additionally, many of these same organizations have guides detailing what the families of these missing people should do in order to report them missing as well as aid with the investigation. However, these same organizations do not have similar guides/resources that specifically address the complexities associated with adult missing investigations. While some law enforcement agencies have designated adult missing person policies posted online, they either do not give a standardized approach to handling these investigations or are outdated.

Finally, when detailing the current guidelines for missing person investigations, it is important to understand the different alert systems used across the nation. When a child goes missing, the only alert system used is the AMBER alert. The AMBER alert is a

national system and the guidelines for issuance are that the person missing is 17 years of age or younger, there is a reasonable belief that an abduction has occurred, the child is potentially in imminent danger, there is enough description about the child and the abduction events, and the entire case is entered into NCIC (Department of Justice, n.d.). However, when an adult goes missing, there are four potential alert systems that can be used but, unlike the AMBER alert, these systems are currently only used on a state-by-state basis. The Ashanti alert has been created to be a national system; however many states have yet to adopt it. It is issued if the individual is an adult, they are an adult with special needs, and/or they are an adult who is endangered or has been involuntarily abducted (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2021). The Missing Endangered Person Advisory (MEPA), Silver Alert, and Purple Alert systems are all used on a state-by-state basis. The MEPA alert system is used for missing people who are at risk of harm or injury, and who do not qualify for the AMBER alert (Pennsylvania State Police, 2013). The Silver alert is used for an adult that has dementia or another cognitive impairment (Mississippi Department of Public Safety, n.d.) while the Purple alert is used for any other mental or cognitive disability that is not dementia, a developmental disability, and/or an intellectual disability (Florida Department of Law Enforcement, n.d.).

If the AMBER alert were to be used as an analog for an adult national alert system (such as the Ashanti alert), the effectiveness of the alert would need to be evaluated in order to make the argument for increased use of adult alert systems. The current AMBER alert system has a success rate of 26.7% after non-abduction cases are removed. This “success” is only evaluating if the alert provided additional information that led to the discovery of the child (Griffin et al., 2021). Therefore, while not very

effective in the overall discovery of missing child, it can provide some insight into what should be added to an adult system in order to increase the effectiveness. One such recommendation is to make the alert more restrictive and ensure that the cases that are issued have immediately usable information that would allow the public to assist the law enforcement agency (Griffin et al., 2021).

Continued Challenges

Further issues of missing person investigations are a result of databases not talking to each other and have inaccurate/incomplete records in both. It has been found that NCIC and NamUs have different information regarding long-term missing person records. For example, in 2015 only 3,170 long term cases were entered into NamUs as opposed to 84,401 long-term cases in NCIC (United States Government Accountability Office, 2016). Additionally, NCIC is more widely used as compared to NamUs by law enforcement, and NamUs allows for public users while NCIC does not. Therefore, if there are people using only one of the systems, they may miss information that could prove useful to an investigation. Furthermore, because NamUs requires NCIC validation of cases, there are hundreds of cases waiting to be published that cannot be because the report was not made to a law enforcement agency. This thereby means that these hundreds of cases may not have anyone actively investigating them (United States Government Accountability Office, 2016). It has been suggested that these inefficiencies in the system exist because integrating NCIC with NamUs would potentially give the public access to sensitive law enforcement information. However, the alternate solution to an integration would be to have one person enter the records from NCIC into NamUs for each agency (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2016). With the addition of a

person entering cases into NamUs separately, it inherently means the cost of these cases would increase, further exacerbating the lack of resources available to law enforcement.

A study conducted in the UK in 2013 calculated the total average cost of a singular missing person case with a medium level of risk to be £2,415.80 (approximately \$4,000 USD) (Shalev Greene & Pakes, 2013). Much of this cost comes from internal staffing and the time it takes to conduct the investigation as well as to call the family. Suggestions for aiding with these costs in order to lessen the burden on the law enforcement agencies would be to outsource cases to another entity or to have the negligent care facilities help offset the cost (Shalev Greene & Pakes, 2013). Furthermore, in order to aid with the inefficiencies in these investigations, such as returning to the family's home for collection of DNA after the fact and/or having to question the family again at later date due to the lack of a proper initial intake, having a standardized set of policies and procedures may provide a reminder to do a thorough investigation at the onset.

Solving the Problem

The aim of creating a handbook that specifically addresses adult missing persons is two-fold. Firstly, due to the lack of standardized policies, procedures, and laws regarding these investigations, many cases are overlooked. This proves problematic as if the case was time-sensitive, it may be too late to help that individual before harm come to them. Additionally, there is a lack of data that can be used to fully understand the extent of the missing person issue. Therefore, establishing policies and procedures for all aspects of an adult missing person case may provide the groundwork for future federal laws that require the intake and entry of adult missing persons into NCIC and NamUs

which would lead to less overlooked cases. Secondly, because the majority of current guidelines, handbooks, and resources publicly available to law enforcement are either not specific enough, outdated, or are not in one easily accessible area, law enforcement are less likely to utilize these resources. Therefore, by implementing an easy to use, fully encompassing resource list that details funding opportunities and additional resources to aid with investigations, the cost of each missing person case may be less of a burden leading to the more cases being worked to completion. Finally, by understanding the inefficiencies built into the NCIC and NamUs databases in terms of case entry and integration, it is important for the handbook to include useful and easy to use guides for each system as well as provide further information for what databases are in use for each state. This will provide law enforcement with the tools necessary to be able to complete a full investigation.

Methodology

Many of the current procedures for investigation of adult missing and unidentified cases that are publicly available come from either departmental policy posted online or from government agencies such as the NIJ and DOJ that have created short procedures outlining the basic introductory steps. However, this information did not provide enough specific details to aid with the investigations. Therefore, further information for this handbook required the interviewing of law enforcement and medicolegal officials throughout the country. The population recruited was law enforcement investigators (from tribal and nontribal sources), forensic anthropologists, and current or past NamUs representatives. The interviews were conducted to probe for four main areas of interest: time frame for completion of tasks, what databases are being used for entry and statistics,

important/niche investigation techniques, and the need for increased structure for adult missing and unidentified person investigations. The Investigator Question List used for the interview was designed to gather information on these areas of interest to better understand the gaps in the research and investigations that were outlined in the currently published resources as well as to provide credibility for the utility of a dedicated Adult Missing and Unidentified Persons Handbook. Additionally, compiling the current resources in conjunction with the information gathered from the interviews allowed for the synthesis of a handbook that could provide all of this information in one place, with the hope of decreasing the challenge for professionals to utilize these resources.

Institutional Review Board

The interview questions were developed to only probe for public information regarding the interviewer's departmental policies and procedures surrounding adult missing and unidentified investigations. Following the initial creation of the Investigator Question List (Appendix A), the list of questions was reviewed and did not require formal IRB approval (Appendix B). Later into the interview process, it was determined that completing an interview with a Native American/Alaskan Native investigator would provide helpful resources that would make this handbook more inclusive. While the Tribal Investigator Question List (Appendix A) did not probe for sensitive information, Tribal Nations required formal IRB approval before conducting an interview. A formal IRB submission was drafted, and the Tribal Investigator Question List and Signed Consent Form were approved for use (Appendix B)

Determination of Participants

In order to gather an accurate representation of which states should be contacted for interviews, NCIC statistical data from each state was requested through the completion of a FOIA to the FBI. The FOIA request did not provide the information requested, and an appeal was made to get a more informational response. The appeal also did not provide the requested information, and indicated that this information was not available. Therefore, the next option to facilitate an accurate representation of AMP policies across the US was to use the NamUs statistical data in conjunction with the 2010 and 2020 US census data to calculate which 10 states would provide a representative sample. These two data sets were chosen for two reasons. First, while NamUs does provide some state level statistics, they are not representative of the total number of missing persons cases that are reported. However, there is a lack of state level statistics of the total number of reports, and therefore the only available credible source of state statistics is through NamUs. Second, to facilitate the calculation of data from a population perspective, the US census data was needed. In order to best average the number of people in the US for each year that NamUs was collecting data (approximately 2009 – Current), the US Census data was taken from both the 2010 and 2020 censuses.

This data was then used to calculate which 10 states (one from each of the nine NamUs regions plus an additional state), when added together, had a similar “Rate of Missing” per 100,000 people as compared to the National “Rate of Missing” per 100,000 people. The national rate was calculated as follows: The 2010 and 2020 US population numbers were averaged to get a population number of 320,097,410. Then the total number of Open Missing cases in NamUs (22,844) was divided by the average

population (320,097,410) and the outcome was multiplied by 100,000. This then gave the National “Rate of Missing” per 100,000 people to be 7.14. The states, one from each of the nine NamUs regions (plus Florida), were: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Texas, and Wisconsin. The average population from each state was totaled together to get a population number of 141,304,443. Then the number of Open Missing cases from each of those states in NamUs was added together (10,583) and divided by the average population of those states (141,304,443) and the outcome was multiplied by 100,000. This then gave the “Rate of Missing” per 100,000 people for those states of 7.49. Since these numbers were similar, it was concluded that these 10 states could be used as a representative population to collect interviews from.

Finally, in order to determine agencies within each state that could serve as a representative sample, the population sizes of the cities in each state were used to determine three cities with a large population and three cities with a small population. The city police department or county sheriff’s office was then determined in each. Using both large and small agencies was hoped to provide information that could relate to all agencies nationwide, regardless of current resources. In addition to using the population sizes, ease of access to a contact at an agency was considered first in order to facilitate a better chance of successfully securing an interview.

Interview Process/Information Gathering

Once the list of six agencies in all 10 states was acquired (Appendix D), each agency was then contacted using their public non-emergency number or, if the agency was a personal contact, the individual was emailed a predetermined template (Appendix

C). The initial phone call was then directed to either one of their investigators or to their Public Information Officer (PIO). Often, these initial calls resulted in leaving a voicemail requesting a call back or resulted in sending an email to their PIO with the predetermined template and the list of investigator questions. Once an interview was secured, the participant was given the option to either conduct the interview over a phone call, a video meeting, or in-person if the participant was within a reasonable driving distance. If the interview was conducted via a video meeting or in-person, the participant was asked if they consented to have the video/in person meeting recorded. If the participant requested a phone call, the information from the interview was recorded in a notebook for future reference. During the interview, the participant was asked the Investigator Question List in order. Additional questions were asked if prompted via the interview. Once the interview had concluded, the participant was asked if they would like to read and provide feedback for the handbook in its early stages. Finally, the participant was sent a follow-up email after the interview in order to keep communication open in the future.

Of the 60 departments that were contacted, 13 different departments responded to the initial call. Of those 13 departments, 10 were successfully interviewed. In total, 14 participants across those departments as well as three medicolegal officials were interviewed. The compiled responses from these participants, as well as publicly sourced resources, were used to develop the handbook, field guide, and resource list.

Limitations of Research

The lack of accurate, measurable statistics for missing and unidentified persons leads to the potential for entered cases to be skewed depending on the regional and departmental differences within each state. Therefore, while NamUs can provide state

level statistics for these numbers, the cases entered often are longer term missing person cases and do not accurately illustrate the success or failure of a specific state for completion rate of cases. Additionally, the difficulty of successfully securing an interview was another factor determining the outcome of which participants were interviewed. Cold-calling departments in each of the selected regions was often met with investigator voicemails or the call was directed to another department which then never returned the call. Additionally, many investigators were reluctant to conduct such an interview and often the request was referred to their Public Information Officer. These requests often were left without answer. This lack of response created a scenario where a majority of the investigators who were interviewed already had progressive views on missing person policies, thereby skewing the information gathered towards favorability of a product such as the handbook. While this bias for more progressive missing person policies does not detract from the importance for the creation of this handbook (as evidenced by the literature), it did hinder the ability to reach a larger audience with varying viewpoints that could have provided valuable insight.

Finally, numerous Native American tribes were contacted in an attempt to secure an interview in order to provide a truly universal set of policies for investigation of these cases. However, every tribal nation that was contacted did not reply to the emails sent with IRB approval and the supporting documentation or were bound by the formal interview process set forth by their tribe and could not get approval to interview. In order to still provide culturally considerate information in the handbook, other public resources were used to infer what policies might differ between tribal and non-tribal entities.

Discussion

Interview Outcomes

The interviews were used to fill in the gaps in the literature regarding the process of investigation as well as to provide information about whether each department had specific policies in place for adult missing person cases. From these interviews, common answers were given across multiple questions, thereby increasing the value of such information. When asked about what their agency's protocols were for these investigations and if there was a designated wait period, almost every department noted that the wait period seems to be more common in television than what is used in real life. Out of the nine departments interviewed, all but one specifically had no designated wait period before taking a report. One, however, did have a 24 hour wait period written into their policies, although the investigator noted that they do not follow this policy anymore. This indicates that while a vast majority of departments are moving away from wait periods, in smaller, more rural areas there could still be departments operating under a wait period. In addition to the wait period policy, each of the departments offered specific investigative steps that they take on each of these cases that would be useful to implement into the handbook that may get overlooked by a new investigator.

Another question that probed for a gap in the literature was asking about the use of NamUs and the timeframe for use. Most of the departments used NamUs for casework; however, one of these departments had (at the time of interview) just recently learned of it from a conference. Two other departments chose not to use NamUs and instead used only NCIC or also used their state's missing person clearinghouse. None of the departments interviewed had a suggested time frame for use of NamUs and noted that

it was often only used as a last resort and after all investigative leads ran out. This provided a framework for how to implement the use of NamUs into the handbook and allowed for a more progressive use of NamUs, while also permitting investigator discretion. Additionally, the lack of knowledge that NamUs is an available resource provides justification that there should be further standardization in training for missing person cases.

Multiple questions probed the importance of more progressive adult missing person laws as well as the importance of implementation of this handbook. Every department noted that a national mandatory reporting law should be implemented for adults like that for children. Additionally, every department noted that having a handbook such as this one would be helpful for investigators and patrol to ensure that they do not forget to ask the proper questions and conduct the proper investigative steps. Some of the larger departments did note that they thought the handbook would make more of an impact at smaller departments instead of large ones. Although this is valuable information to have, because this large department also noted that they did not have specific policies and procedures in place for these cases, it can be argued that they would benefit from a more structured guide as well.

Finally, when asked about what the most important information/step would be to include in the handbook, the answers generally varied widely from niche investigative steps to what databases should be used. However, one common theme amongst a few of them was that these cases should be “treated like a potential homicide” (i.e., the first 48 hours are the most crucial). They further explained that if the investigator actively treats the missing person case like the individual’s life depends on it, it may help to cut down

on the number of negligent cases. Additionally, the investigator will be more likely to increase their investigative efforts and ask all of the “right” questions, which may in return lead to a faster resolution of the case. This recommendation is noted often in the handbook in order to ensure that every missing person case is properly investigated regardless of discretion and circumstance.

Future Recommendations

Future research into the field of adult missing and unidentified case work can be benefitted in a few ways. Firstly, future studies should attempt to interview a larger population of police departments. This way there can be a more diverse set of recommendations from departments that may not believe adult missing person policy should be as progressive. Secondly, more research should be conducted with the NA/AN population in order to create policies that can more thoroughly relate to the cultural differences in these investigations. Additionally, greater emphasis should be put on missing person data collection from every state. Future research of this data should investigate variables such as mandatory database entry laws, mandatory reporting laws, environmental factors, and population size. These convoluted statistics make it difficult to understand where/why people are slipping through the system, why they are not being found, and what systemic issues occur within different states that lead to greater mass of people being reported as missing from one area. If each state can accurately provide missing person statistics and these variables can be separated, more patterns may be revealed as to understand if progressive laws, policies, and procedures are helping solve the problem. Finally, while the importance of having a handbook for all 50 states is significant, the ability to contact and successfully interview a large variety of states was

difficult. Future research might focus on one geographical section at a time to better provide information and recommendations that are geographically significant.

Conclusion

When someone goes missing, they are often found or return within a short period of time. However, law enforcement cannot predict which of these cases will result in an easy resolution. Adult missing persons tend to go missing for longer and are more likely to be found deceased. These themes along with the lack of federal and state laws mandating the reporting of adult missing persons are what have led to the increasing number of unsolved adult cases every year. While these cases are often more complex than those involving children, law enforcement should be able to use their discretion while still maintaining integrity and investigating each case to its full capacity. In addition to the more progressive laws, policies, and procedures, law enforcement should better understand how their actions towards the investigation may affect the family and community. Lack of communication with the family can lead to increased stress and ambiguous loss which creates distrust of law enforcement and may hinder the investigation further. Furthermore, law enforcement's lack of access and knowledge of readily available resources and databases hinder the investigative and financial support they may receive for adult missing persons.

Through the creation of a handbook that implements information gathered from a variety of state policies and procedures as well as governmental resources, public services, and further reading, law enforcement can more readily access knowledge that may help increase solvability of their cases. By implementing information regarding forensic techniques that apply to missing person investigations, it is hoped that

investigators better understand what other avenues may be used to complete an identification. Future implications for this research would be the passing of a federal law requiring the entry of adult missing persons into NCIC, mandating a timeframe for NamUs usage, creating more data archival centers for missing person statistical research, and decreasing the number of unsolved adult missing person cases each year.

CHAPTER II: MISSING AND UNIDENTIFIED ADULT INVESTIGATIONS: A COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK

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**Missing and Unidentified
Adult Investigations:
A Comprehensive Handbook**

Written By:

Hunter Smith

**Honors Student from the University of Southern Mississippi
with a Bachelor of Science in Forensic Anthropology with emphases
in Chemistry and Anthropology**

Recognition of Participants:

Captain David Ward – Forrest County Sheriff’s Department

Investigator Alicia Handler – Harrison County Sheriff’s Office

Detective Lieutenant Lenny Ordonez – Ocean Springs Police Department

Dr. Anastasia Holobinko – Mississippi State Medical Examiner’s Office

Chief Rusty Keyes – University of Southern Mississippi Police Department

Dr. Jesse Goliath – Mississippi State University

Lieutenant Darren Versiga – Pascagoula Police Department

Sergeant J.T. Thornton – Mobile County Sheriff’s Office

Detective Amanda Paris – Bryan Police Department

Detective Latoya Carrington – Dallas Police Department

Sergeant Jose Scott - Dallas Police Department

Lieutenant Chandra Griffith - Dallas Police Department

Detective Zacharie Perez - Dallas Police Department

Sergeant David Bayson - Dallas Police Department

Chief Deputy Dan Clark – Bayfield County Sheriff's Office

Lieutenant Roman Aronstein – Brown County Sheriff’s Office

Michael Nance – Othram Inc.

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Introduction

Mission Statement:

To establish lasting awareness about missing adults by providing a comprehensive and accessible guide encompassing procedures, databases, and resources to facilitate unified and effective investigations.

Purpose and Goals:

The ultimate purpose of this handbook is to improve success rates of finding and/or identifying adult missing persons. This is achievable through two methods. The first involves using this handbook as a training aid for law enforcement agencies to educate their officers on the proper questions to ask, what databases can be utilized, and what resources are available to them. The second method is the use of this handbook by law enforcement personnel as a resource and field guide throughout the investigation process.

There are three goals for the use of this handbook:

- To further clarify any questions regarding investigative tools or professional techniques that an investigator might have concerning missing adult investigations.
- To use as a guide to ensure that proper investigative techniques are applied before, during, and after the initial investigation.
- To provide resources for data management, databases used for identifying missing persons, and contact information for other professionals who can aid with these databases.

The outcome is not necessarily for this handbook to be read in its entirety (although all of the information is important), but rather for this to serve as a valuable tool as needed during all aspects of a missing adult investigation.

Introduction

Key Word Index: missing persons, unidentified, adult, NamUs, policies, NCIC

Important Definitions:

Adult Missing Person: Any person, 18 years of age or older, whose location is unknown.

Missing Endangered: Any person whose location is unknown, and circumstances have dictated that they are documented to have a mental/physical disability, they are involuntarily missing, or are in immediate danger.

Wait Period: A statute implemented by some law enforcement agencies requiring their officers to wait a specific amount of time, usually 24 or 72 hours, before responding to a Missing Adult Incident.

Unidentified Human Remains: Any human remains, whether that be a complete body or just one bone fragment, that are not able to be scientifically linked to a specific person.

Forensic Science: The application of science to criminal and civil laws that are enforced by law enforcement agencies in a criminal justice system.

Genealogy: The study of families, family history, and the tracing of their lineages.

Gender vs. Sex: Gender is what the individual identifies as for themselves (Male, Female, Transgender, Non-Binary, etc.), while Sex is the person's biological sex (Male or Female).

Distinctive Physical Features: These are any type of facial or bodily features on a person that can be either individualized or can narrow down the search dramatically. For example, identifiers might be that they are missing an arm, they walk with a severe limp, they have an unusual tattoo, etc.

Indian Country: All land within the limits of any Indian/Indigenous reservation under the jurisdiction of the United States government.

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Buccal Swabbing: A common technique that requires the donor to have the inside of their cheeks rubbed with a sterile object, such as a cotton swab, in order to collect DNA for comparison.

Latent Fingerprint: These are fingerprints that are left on a surface that are invisible unless a processing technique is first used to create more distinction.

Procedures

I. Initial Reporting

- A. Upon receiving notice of an Adult Missing Person (AMP), whether that be through dispatch, a call to the precinct, or a walk-in visit, a patrol officer should

IMMEDIATELY respond to the situation.

1. **NOTE: While some law enforcement agencies still offer their officers the option to enact a 24 – 72 hour wait period before the missing person report can be taken, this option should not be utilized.**
2. Should this missing individual have gone missing outside of the department's jurisdiction, the case should not be declined. Instead, the officer should take the report and get in contact with the proper jurisdiction to work on the case.
 - a. If this individual went missing in another jurisdiction, but resides in the jurisdiction of the reporting agency, the case should be handled by both jurisdictions. **NOTE: Only the primary agency should report the missing person in NCIC.**
 - i. Primary Agency – The jurisdiction where the person was last seen.
 - ii. Assisting Agency – The jurisdiction where the person lives.
 - iii. This will ensure ease of access to the area of which the missing individual went missing and ease of access to any potential family members, partners, and colleagues for additional information about the individual.
 - b. If it is not known where the person went missing, then the agency in their home jurisdiction should take the case.
3. Should this person have gone missing and is a part of a Native American Reservation, see [Procedures: Section III](#), for how to properly handle these cases.

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- B. Once the officer has arrived at the scene (the reporting person's residence, the missing person's residence, etc.), they should collect contact information from the reporting party (Complainant). **The officer should activate their vehicle and body camera to document the scene and all interviews.**

1. What is their name and relationship to the AMP?
2. What is a good contact phone number?
3. Are there any other persons that the officer should have contact information for? If so, gather that information as well.

- C. Determine if the missing individual meets the definition of an "Adult" in their state. Doing this first will provide a more tailored procedure of investigation.

1. If determined this person does not meet the criteria of an "Adult," proceed with the protocols establish for a Child Missing Person in the designated jurisdiction.
2. If determined this person does meet the criteria of an "Adult", proceed with the protocols listed below.

- D. Collect information regarding the circumstances behind the missing person's whereabouts. **Ensure that all witnesses are separated and interviewed independently.**

1. How was this person discovered to be missing?
 - a. Do the circumstances that surround the disappearance of this individual deviate significantly from their "normal" day to day routine?
 - i. What is their "normal" day to day routine?
 - b. Did this person go missing under circumstances that indicate their disappearance was not voluntary?

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2. Has the Complainant attempted to contact this person via cell phone (if they have a cell phone)?
 - a. Did this person answer the phone?
 - i. If they did answer the phone but refused to give them their whereabouts, the patrol or investigator should attempt to contact the person themselves. This hopefully can confirm that they are safe and simply don't want to be found by the Complainant.
 - ii. If this phone call leads the investigator to suspect foul play, continue with the investigation as normal.
 - b. How many times did they attempt to call them?
 - c. Is it normal for this person to not answer their phone?
 - d. The investigator should attempt to contact this person via phone call. The individual may just not want to be contacted by the complainant. If this is the case, see [Procedures: Section IV](#).
3. Who saw them last?
4. When was the last time this person was seen? [Date of Last Contact]
 - a. If this person has already been missing for a significant portion of time, see [Procedures: Section VI](#) for what additional information needs to be initially gathered.
5. Where was the last place this person was seen? [Last Known Location]
6. How did they leave? [Means of Departure] (e.g., on foot, in a car, by metro, etc.)
 - a. If this person left by car: Whose car was it? What was the color? What was the year, make, and model? If possible: What was the VIN number? What was the

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- license plate/tag number)? Are there any identifying features (damage, rims/hubcaps, stickers, etc.)?
- b. If this person left by other means such as metro, bus, taxi, train, etc: What was the company? Are there any identifying features (bus number, license plate/tag number, etc.)? What was the planned route for this trip?
- 7. Did this person take any of their personal belongings with them?
 - a. If so, what did they take?
 - i. Collect any information on the items that this person took with them.
 - ii. Note any items that they didn't take that might seem important (or out of the usual) such as their phone, wallet/purse, mandatory medications, car, etc.
- E. Collect identifying information about the missing person.
 - 1. What is their personal information?
 - a. Name, Place of Birth, Aliases, Age (Date of Birth), Social Security Number, Ethnicity, Race, Gender, and Sex.
 - 2. What is their physical description?
 - a. Hair Color, Eye Color, Height, Weight, Skin Color, Distinctive Physical Features
 - b. Collect a current (most recent) photograph of the AMP.
 - 3. Does the person have any cognitive disabilities/physical disabilities that might impact their situation?
 - a. Alzheimer's, Dementia, Autism, etc.
 - 4. What were they last seen wearing?
 - a. Clothing, Shoes, Glasses, Hats, Jewelry, Accessories, etc.
 - 5. Does this person have any scars, marks, tattoos, and/or piercings?

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- a. For each of the characteristics, gather information on its physical description (collect a photograph of the scar/mark/tattoo/piercing, if applicable), approximate size, location on their body, and approximate time when the AMP acquired it.
 - i. Should the Complainant not have a photograph of the tattoo/piercing, ask if the party has information on who/where the tattoo/piercing was acquired.
 - ii. Reach out to artist and inquire about receiving a picture of the tattoo.
6. What other information can be useful when conducting the investigation?
 - a. Place(s) of employment.
 - b. Date of Emancipation (if applicable)
 - c. Operator's (Driver's) License Number, Operator's State of Issuance, License Expiration
 - d. Pertinent Medical Information (e.g., does this person have seizures, are they diabetic and need to have insulin, etc.)
 - e. Has this person been fingerprinted previously?
 - i. If yes, by whom?
 - f. Collect the AMP's social media handles, email addresses, gaming accounts, online profiles, etc. If the Complainant has access to their account, the officer should investigate if there has been any recent activity that might offer support in locating the individual.
 - g. Identify telephone number(s) for AMP as well as service provider(s). This can assist with compiling a timeline, identifying contacts and associated frequencies of contact, developing leads, location data, etc.

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- h. Some car dealerships and “Buy Here, Pay Here” car lots have GPS reporting systems installed into their cars for easier repossession. If the AMP took their car, collecting the name for the place of purchase of their car could aid with the search if a GPS was installed.
 - i. Remember other potential devices can store data and can assist with location data and other information such as steps taken, heart rate, etc. (i.e., Smart watch, Fitbit, etc.)
 - j. Collect financial records such as what financial institution they belong to and/or what credit cards they use.
 - k. At the AMP’s place of residence, collect a known DNA sample from the individual’s belongings, should it be needed in the future.
 - l. Create a victim profile (victimology). A missing person’s family dynamics and background can provide further information into their disappearance.
- F. Enter the Adult Missing Person into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) immediately following the initial reporting.
- 1. The agency in the jurisdiction where the person went missing should be the agency that reports to NCIC.
 - 2. If the missing person has already been entered into NCIC by another agency, but later it is determined that the case needs to be transferred to another jurisdiction, the case will need to be cleared from NCIC and reentered by the new agency.
 - 3. Ensure that the NCIC report is filled out with as much information as possible. For more information on the NCIC reporting system, see [Databases / Data Entry / Archives: Section I](#) and/or [Appendix B](#).

Procedures

II. Investigation

A. Determine the appropriate plan of action, following reporting the adult missing in NCIC.

1. What is the status of this Adult Missing Person?

a. Endangered (EME):

i. This missing individual has a mental disability that may cause them to pose an imminent danger to themselves or others.

ii. Initial investigation indicates that this person went missing under circumstances (whether those be by their own accord or someone else's) that poses an imminent physical danger to themselves or others.

b. Disability (EMD):

i. There is a clear indication that the person does not possess rational thinking due to mental deterioration (This could be from disease such as Alzheimer's, old age, or other cognitive disabilities).

ii. The person has a developmental or intellectual disability that requires them to have constant supervision by a parent, guardian, partner, or health facility.

iii. The disability would require the aid of law enforcement in order to return them to safety.

c. Involuntary (EMI):

i. Circumstances indicate this person may not have gone missing voluntarily (e.g., kidnapping, abduction, coercion, etc).

d. Catastrophe Victim (EMV):

i. Circumstances indicate this person is missing following a natural disaster, catastrophe, or other wide scale event.

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- e. Other (EMO):
 - i. Circumstances indicate this person's whereabouts are unknown but do not pose an imminent threat to themselves or others, or do not fall under the previous categories.
 - ii. This person is under the age of 21 and considered emancipated by the laws of their state.
 - iii. These cases should still be investigated immediately; however, statewide alerts, social media posts, and other forms of media dissemination may not need to be implemented immediately.
 - f. Consider individuals that may fall into more than one of the above categories (involuntary missing who may have mental and/or physical limitations) and how these vulnerabilities may affect the investigation.
2. Who should begin the investigation?
- a. Should circumstances indicate this person has been missing for a short period of time (less than 24 hours), indicate imminent danger, and/or suggest there is a reasonable concern for their safety, patrol should aid in searching for the individual in conjunction with the investigator and/or search party.
 - b. Should circumstances indicate this person has been missing for a longer period of time, patrol should notify an investigator of the missing person case and submit an in-depth report of the initial information gathered as well as any supporting documentation. This case should then be handled by an investigator as soon as they receive the report.

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- B. Notify the public and determine if any statewide alerts should be issued.
 - 1. Use your department's social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter)) to post the missing person's information online. Additionally, some departments may have missing person boards on their website, and these should be updated as well.
 - 2. Check your department and/or state criteria for what qualifies a missing person circumstance to have an alert issued. If this case meets the criteria, follow the steps for the given alert and have it issued immediately ([See Appendix C for state specific alert guidelines](#)).
- C. Determine the search area(s).
 - 1. Begin with their **Last Known Location**.
 - 2. Check any potential destinations that became apparent during the initial reporting or during other interviews.
 - 3. Check their place of residence (if different from that the reporting party), the residences of their friends and family, and homeless shelters.
 - a. **Following the determination of an AMP, the investigator/patrol officer should secure the residence of the AMP to maintain the integrity of any potential DNA or evidence.**
 - 4. Check their place of employment.
 - 5. Check places they have been known to frequent.
 - 6. Check local hospitals, morgues, mental health facilities, and jails.
 - 7. Check trash cans and dumpsters in the area as in some cases an AMP body or items of relevance could have been discarded.

Procedures

D. Resources available for searches.

1. If needed, contact and utilize Search and Rescue Teams to aid in the process, especially if the person is in imminent danger.
2. Think about the potential for using helicopters, drones, on-foot surveys of areas, search dogs, etc.
3. Use roadblock canvasses as needed to stop and interview people who might have seen the person leaving.
4. If the person left by car, check for license plate readers at places or routes the AMP was thought to have traveled through.
5. If the person is thought to have their phone, or the phone is located, there is potential for preservation orders for phone records. Additionally, in exigent circumstances, cell phone tower data could be an option for searching.

E. At each search area collect information on each of the following:

1. Address and what is located at that address (e.g., place of residence, grocery store, homeless shelter, forest, etc.).
2. Collect all information from any potential witness (see Section II-F).
3. Check for security cameras and, if possible, review the video.
 - a. Sometimes what the video does not show may be more important than what it does (e.g., provable lies).
4. Take pictures of the surrounding area.
 - a. Take pictures of parking lots, roads, other security cameras, etc.
 - i. This can provide context or potentially hold information on a suspect vehicle or place of exit.

Procedures

5. Make notes of any other information (no matter how insignificant it seems) that may become relevant.
 6. Collect the recording of the 911 call or call to police station for documentation purposes.
 7. If a vehicle is recovered, it can provide forensic evidence as well as the mileage traveled and any notable damages. Most newer cars have a “black box” that records everything that had been done in the car for a certain amount of time.
 8. **Document in detail all current and future search efforts.**
- F. Question/Interview potential witnesses and/or family, friends, and acquaintances. **Ensure that all witnesses are separated and interviewed independently.**
1. What is their relationship to the missing individual?
 2. What is their contact information?
 3. If they know the individual, when was the last time they heard from them?
 4. Where did they see the individual? (e.g., they saw them at the grocery store, they saw them traveling on Interstate X, etc.). Have the witness be as specific as possible.
 5. Consider conducting a recorded walkthrough and/or reenactment (case specific).
 6. If they have heard from the individual, or were a witness:
 - a. Did they say where they were going? If so, where?
 - b. What were they wearing?
 - i. Ask this in case the individual may have switched their clothing.
 - c. How did they look?
 - i. Did they seem in good spirits?
 - ii. Were they distressed? Agitated? Depressed?

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- d. Were they alone or with someone else?
 - i. If they were with someone else, ask for potential identifying information on the other party (e.g., What did they look like? Were they male or female? etc).
 - e. What were they seen traveling in? (e.g., on foot, in a car, on a train, etc.)
 - i. Collect any identification for the means of travel that the witness might have/remember.
7. All interviews should be recorded. This may be helpful if there is a later determination to conduct follow-up interview(s). This also allows the interviewer to focus on asking questions and processing the information as opposed to taking notes. This allows investigators the opportunity to conduct post interview review for any potentially missed/overlooked information and/or identify information that may not have been identified as significant at the time of the interview. Recorded interviews can assist in cases involving assertions of misunderstanding or recantation by the subject of the interview. Recordings can also assist in providing context such as emotion or lack of theory. On the topic of interviews, the objective is not to get a “confession” but to seek the truth. Initial interviews assist in providing a baseline. Here are some pertinent definitions to consider:
- a. Statement:
 - i. Declaration of matters of fact.
 - b. Admission:
 - i. Acknowledgement of fact(s) tending to prove guilt which fall short of acknowledgment of all essential elements of the crime.

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- c. Confession:
 - i. Statement admitting or acknowledging all the facts necessary for conviction of the crime.
 - ii. As it relates to subject interviews, consider that the truth may be in the lies.
- G. Determine and appoint who will be your (the investigator's) Point of Contact (POC) for easy access to information and reporting for the family.
 - 1. This can help to alleviate the number of people contacting the investigator and create a more streamlined process for information sharing.
- H. Determine the appropriate next steps dependent on the outcome of the initial investigation.
 - 1. If the missing individual has been located alive, follow the steps and guidelines listed in **Section IV: Located Alive** (p. 52).
 - 2. If the missing individual has been located deceased, follow the steps and guidelines listed in **Section V: Located Deceased** (p. 53).
 - 3. If the missing individual has not been located within the designated amount of time given by the departmental policy, all of the notes and investigative information gathered should be turned over to an investigator (if not already given).
 - a. Follow the steps and guidelines listed in **Section VI: Long-Term Missing** (pg. 55).

III. Missing Native American and Alaskan Native People

- A. While the majority of protocols and procedures for Adult Missing and Unidentified Persons cases are the same for both Indigenous and Non-Tribal entities, there are three

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main differences in the handling of these investigations: Jurisdiction, Cultural Considerations, and Availability of Resources/Protocols.

1. Jurisdiction: Often cases involving missing and unidentified indigenous persons will require a multijurisdictional approach. Understanding this at the onset of a report will help to speed up the response time as well as solve further problems that might come up in a timely manner.
 - a. When there are cases that are either reported in Indian Country or are believed to be in Indian Country:
 - i. If the person is an Indian, the local Tribal Agency or the BIA should be the immediate response entity.
 - ii. If the person is non-Indian, the local or state agency in the surrounding jurisdiction should be the immediate response entity.
2. Cultural Considerations: There are 574 Federally Recognized Tribes in the US, Alaska, and Hawaii. Even though many of these tribes may share the same language, that does not mean that they share the same culture or beliefs. Therefore, it is most important for a non-tribal investigator to come into these situations with an open mind, ask questions, and build trust with the community.
 - a. Family is an integral part of their culture, and their “tribe” is considered their whole family. Therefore, when a member of the tribe goes missing, it affects the entire tribe not just the immediate family.
 - b. Spirituality also plays a large role in their culture. Oftentimes, parts of their religious protocols and ceremonies are meant to be private. Individuals within each community may also have different beliefs or ways in which they interact

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with the religion, and therefore an investigator should be sensitive to this information and should seek to understand each individual they are working with or the missing individual.

- c. The Elders in each community are significant to the entire community. Therefore, these people may want to be and/or need to be an integral part in an investigation. The investigator should be considerate of this custom but should also find a balance to ensure the integrity of an investigation.
- d. When unidentified remains are found in Indian Country, they will first need to determine if they are of forensic importance (i.e., not prehistoric or historic).
 - i. Should it be determined that they are not of forensic importance, they will be handed to the tribe for reburial.
 - ii. Should it be determined that they are of forensic importance, they will go to the coroner or medical examiner's office so that they can be examined and eventually identified. Once they are identified, should the person be from the tribe, the remains will be returned for proper disposition.
- 3. Availability of Resources/Protocols: Not all Native American or Alaskan Native tribes have the same access to funding. They also may have different societal structures and government policies which will create more difficulty for some to have designated protocols for missing and unidentified persons. Therefore, when beginning an investigation, an investigator should seek to understand what is already established, what can be improved, and where additional resources can come from.
 - a. The DOJ created a guide for Tribal Communities to create a Response Plan for Missing Person Cases. It offers a variety of tips for the creation of missing person

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working procedures that can be useful in conjunction with the information in this handbook. The link to the DOJ guide can be found [HERE](#) or Reference 7.7.

In addition to the considerations above, the alert systems used for Missing Indigenous Persons are slightly different than non-tribal cases.

4. ASHANTI Alerts: A public notification system used to broadcast information about missing adults, aged 18-75 years old.
5. MEPAs: Missing and Endangered Persons alert system is a public notification of a person aged 18 or older for whom there is a reasonable concern for their safety or for whom one or more risk factors is present.

IV. Located Alive

- A. Should the officer or investigator locate the missing individual, or the missing individual or family member calls and reports they have returned, they should do the following:
 1. Take the proper steps to confirm the identity of the individual.
 - a. This could be using official forms of government identification such as driver's license, social security, and/or passport.
 2. Contact the missing individual themselves and ensure that they are safe and see if medical aid needs to be administered.
 3. Interview them and discuss the incident and maintain this interview for future records.
 4. If this individual did not go missing voluntarily, follow your departmental policies regarding any further criminal actions that were committed against that person.
 5. If this individual went missing on their own accord, but does not want their location known to family, they have that right. However, make sure to follow up with the

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- family members and let them know the individual is safe and that they did not want to reveal their location.
6. Ensure that this case is removed from actively missing on NCIC, NamUs, departmental databases, missing person boards, alerts. etc.
 7. Following their case, ensure that all aspects of the investigation are properly stored and archived, this includes but is not limited to:
 - a. The initial reporting party's information and interview.
 - b. Any notes, witness interviews, and photographs taken during the search.
 - c. Any information gathered from the missing individual such as their account for the disappearance, further criminal charges, and any further actions taken.
 8. This information should be stored in the lead investigator's personal files, the responding agency's home reporting system, NCIC, and NamUs (if applicable).

V. Located Deceased

- A. If an individual has been located deceased, but their identity has yet to be confirmed, follow proper evidence collection and forensic procedures in an attempt to determine the individual's identity (e.g., fingerprinting, dental records, medical records, DNA, etc.). For further information on forensic applications and procedures, see [Forensic Techniques / Application](#).
- B. Should there be skeletal human remains, contact a forensic anthropologist to aid in estimation of sex, approximate age, estimated ancestry, approximate height, and any antemortem or postmortem history that has presented in the remains.
 1. Consider the use of a forensic artist if remains are found.

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- C. Check for any medical devices or joint replacement items that may be present with the skeletal remains. These devices have serial numbers that are directly tied to the individual and can provide positive identification.
- D. Check databases such as NCIC and NamUs to cross reference any individuals who were known to have gone missing in the location of which the deceased individual was found, while also referencing the identifying information gathered from the forensic anthropologist.
 - 1. **NOTE: Although a forensic anthropologist can be an excellent resource in providing law enforcement with key identifying markers for the remains (such as age, sex, and ancestry), there is potential for error. Should referencing these databases for the exact identifying features given not prove useful, keep an open mind as to the identification markers of the individual these remains belong to.**
- E. Should these remains be identified as a known missing person:
 - 1. The law enforcement official should contact any known relatives and inform them of the situation.
 - 2. They should follow up on any additional actions that must be taken for the case should there be potential of foul play.
 - 3. They should attempt to determine the cause of death and the circumstances surrounding it.
 - 4. They should update, and close, the open missing person case in any database that the individual is entered (e.g., NCIC, NamUs, Clearing House, etc.).
- F. Should these remains continue to be unidentified:

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1. The law enforcement official should upload these remains to CODIS and NamUs, along with the information gathered from the forensic anthropologist, in order to store this information for it to be cross-referenced by other law enforcement officials and/or the general public.
2. Throughout the death investigation process, the investigator should periodically check the databases (NCIC, NamUs, Clearing House, etc.) for any new missing persons reports that might fit the profile for these remains.
 - a. Remain in contact with the medical examiner and/or coroner.

VI. Long-Term Missing

- A. The law enforcement official should request to collect a DNA reference sample from a direct family member when:
 - a. An adult has been missing for an extended period prior to the reporting party making an initial report, [\(EXAMPLE A in Appendix F\)](#). **NOTE: This should be completed by the responding officer during the initial reporting process.**
 - b. An adult has been missing for an extended period after the reporting party made the initial report. **NOTE: This should be completed by the primary investigator on the case.**
1. The law enforcement official should make the submitting party aware that:
 - a. They are requesting (i.e., it is not mandatory) that a family member submits their DNA for referencing unidentified remains, as well as to have on file should it become relevant in the future. **NOTE: These family members must be directly tied to the missing person's blood line (e.g., biological parents, full biological**

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- siblings, biological children, etc.). See [Appendix F](#) for a flow chart regarding which family member is the best candidate for a DNA reference.
- b. Their DNA will only be kept in a database meant for cross referencing for missing persons at NamUs and CODIS and that it will not be available for use in criminal cases.
 - c. Once the missing person case has been resolved, their DNA sample will be archived. However, the donor can request their sample to be returned at any point.
2. The officer/investigator should collect a signed consent form ([Appendix F](#)) from each submitting party.
 3. The officer/investigator should then proceed to collect a buccal swab from the family member or, if the officer/investigator is not comfortable with conducting the collection, they should request a forensic investigator to collect it. See [Forensic Techniques / Application: Section I.C.](#) for more information on proper storage and collection of DNA samples.
 4. These swabs, along with their supporting documentation, should be sent to NamUs for analysis, comparison, and storage. See [Databases / Data Entry / Archives: Section II](#) for the process of sending DNA to NamUs for processing.
- B. The law enforcement official should request for the medical and dental records of the missing person to be released by their primary care doctor and their dentist for reference when:
- a. An adult has been missing for an extended period PRIOR to the reporting party making an initial report. **NOTE: This should be completed by the responding officer during the initial reporting process.**

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- b. An adult has been missing for an extended period AFTER the reporting party made the initial report. **NOTE: This should be completed by the primary investigator on the case.**
1. The law enforcement official should make the submitting party aware that:
 - a. They are requesting (i.e., it is not mandatory) that the family member submits a medical release form for collection of the missing persons medical history and dental records for referencing unidentified remains, as well as to have on file should it become relevant in the future. **NOTE: It might be easier/less risky to subpoena the medical/dental records as it will protect you from any HIPAA violations.**
 - b. Their medical and dental records will only be kept in a database meant for cross referencing for missing persons in the NCIC database, at NamUs, and in the law enforcement agency and that it will not be available for criminal use.
 - c. Once the missing person case has been resolved, their medical and dental records will be retired.
2. The officer/investigator should collect a signed consent form ([Appendix F](#)) from the appropriate party.
3. The officer/investigator should then proceed to collect the medical and dental records from the missing person's primary care doctor and dentist. For more information on the importance of medical and dental records in identification, see [Forensic Techniques / Application Sections III and IV](#).
4. The dental records, along with their supporting documentation, should be sent to NamUs for analysis, comparison, and storage. NamUs can then complete dental

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worksheets that can be sent to law enforcement agencies for upload to NCIC. See [Appendix B: NamUs](#) for the process of sending dental records to NamUs for processing.

5. Pertinent medical information obtained from the medical records should be uploaded to NCIC and NamUs. The actual set of medical records should not be uploaded; instead, the investigator should enter pertinent information into the identifying features textboxes. The physical records should be kept on file at the primary agency.

NOTE: Consult your local attorney for the HIPAA laws in your state to ensure everything entered is legal.

6. Consider court order for AMP medical and/or mental health records as that could assist with lead development.

C. Throughout the course of the investigation, the investigator should periodically check the databases (NCIC, NamUs, Clearing House, etc.) for any new unidentified remains and/or potential matches and leads for their missing person.

- a. Conduct ongoing checks related to signs of life such as travel (Passport/Visa), SSN, criminal history, civil actions, driving records, financials, etc. Document if there is no data. Follow-up on any data that may be identified and make sure to include or exclude it as your AMP.
- b. Make sure to follow-up on all other leads such as sightings and document efforts to include or exclude them from being associated with your AMP.

D. Make sure to fully document any and all steps/information during the entirety of the investigation.

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- E. While it may seem monotonous and potentially difficult for the investigator to check in and update the point of contact (POC) on any new developments, or that there are no new developments, this part of the investigation is just as important as the investigative work.
 - 1. Often the family of the missing person just wants reassurance that their loved one is being thought of and that the investigator is continuing to keep them relevant. This can go a long way in terms of building the relationship between the family, the investigator, and the law enforcement agency.
- F. While not mandatory, on the annual anniversary of the person being missing, the investigator should:
 - 1. Work with the media to facilitate a media release informing the public about the missing person and asking for leads.
 - 2. Call the family and let them know that they are still thinking about their loved one and are continuing to look for leads and updates.

Databases / Data Entry / Archives

I. National Crime Information Center (NCIC)

A. What is the NCIC?

1. The National Crime Information Center (NCIC) is a computer database that houses information pertaining to the criminal justice field, such as criminal record history, fugitives, stolen property, and missing and unidentified people. The FBI is authorized to acquire, classify, and preserve identification, crime, and other records in order to assist other agencies with their casework (Reference 1.1).
2. It is available for all law enforcement (federal, state, local, and others) to use as a place to enter information for record keeping, but also serves as a database to search for records regarding any individual they may encounter in the field, whether that be a fugitive or a missing person report. However, this database, and the records, are only available to authorized law enforcement agencies and individuals. It is protected through various measures such as locks, alarm devices, passwords, and encryption devices (Reference 1.1).

B. What needs to be entered for an Adult Missing Person?

1. Name (NAM)
2. Sex (SEX)
3. Race (RAC)
4. Date of Birth (DOB)
5. Height (HGT)
6. Weight (WGT)
7. Eye Color (EYE)

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8. Hair Color (HAI)
9. Missing Person (MNP)
10. Date of Last Contact (DLC)
11. Originating Agency Case Number (OCA)

C. What is the timeframe for use?

1. After the initial report of the missing person, the minimum information recorded above **NEEDS** to be entered into NCIC within two hours.
2. A second party check should be conducted after the record is entered into NCIC (e.g., another officer, investigator, etc.) should check for completeness, accuracy, and validity.
3. Should the person continue to be missing for 24 – 48 hours, the NCIC report should be updated to include any other information gathered from the initial report and investigative efforts.
4. After 1 to 2 weeks (or should the circumstances indicate this is relevant sooner), the investigator should attempt to gather the missing person's medical and dental records. Once these are received, they both need to be uploaded to NCIC and NamUs to aid in future identification purposes.
5. Should the person continue to be missing for longer than 2 weeks, the investigator should continue to update their NCIC records as more information is gathered.
6. Between 60 – 90 days after the initial entry, these records will be validated by the agency's Terminal Agency Coordinator. They will determine the completeness, accuracy, and if the record is still active. Should the criteria not be met, the record will not be retained in the system. Therefore, it is vital that the investigator keeps the

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NCIC record complete and up to date so that a record that should be active does not get dismissed.

D. Searching for Missing/Unidentified Leads through NCIC

1. Automatic Cross-Search

- a. When a missing person record is entered and/or modified in NCIC, the system automatically searches the database against all unidentified records in NCIC. This is done every day for all records entered on the previous day.
 - i. Information to be compared: date of birth, sex, race, ethnicity, height, weight, eye color, hair color, date of last contact (estimated date of death, date body found), scars/marks/tattoos, fingerprint classification, jewelry type, originating agency state code, blood type, dental characteristics.
- b. Once the comparisons have been made, the agency will either get a message that a possible match(es) has/have been made or that no match was made. Should there be matches, the message will include short records for up to 100 potential matches (should there be more, the remaining records can be obtained by contacting the FBI CJIS staff).

2. Global Inquiry (SPRQ)/Off-Line Search

- a. The Global Inquiry is a request for records that cannot be retrieved through a standard inquiry transaction. The use of this function is restricted to authorized CTAs/FSCs and other authorized agencies. They can perform searches of the active and retired NCIC 2000 records. Log searches can also be requested by contacting FBI CJIS.

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- i. For further information on how to conduct a Global Inquiry, see [Appendix B: NCIC](#).

- E. When entering information into NCIC, it should be remembered that it is just as important to note what is not known in the investigation as it is to note what is known. When filling out the entry, if the investigator or patrol officers finds that an answer to a question is “none” for example, then in the entry “none” should be entered. If the investigator does not know the answer, they should write “unknown”. If an entry is left blank, it could cause confusion for others thinking that it was not answered, or the investigator did not ask that question.
- F. Remember all information in NCIC can be cross referenced and matched to other entries. Therefore, be as specific as possible and put as much information that is known (or unknown) into the system. This will help to increase the chances of a match in the future.

II. The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)

- A. What is NamUs?
 1. The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) is a centralized repository and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases across the United States. NamUs acts as a database to aid investigators in solving long-term missing and unidentified persons cases. NamUs was created to assist in the investigation process as well as offer free forensic services to aid with identification.
 2. It is designed to complement the NCIC database, specifically with the long-term cases of which investigative efforts have been exhausted. Therefore, the NamUs

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database is also available for the public to search for open cases within their database, which allows for a larger number of people to aid in investigative search efforts.

3. Each region of states has a designated NamUs representative who can provide help with cases as well as provide training for NamUs first time users. These regions are based on population, geographical location, and the amount of casework each region has. To determine the region that your agency is in, as well as the designated representative, please refer to the contact page on the NamUs website.
 - a. Link to Contact Page [HERE](#) or Reference 1.2.

B. What needs to be entered?

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Sex Assigned at Birth
4. Date of Birth
5. Race/Ethnicity
6. Height
7. Weight
8. Hair Color
9. Eye Color
10. Date of Last Contact
11. City Last Seen
12. State Last Seen
13. Circumstances of Disappearance
14. Missing from Tribal Land

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15. Investigating Agency Name, Case Number, and Email Address

C. What is the timeframe for use?

1. While NamUs can be used for any missing person case (at any point in the investigation), they recommend that their resources best benefit a case that has been active for 180 days or more, unless circumstances indicate that there is an increased risk of harm or death to the person, of which entrance into NamUs might prove useful before that timeframe. For those cases of which exigent circumstances are indicated, a timeframe of 15 – 30 days has been suggested for use. However, it is up to the investigator to decide when uploading information into NamUs will prove most beneficial to their case.
2. Any additional information that is gathered at the onset of the case, such as photo, description of jewelry, description of clothing, etc., should also be added. Then, throughout the process, should more information become available, such as DNA or dental records, the case file should be updated.

D. Searching for Missing/Unidentified Leads through NamUs

1. Once the investigator is registered, they can perform an advanced search of all missing, unidentified, or unclaimed person cases matching a customized criterion. Every field in the NamUs database is able to be searched using the user's custom permission, checkboxes, pre-populated picklists, and keywords. For the full guide on using the NamUs Advanced Search function, see [Appendix B: NamUs](#).

E. When entering information into NamUs, remember that it is just as important to note what is not known in the investigation as it is to note what is known. When filling out the entry, if the investigator or patrol officers finds that an answer to a question is “none” for

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example, then in the entry “none” should be entered. If the investigator does not know the answer, they should write “unknown”. If an entry is left blank, it could cause confusion for others thinking that it was not answered, or the investigator did not ask that question.

- F. Remember all information in NamUs can be cross referenced and matched to other entries. Therefore, be as specific as possible and put as much information that is known (or unknown) into the system. This will help to increase the chances of a match in the future.
- G. When submitting DNA to NamUs, the investigator should reach out to their designated NamUs representative for further information on how to submit their sample and what additional forms should be submitted in conjunction.

III. Additional Databases and Resources

- A. Bureau of Indian Affairs – Missing and Murdered Unit (MMU)

Visit their website: [HERE](#) or Reference 1.3

- 1. This unit was established to focus on solving missing, murdered, and/or human trafficking cases involving American Indians and Alaska Natives. The investigators work to use resources from tribal, federal, state, and local jurisdictions in order to aid this problem (Reference 1.4).
- 2. The MMU offers a wide variety of resources on their website such as a board for the current missing or murdered cases, places to report information, learn about the organization and the crisis, and many other information centers helping to educate the public.

- B. ViCAP

Visit their website: [HERE](#) or Reference 1.5

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1. The FBI Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP) provides a national repository and investigative information to law enforcement regarding four major categories:
 - a. Homicides (and attempts) that are suspected to be a part of a series and/or appear to be random, motiveless, or sexually oriented.
 - b. Sexual assault that is known or is suspected to be a part of series and/or appears to be conducted randomly.
 - c. **Missing Persons where circumstances indicate that reason for their disappearance indicated foul play and the person is still missing.**
 - d. Unidentified Persons where the manner of death is known or suspected to be homicide.
2. ViCAP recommends entering resolved cases into the system as well as active cases. Their program can cross-reference characteristics from resolved case that may create a lead for other active cases in jurisdictions across the nation (Reference 1.6).

C. The DoeNetwork

Visit their website: [HERE](#) or Reference 1.7

1. The DoeNetwork is an informal volunteer organization established by various individuals including law enforcement, forensic specialists, and citizens, who saw a need for a centralized database for aiding in the identification and locating of missing and unidentified persons.
2. Their mission is to “give the nameless back their names and return the missing to their families” (Reference 1.7). They aim to meet this mission by providing exposure

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for these cases, providing potential matches to investigating agencies, and to attempt to gain media exposure for these cases.

D. State Level Missing Person Boards

1. Many states have state-level missing person websites that detail current missing person cases, offer information on how to report a missing person, and/or provide additional resources to the public. Some states offer these boards through their State Bureau of Investigation, while others offer it through another entity.

E. Medical Examiner or Coroner's Office

1. Each state has different policies on whether it is a medical examiner system, a coroner system, or both. However, utilizing the state medical examiner's office (if applicable) or the county coroner's office can provide resources such as aiding in search and recovery efforts for human remains, managing long-term unidentified person cases, help to dispose of unclaimed decedents, and create mass disaster protocols for the law enforcement agencies in their areas (Reference 1.8).

F. Community Run Organizations

1. Often community members can be great sources of information regarding missing persons. There are countless Facebook groups and community organizations, often created by concerned families of the missing, that post information regarding new missing and unidentified persons, provide updates on their whereabouts, as well as create awareness for the missing.

- G. **NOTE: For a list of the most relevant missing persons websites, resources, and data archival centers in each state, see [Appendix C](#).**

Forensic Techniques / Application

I. Proper Evidence Collection, Processing, and Storage

A. What is Forensic Science?

1. “Forensic science is the application of science to criminal and civil laws that are enforced by police agencies in a criminal justice system” (Reference 2.1).
2. Forensic Science is an umbrella term for a wide array of disciplines, many of which are useful in missing person cases, such as general forensics, odontology, pathology/biology, anthropology, and criminalistics.

B. Why is it important?

1. For the general forensics aspect, proper collection, processing, and storage of evidence collected at the scene, or as a result of an investigation, can provide useful information regarding a missing person’s identification and whereabouts.
2. Should this evidence have not been collected, processed, or stored correctly, issues could arise regarding the efficacy and integrity of DNA, fingerprint, and physical evidence, as well as could prove inadmissible in court (should a case get to that level) (Reference 2.2).

C. DNA

1. Collection

- a. In a missing person case, often the DNA collected will be the saliva from a family member, a toothbrush, hair from a hairbrush, etc. Each of these items will need to be collected in a different way, collection of items such as a toothbrush and hairbrush will be detailed below in the “Physical Evidence” section.
- b. When collecting saliva from a family member to use as a reference, the most widely used technique is buccal swabbing. Before collecting familial DNA, please

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refer to the “Types of DNA” section below, as well as see the flow chart for which family member is the best for testing a reference ([Appendix F](#)).

- i. The procedures for proper collection of buccal swabs can be found ([HERE](#)) or by going to Appendix F.

2. Processing

- a. When using a buccal swab for DNA processing in a missing person case, NamUs provides free DNA testing. Therefore, should the agency want to use this resource, please follow the processing guidelines for NamUs below. Should the agency choose to use another entity to process the DNA, please refer to that entity’s protocols for processing guidelines.
- b. NamUs no longer provides buccal collection kits for testing. However, CODIS can provide these kits. As of the Fall 2023, the CODIS Laboratory has moved to a new buccal collection kit. These new kits will replace the old buccal swab and blood tube collection kit with a collector that combines both pieces into one unit. In addition to the buccal swab sample collected, NamUs also requires a form to be filled out by the primary agency.
- c. The NamUs DNA Sample Collection Form can be found ([HERE](#)) or Reference 2.3.
- d. Should your agency need to order buccal collection kits from CODIS, please follow your agency’s protocols. Additionally, the following link will take you to their order form. ([ORDER FORM](#)) or Reference 2.4.

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3. Storage

- a. Ideally, the buccal swab should be processed immediately after collection; however, that may not be realistic in most scenarios. In this case, it is recommended that a buccal swab should be stored in a collection tube at 36 – 46 degrees Fahrenheit (2 – 8 degrees Celsius) for up to 2 weeks, for midterm storage samples should be stored at -4 degrees Fahrenheit (-20 degrees Celsius), and for long-term storage samples should be stored at -112 degrees Fahrenheit (-80 degrees Celsius) (Reference 2.5).

D. Fingerprints

1. Processing

- a. The most common technique for processing and collection of fingerprints at a scene is the “dusting” technique. When conducting this technique, a fine powder is lightly dusted over the area that a latent fingerprint is either known to be or thought to be. The color of the powder is dependent on the color of the background material that is being dusted. An object with a light background will be dusted with a dark powder and vice versa. The two most common types of dusters are a soft, fine bristle brush and a magnetic brush. The type that is used is often left up to the preference of the investigator and/or department; however, the processing technique is identical (Reference 2.2).
- b. To process a latent print with powder, a small amount of powder should be applied to the brush first. Then using a light sweeping motion, the investigator should brush the area that a fingerprint is thought to be until the investigator can see the latent print begin to develop. The print should not have a lot of pressure

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applied to it, nor should an excessive amount of powder be used to process the print. Either scenario can cause the print to be unusable for comparison purposes (Reference 2.2).

2. Collection

- a. Due to the fragile nature of a fingerprint, after processing, the print should ALWAYS be photographed and documented first before attempting removal. This is to ensure that there is record of the print as well as provide a potential comparison source should the print not lift properly (Reference 2.2)
- b. To properly lift a print from a nonporous surface, a fingerprint backing card should be prepared first. Then, fingerprint lift tape should be used to apply to the surface over the top of the print, ensuring the least number of creases and air pockets. This can be done by slowly rolling the tape from top to bottom. Finally, the tape should be removed from the surface by slowly lifting/rolling the tape in the opposite direction it was applied. This tape should then be applied to the fingerprint backing card. This should then be packaged in a paper bag and properly sealed and documented to maintain chain of custody (Reference 2.2).

3. Storage

- a. Due to the stable nature of the powder used to process latent prints, they can be stored indefinitely in the original packaging and on the fingerprint backing card that was used when collecting the print (Reference 2.6).

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E. Physical Evidence

1. Collection

- a. The collection process differs dependent on the type of physical evidence present.

However, as a rule of thumb, objects that contain biological or plant specimens (hair/hairbrush, buccal swabs, toothbrush, clothing items, blood-soaked items, cigarette butts, etc.) and/or are wet/moist should be packaged in a paper product (a drying chamber may also be used). Products such as drugs (except for the plant-based drugs), bullets, shotgun shells, and other small non-porous items, should be packaged in a plastic product. Paper allows for biological, plant, and wet specimens to dry out without the potential of contamination from mold, while plastic products ensure small or fine particle products are fully contained and will not be exposed to air.

- b. Proper collection of evidence will include steps such as:

- i. Each piece of evidence should be collected and stored separately.
- ii. Each package should be marked with a description of the item, its original location, the handling investigator/agency, the evidence marker number, the case number, and the date and time.
- iii. Each package should be completely sealed as to be tamperproof. This seal should then have the investigator's signature across the tape line and packaging line to ensure chain of custody.
- iv. Proper records should show when, where, and to whom this evidence has been handed and/or by whom it was opened/examined (i.e. chain of custody)

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2. Processing

- a. Physical evidence will be processed differently dependent on the type of evidence. However, when submitting items such as cigarette butts, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, clothing items, etc., to a lab for DNA analysis, the items should be sent in totality to these agencies following that entity's protocols for submission.

3. Storage

- a. Most evidence can be stored at room temperature in the original packaging that was used for collection at the scene. However, wet/moist items must be removed and allowed to fully dry before long term storage. Liquids or other fragile biological specimens should be refrigerated in glass or plastic.

II. Types of DNA

A. What are the different types of DNA?

1. Nuclear DNA (nDNA)

- a. Nuclear DNA is found in the nucleus in most of our cells in our body. This DNA is inherited from both parents and is unique to every person (apart from identical twins) (Reference 2.7).

2. Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA)

- a. Mitochondrial DNA is found in the mitochondria in most of the cells in our body. This DNA is only inherited from the mother of the individual. Unlike nDNA, mtDNA is not unique to every person; rather, being inherited from only the mother, it is unique to a maternal lineage of people (Reference 2.7).

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B. DNA Typing

1. What is it?
 - a. DNA Typing is a category of which there are multiple methods for studying, analyzing, and comparing DNA samples and other genetic factors (Reference 2.8).
2. How does it work?
 - a. First, a laboratory analysis of the sample is completed, and the genetic-marker types are determined at sites with possible variance (Reference 2.8)
 - b. Second, a comparison of these marker types is completed to determine if the sample could have come from another/the same reference source (Reference 2.8).
 - c. Third, should there be a match, an analysis is completed to determine the probability of which this match could be from the same source (Reference 2.8).
3. Methods for DNA Typing
 - a. Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)
 - i. This typing method is widely used in the forensics field for the analysis of DNA samples due to the extreme sensitivity it provides. This process amplifies a very small amount of DNA (even degraded DNA) to an extent that can be more easily analyzed. However, one potential drawback is that it amplifies all DNA present in a sample and, therefore, there are higher risks of contamination (Reference 2.9).
 - b. Short Tandem Repeat (STR)
 - i. This method aids in providing statistical probability of a match between two DNA samples. DNA has many different sequences of bases that make up the

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backbone of the DNA. The location and order of these bases are generally the same for the vast majority of people. However, there are some that differ in how many times a specific sequence of these bases repeat in an area. The FBI has 13 established locations in the DNA that can be analyzed for a potential match. Each time one of these locations match to the reference, the probability of these samples being a match increased significantly (Reference 2.10).

c. Y-Chromosome Analysis

- i. One set of chromosomes is inherited from our mother and one from our father. Females have two “X” chromosomes and therefore can only donate an “X” chromosome. Males, however, have one “X” and one “Y” chromosome. There is a 50% chance of inheriting either chromosome from your father. If an “X” is inherited, the embryo will be a female and if a “Y” is inherited the embryo will be a male. Therefore, using the Y chromosome from a male contributor can aid with differentiating mixtures of multiple DNA samples, as well as be used to trace a paternal lineage (Reference 2.9).

d. Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA)

- i. As noted previously, mitochondrial DNA comes from certain non-nuclear structures in the cell called mitochondria and provides information on a maternal lineage. The importance of this DNA typing is that in instances where nDNA is either too degraded, or cannot be amplified enough to be compared, mtDNA can often survive longer and provide a viable analysis. This is particularly important in cases that have gone cold or have unidentified remains that are degraded (Reference 2.9).

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- C. Why is it important to know which family member to collect a DNA reference sample from?
1. Not every individual in a person's family is equal regarding the usefulness of reference DNA. Only those who are blood relatives can provide DNA for comparison (i.e., a brother- or sister-in-law, a spouse or partner, will not work). Family members who are a part of their immediate family will work the best (mother, father, biological brother or sister, children, etc.).

III. Forensic Anthropology

- A. What is Forensic Anthropology?
1. Forensic Anthropology is the study of human skeletal remains for the purposes of analysis, identification, and comparison in both historical and contemporary contexts. It is generally used for aiding law enforcement with their cases.
- B. Why is it important?
1. Forensic Anthropologists can provide law enforcement with useful identifiers from the skeletal remains (sex, age, ancestry) that can aid in providing potential identification of the individual. Additionally, the remains can also show evidence of trauma, pathologies, medical procedures, and estimated time of death, all of which could provide law enforcement with further means of identification.
 - a. Sex Determination
 - i. Humans display a concept called sexual dimorphism. This means that there are specific patterns and features present in our skeleton that help to differentiate males from females. Anthropologists typically use a scale ranging from 1 to 5 denoting whether the specific feature is most likely female

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(1), most likely male (5), or somewhere in between (2-4). After evaluating multiple features, the anthropologist can then make an educated estimation of the sex of the remains. Some human skeletons are graded as a '3' on the sexual dimorphism scale. This does not mean that their sex cannot be determined, but rather their skeleton just does not show predominantly the traits of one sex over the other.

ii. Some features that are often evaluated for sex determination are:

(i) Pelvis: Females tend to have a wider pelvic inlet, a u-shaped subpubic angle, and have a wider greater sciatic notch. Males tend to have a narrower pelvic inlet, a v-shaped subpubic angle, and a more narrow (u-shaped) greater sciatic notch (Reference 2.11).

(ii) Cranial vault: Typically, females tend to have smaller less robust cranial features as compared to males. This is due to the male morphology typically having larger muscles and body size. Some features that are often used to determine sex are the mastoid process, nuchal crest, supraorbital margin, glabella (browridge), and mental eminence (chin) (Reference 2.12).

b. Age Estimation

i. Forensic Anthropologists can estimate the age of an individual based on a few morphological features present in the skeleton. However, age estimation can be difficult and, especially after the age of 40, often results in a broad age range. This is because the skeleton typically has finished growing and indicators such as tooth eruption or fusion of bone ends are no longer reliable

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ways to determine age. Some features that provide potential age estimation are the teeth, auricular surface of the ilium, and the pubic symphysis (Reference 2.11).

c. Stature Estimation

- i. The stature of an individual can be estimated with decent accuracy by measuring the long bones and using a specialized equation. However, for the measurements to provide the most accurate estimation, the sex and ancestry of the individual need to be established first. Typically, the long bones in the legs (femur, tibia, and fibula) provide the most accurate estimation, but the arm long bones (humerus, radius, and ulna) can be used if there are no other options (Reference 2.11).

d. Ancestry Identity

- i. The use of skeletal remains for ancestry/race determination is very convoluted. The concept of “race” is debated as a social construct in anthropology, and even attempting to use ancestral markers from DNA for estimation can prove difficult. While the skeleton can show some variance among races such as a wider interorbital breadth, teeth shape, nasal form, and cranial shape, the results are not highly accurate and the repercussions of assuming an individual’s socially accepted “race” when attempting to identify a missing person can be detrimental to the investigation ([EXAMPLE B in Appendix F](#)).

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- e. Ante-, Peri-, and Post- Mortem Trauma
 - i. Forensic Anthropologists can note trauma that has happened to the individual prior to their death, during the time of death, and after their death. This could potentially provide investigators with a cause of death, estimated time of death, as well as an aid for cross-referencing with medical records for past trauma. While there is an ample number of studies on trauma in the skeleton at different intervals, the differences between each can be minimal dependent on the circumstances. Often, forensic anthropologists look for factors such as signs of healing (or healed) trauma, how the bone broke (was it brittle, did it splinter, etc.), discoloration from blood or other bodily fluids, and butcher or animal (scavenger) markings (Reference 2.13).
- C. How can medical records assist in finding a missing person?
- 1. While medical records can provide investigators with useful information when locating an AMP who is suspected to still be alive, such as potential medical anomalies and any chronic illness that could present an issue should this person not receive medical attention, medical records are best used for aiding the identification of human remains. Medical history such as fractures, skeletal deformities, amputations, surgical modifications, x-rays, etc. can be used to help identify key features on human remains. Additionally, medical devices such as a pacemaker, knee or hip replacement, screws and rods, etc., could be present where the remains were found and can provide serial numbers or positive identification of the individual (Reference 2.14).

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D. What are the limitations?

1. While forensic anthropologists are vital for the investigation and potential identification of a set of human remains, all human skeletons are different. The skeleton can show completely different sex, age, and ancestry identifiers than what the individual identified as when they were living. Therefore, this information should be used as a jumping off point and not used to exclude any individuals.

IV. Forensic Odontology

A. What is Forensic Odontology?

1. Forensic Odontology is a branch of forensic science that focuses on using the analysis of dentition and dental records for aiding with identification in legal proceedings (Reference 2.15).

B. How can dental records assist in finding a missing person?

1. Forensic Odontology can aid with the identification of human remains. Due to the teeth being the hardest tissue in the human body, they may survive longer in the elements compared to the other bones. Additionally, teeth can provide accurate age estimation for individual 18 years old and younger due to known and predictable pattern of development and eruption. However, in individuals of all ages, forensic odontologists can use dental records to compare the teeth of an unidentified individual for a positive identification. This is done by comparing teeth structure to the x-rays taken by a dentist. Additionally, features such as fillings, dental modifications, tooth loss, dental wearables (braces, retainers, screws, etc.), and unusual tooth formation can be compared to the records kept by their dentist and

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provide further information that can either narrow down the list of individuals or provide an identification (Reference 2.16).

C. What are the limitations?

1. While dental records and dentition can provide valuable information for identification purposes, as with forensic anthropology, estimations such as age, sex, and ancestry should be used as a guideline and not exclude entire populations. Additionally, the use of bite mark analysis in forensic work has come under scrutiny and lacks sufficient scientific backing (Reference 2.17). Should bite mark analysis become an aspect of the case work, the investigator should proceed with caution and understand the limits of the information that can be gathered.

V. Facial Approximation

A. What is Facial Approximation?

1. This is a forensic technique that uses the skull of an unidentified individual to approximate what the person looked like alive with facial features. This technique is used not as a means of identification, but rather it is meant to provoke a recognition from a family member, a friend, or an acquaintance that might aid in the investigation and eventually lead to a positive identification (Reference 2.18).
2. There are two methods currently used for facial approximation: The clay modeling method and the virtual modeling method. The clay modeling method requires the sculptor to have an extensive knowledge of human anatomy and takes much longer to complete a model as compared to the virtual modeling. Virtual modeling uses a computer program that can approximate (based on a data set of facial approximations

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for each sex, age, and ancestry) the anatomy, facial features, and skin depth (Reference 2.18).

3. The process of clay modeling a facial approximation starts with creating a cast or 3-D model of the skull so that the sculptor does not damage the remains. Then the cast has wood dowels placed into it at 19 different craniometric points that help to determine how deep the soft tissue should be around the skull. These points are not standardized; however, the current method uses Helmer's ultrasound data, which changes based on the sex, age, and ancestry the individual is thought to be (Reference 2.18). Then using these guides as well as where the muscle attachments are on the cast, the sculptor can work to create a facial approximation of the skull. Finally, features such as skin color, hair color and style, wrinkles and folds, eyebrows, etc., are added in based on of what is most commonly seen in the expected population that the individual is thought to be a member of (Reference 2.18).

B. How can facial approximation assist in finding a missing person?

1. Facial approximation can assist in finding missing individuals by making it easier for the public to potentially identify human remains. Currently, the only way to positively identify a set of human remains is to take a DNA sample and use a family reference sample to compare the two. Additionally, DNA is not always possible to get from the remains as they may not have viable DNA left if it has been degraded too much. While a forensic anthropologist can give certain identifiers to the investigator regarding sex, age, and ancestry, the skeleton does not always show what the person looked like when they were alive. Therefore, having the technology to approximate

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what a person might have looked like when they were alive help to give investigators and the public potentially an extra lead for the case.

C. What are the limitations?

1. Facial approximation used to be known as facial reconstruction. However, experts have started to move away from this term as this process does not necessarily reconstruct what the individual looked like alive. Rather it helps to potentially create a recognition of facial features that someone in the public might identify and thereby create additional leads for the investigators. Additionally, facial approximation can only show muscle attachments and facial shape and cannot always reliably replicate how soft tissue features such as the wrinkles, hair color, eyebrow size, etc. appeared on an individual (Reference 2.18). Finally, as previously noted, forensic anthropologists have a difficult time connecting an individual's remains to a specific ancestry. Therefore, if a set of remains are ambiguous, the facial approximation team might have a difficult time creating an approximation that resembles the individual accurately and may lead having the wrong skin color and/or ancestry of an individual represented.

Appendix A: Field Guide

Initial Response

A. Immediate Response

- ☐ Upon receiving notice, respond immediately without waiting periods.
- ☐ Regardless of jurisdiction, take the report and collaborate with relevant agencies.

B. Contact Information Collection

- ☐ Gather contact details of the reporting party.
- ☐ Activate vehicle and body cameras for documentation.

C. Determination of Adult Status

- ☐ Confirm if the missing individual meets the state's definition of an adult.

D. Circumstances Inquiry

- ☐ Collect information on how the person went missing.
- ☐ Assess deviation from normal routine and voluntariness of disappearance.

E. Last Known Details

- ☐ Record last sighting details including time, location, and means of departure.
- ☐ Note any personal belongings taken or left behind.

F. Identifying Information

- ☐ Gather personal details, physical description, and recent photograph.
- ☐ Note cognitive or physical disabilities and attire at the time of disappearance.

G. Additional Information

- ☐ Document scars, marks, tattoos, and piercings.
- ☐ Obtain relevant details such as employment, medical conditions, and social media handles.
- ☐ Collect phone numbers and service providers.
- ☐ Collect financial institutions and credit cards.
- ☐ Collect car purchase information for GPS tracking if applicable.
- ☐ Secure DNA sample from belongings at the individual's residence.
- ☐ Collect time sensitive data such as surveillance video.

H. NCIC Entry

- ☐ Immediately enter missing person into the NCIC database with comprehensive details.
- ☐ Ensure accuracy and completeness of the NCIC report.

Investigation

A. Determine Status of Missing Person:

- ☐ Identify the classification:
 1. Endangered (EME)
 2. Disability (EMD)
 3. Involuntary (EMI)
 4. Catastrophe Victim (EMV)
 5. Other (EMO)
- ☐ Decide on the appropriate investigation response based on classification.

Appendix A: Field Guide

B. Initiate Investigation:

- ☐ Assess urgency:
 1. Immediate danger: involve patrol for search
 2. Longer duration: involve investigator
- ☐ Activate public alerts if necessary.
 1. Utilize department's social media platforms.
 2. Refer to department/state criteria for alert issuance.

C. Establish Search Area:

- ☐ Start from Last Known Location.
- ☐ Investigate potential destinations.
- ☐ Check residences, workplaces, frequented places, hospitals, etc.
- ☐ Secure the missing person's residence if applicable.
- ☐ Note the transportation methods

D. Utilize Resources for Search:

- ☐ Contact Search and Rescue Teams if needed.
- ☐ Consider aerial surveillance, search dogs, roadblock canvasses, etc.
- ☐ Preservation orders for phone records if applicable.

E. Document Search Areas:

- ☐ Record addresses and surroundings.
- ☐ Interview witnesses independently.
- ☐ Collect security footage if available.
- ☐ Document surroundings with photographs.
- ☐ Take notes of all relevant information.

F. Interview Witnesses:

- ☐ Identify relationship to missing individual.
- ☐ Obtain contact information.
- ☐ Determine last contact with the missing person.
- ☐ Gather details about sightings, clothing, mood, associates, etc.

G. Appoint Point of Contact (POC):

- ☐ Designate a single contact person for family communication.

H. Determine Next Steps:

- ☐ Enter AMP into NamUs if there are exigent circumstances or they have not been located in at least 30 days. (It is up to the investigator's discretion on time frame)
- ☐ Follow guidelines for located alive, deceased, or long-term missing individuals.

Located Alive

A. Confirm Identity:

- ☐ Use official government identification (driver's license, social security, passport).

B. Ensure Safety and Medical Aid:

- ☐ Contact the missing individual, assess safety, administer medical aid if necessary.

C. Conduct Interview:

- ☐ Interview the individual, discuss the incident, maintain records for future reference.

Appendix A: Field Guide

D. Follow Departmental Policies:

- ☐ If involuntary disappearance, follow departmental policies regarding further criminal actions.

E. Respect Privacy Wishes:

- ☐ If individual wishes to remain undisclosed to family, inform family of safety without disclosing location.

F. Update Databases:

- ☐ Remove case from active missing status in NCIC, NamUs, departmental databases, etc.

G. Archive Investigation:

- ☐ Store all investigation aspects properly including initial report, witness interviews, and information gathered.

H. Document Storage:

- ☐ Ensure information is stored in lead investigator's files, agency's reporting system, NCIC, and NamUs.

Located Deceased

A. Attempt to Confirm Identity:

- ☐ Use forensic procedures (fingerprinting, dental records, DNA) to confirm identity.

B. Consult Forensic Anthropologist/Expert:

- ☐ Seek assistance for sex, age, ancestry, height determination, and check for medical devices.

C. Database Cross-reference:

- ☐ Cross-reference NCIC and NamUs for missing persons matching the location and information gathered.

D. Handle Unidentified Remains:

- ☐ Upload remains and forensic information to NCIC and NamUs for cross-referencing.

E. Inform Relatives:

- ☐ Contact relatives if remains match a missing person, follow up on further actions if foul play suspected.

F. Update Databases:

- ☐ Close missing person case in relevant databases upon identification.

Long-Term Missing

A. Collect DNA Sample:

- ☐ Request DNA sample from direct family member, educate them on its purpose, and collect consent.
- ☐ Send to CODIS and NamUs for analysis.
- ☐ Upload to NCIC.

Appendix A: Field Guide

B. Request Medical and Dental Records:

- ☐ Obtain medical and dental records for identification purposes, ensuring consent and awareness.
- ☐ Send/upload to NamUs and NCIC.
- ☐ Consider the use of a forensic artist.

C. Periodic Database Checks:

- ☐ Regularly check databases for unidentified remains and potential matches.
- ☐ Continually check for “signs of life” (e.g. passport use, criminal history, financials, social media, etc).

D. Maintain Communication:

- ☐ Keep in touch with family, update them on developments or lack thereof.

E. Annual Anniversary Actions:

- ☐ Coordinate media releases and contact family on the anniversary of the disappearance to maintain awareness and support.

Missing Native American/Alaskan Native

A. Jurisdiction:

- ☐ Determine jurisdiction for an appropriate response entity based on whether the person is Indian or non-Indian and where the case is reported.

B. Cultural Considerations:

- ☐ Understand the significance of family, spirituality, and the role of Elders through involvement in investigation.
- ☐ Respect the privacy of religious protocols and ceremonies.
- ☐ Handle unidentified remains respectfully based on forensic importance.

C. Availability of Resources/Protocols:

- ☐ Provide information and support in funding, societal structures, and government policies among tribes.
- ☐ Understand existing protocols and provide information for opportunities for improvement and additional resources.
- ☐ Utilize DOJ guide for Tribal Communities for creating Response Plans.

D. Alert Systems:

- ☐ Utilize ASHANTI Alerts for broadcasting information about missing adults aged 18-75 years old.
- ☐ Activate MEPAs for persons aged 18 or older with safety concerns or risk factors present.

Appendix B: Database Use Guides / Extra Information

National Crime Information Center (NCIC)

A. NCIC 2000 Manual:

1. Link to Full Manual [HERE](#) or Reference 3.1
2. Link to Synopsis of Manual [HERE](#) or Reference 3.2
3. Link to Section of Manual on Missing Person File [HERE](#) or Reference 3.3

B. Global Inquiry Search:

1. Link to Section of Manual [HERE](#) or Reference 3.4

C. NCIC Missing Person Guide:

1. Link to Guide [HERE](#) or Reference 3.5

D. Extra Resources:

1. NCIC Contact, Hours, and Basic Information:
Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 3.6
2. NCIC Validation Procedures: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 3.7

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)

A. NamUs User Guide:

1. Link to Guide [HERE](#) or Reference 3.8

B. NamUs User Guide - Advanced Search and Export:

1. Link to Guide [HERE](#) or Reference 3.9

C. Extra Resources:

1. NamUs User Guide – Requesting Dental Records:
Link to Guide [HERE](#) or Reference 3.10

Appendix B: Database Use Guides / Extra Information

2. Introducing NamUs 2.0 Video:

Link to Video [HERE](#) or Reference 3.11

3. NamUs: Making a Difference Video:

Link to Video [HERE](#) or Reference 3.12

4. Services Provided By NamUs:

Link to Webpage [HERE](#) or Reference 3.13

5. Reports & Statistics at NamUs:

Link to Webpage [HERE](#) or Reference 3.14

Appendix C: State Specific Information

States A – K

1. Alabama

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.1
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Central Alabama Crime Stoppers: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.2
 - ii. Alabama Missing, Unsolved Cases, and Crime Watch Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.3
 - iii. Alabama Missing Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.4
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 4.5
 - ii. Link to Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.6

2. Alaska

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.7
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Anchorage Crime Stoppers: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.8
 - ii. Seeking Alaska's Missing Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.9
 - iii. Data for Indigenous Justice: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.10
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.11

3. Arizona

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. As of January 2024 no state level website can be found.
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Phoenix Missing and Unidentified Unit: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.12
 - ii. Missing in Arizona Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.13
 - iii. Arizona Missing Person Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.14
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.15

4. Arkansas

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link to Database [HERE](#) or Reference 4.16
 - ii. Link to Missing Persons Reports [HERE](#) or Reference 4.17
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing Persons of Arkansas Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.18
 - ii. Arkansas Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.19
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.20

5. California

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.21

Appendix C: State Specific Information

- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. California Missing and Wanted Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.22
 - ii. California Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.23
 - iii. Missing Persons in California Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.24
 - c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.25
- 6. Colorado**
- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.26
 - b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing People From The State of Colorado Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.27
 - ii. Missing Persons of Colorado Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.28
 - c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.29
- 7. Connecticut**
- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. As of January 2024 no state level website can be found.
 - b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing in CT Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.30
 - ii. Connecticut Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.31
 - c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.32
- 8. Delaware**
- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. As of January 2024, no state missing person database could be found.
 - ii. Link to Missing Archives [HERE](#) or Reference 4.33
 - b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Delaware Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.34
 - c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.35
- 9. Florida**
- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.36
 - b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Florida Crime Information Center Public Access System: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.37
 - ii. Florida Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.38
 - iii. Missing in Florida Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.39
 - c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.40
- 10. Georgia**
- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.41

Appendix C: State Specific Information

- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing in Georgia – Cold Cases Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.42
 - ii. Georgia Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.43
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.44

11. Hawaii

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. As of January 2024, no state level adult missing database could be found.
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. CrimeStoppers Honolulu: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.45
 - ii. Hawai'i's Missing People Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.46
 - iii. Missing Persons Hawaii Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.47
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.48

12. Idaho

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.49
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Idaho Missing Person Clearinghouse Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.50
 - ii. Idaho Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.51
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.52

13. Illinois

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.53
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Illinois Missing Persons Organization: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.54
 - ii. Missing Persons Awareness Network NFP: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.55
 - iii. Illinois Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.56
 - iv. Missing People of Illinois Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.57
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Amber Alert Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.58
 - ii. Link to Silver Search Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or i Reference 4.59

14. Indiana

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.60
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Indiana's Missing and Unsolved Cases Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.61
 - ii. Indiana Missing Children and Adults Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.62
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.63

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15. Iowa

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.64
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Iowa Cold Cases: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.65
 - ii. Missing and Endangered Iowa Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.66
 - iii. Iowa Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.67
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.68

16. Kansas

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.69
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Kansas Missing and Unsolved: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.70
 - ii. Kansas Missing and Unsolved Cases Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.71
 - iii. Missing in Kansas Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.72
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.73

17. Kentucky

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. As of January 2024, no state level adult missing database could be found.
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Kentucky Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.74
 - ii. Kentucky's Missing and Lost Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.75
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.76

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18. Louisiana

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.77
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing People in Louisiana Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.78
 - ii. Missing in Louisiana Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.79
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.80

19. Maine

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.81
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing People of Maine Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.82
 - ii. Maine Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.83

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c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.84

20. Maryland

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.85

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Maryland Missing Persons Network: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.86
ii. Maryland Center for Missing and Unidentified Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.87
iii. Maryland Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.88

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Amber Alert Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.89
ii. Link to Silver Alert Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.90

21. Massachusetts

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.91

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Massachusetts Missing & Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.92
ii. Massachusetts Missing and Unidentified Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.93

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.94

22. Michigan

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.95
ii. Link to Reports [HERE](#) or Reference 4.96

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Missing in Michigan: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.97
ii. Missing in Michigan Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.98

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.99

23. Minnesota

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.100

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Zero Abuse Project: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.101
ii. Missing Persons of Minnesota Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.102
iii. Missing in MN Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.103

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.104

24. Mississippi

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.105

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Mississippi Missing and Unidentified Persons: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.106

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- ii. MissingSippi Organization: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.107
- iii. Mississippi Repository for Missing and Unidentified Persons: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.108
- iv. Mississippi Coast Crime Stoppers: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.109
- v. MissingSippi Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.110
- vi. Mississippi Missing and Unidentified Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.111
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.112

25. Missouri

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.113
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missouri Missing: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.114
 - ii. Missing People of Missouri Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.115
 - iii. Missouri Missing Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.116
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.117

26. Montana

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.118
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Montana Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.119
 - ii. Missing in Montana Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.120
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.121

27. Nebraska

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.122
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Omaha Crime Stoppers: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.123
 - ii. Missing Persons of Nebraska Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.124
 - iii. Nebraska Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.125
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.126

28. Nevada

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. As of January 2024, no state level missing person website could be found.
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Nevada Missing & Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.127
 - ii. Nevada Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.128
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.129

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29. New Hampshire

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.130
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. New Hampshire's Missing People and Cold Cases Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.131
 - ii. New Hampshire Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.132
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.133

30. New Jersey

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.134
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. New Jersey Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.135
 - ii. New Jersey Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.136
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.137

31. New Mexico

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.138
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. UNM Health Sciences Missing Persons & Unidentified: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.139
 - ii. Missing Person in New Mexico and United State Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.140
 - iii. New Mexico Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.141
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.142

32. New York

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.143
 - ii. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.144
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. New York Missing & Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.145
 - ii. New York Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.146
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.147

33. North Carolina

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.148
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing in North Carolina Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.149

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- ii. North Carolina Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.150
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.151

34. North Dakota

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.152
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. North Dakota Lost and Missing Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.153
 - ii. Missing Persons of North Dakota Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.154
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.155

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35. Ohio

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.156
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing in Ohio News & Bulletin Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.157
 - ii. Ohio's Missing People Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.158
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.159

36. Oklahoma

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.160
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Oklahoma Cold Cases: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.161
 - ii. Oklahoma Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.162
 - iii. Oklahoma Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.163
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Kasey Alert Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.164
 - ii. Link to Amber and Silver Alert Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.165

37. Oregon

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.166
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Crime Stoppers of Oregon: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.167
 - ii. Oregon's Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.168
 - iii. Oregon Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.169
 - iv. Oregon Statewide Silver Alert Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.170

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c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Amber Alert Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.171

38. Pennsylvania

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. As of January 2024, no state level missing person website could be found.

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Pennsylvania Crime Stoppers: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.172
ii. Pennsylvania's Missing Person, Amber Alert Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.173
iii. Pennsylvania Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.174

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.175

39. Rhode Island

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. As of January 2024, no state level adult missing person website could be found.

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Unsolved R.I. Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.176
ii. Rhode Island Lostnmissing Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.177

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.178

40. South Carolina

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.179

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. South Carolina Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.180

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.181

41. South Dakota

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.182

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. The Missing in 605 Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.183
ii. South Dakota Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.184

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.185

42. Tennessee

a. State Level Missing Person Website:

- i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.186

b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:

- i. Tennessee Missing and Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.187
ii. Tennessee Missing People Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.188

c. State Level Alert Systems:

- i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.189

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43. Texas

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.190
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Texas Center for the Missing: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.191
 - ii. Texas Search and Rescue: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.192
 - iii. Texas Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.193
 - iv. Texas Missing & Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.194
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.195

44. Utah

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.196
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Utah Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.197
 - ii. Utah Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.198
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.199

45. Vermont

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.200
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Vermont Missing Persons Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.201
 - ii. Missing People in Vermont Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.202
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.203

46. Virginia

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.204
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. New Jersey Unsolved Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.205
 - ii. New Jersey Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.206
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.207

47. Washington

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.208
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing People in Washington State Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.209
 - ii. Washington State Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.210
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.211

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48. West Virginia

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.212
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. West Virginia Missing Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.213
 - ii. Missing in West Virginia Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.214
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 4.215

49. Wisconsin

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.216
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.217
 - ii. Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.218
 - iii. Wisconsin Missing Persons Alerts Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.219
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.220

50. Wyoming

- a. State Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.221
- b. Local Websites/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Missing People of Wyoming Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.222
 - ii. Wyoming AMBER / Ashanti Alert Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.223
- c. State Level Alert Systems:
 - i. Link to Amber Alert Website and Criteria [HERE](#) or Reference 4.224

51. Indigenous Tribes

- a. National Level Missing Person Website:
 - i. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.225
- b. Website/Community Social Media Groups:
 - i. Native Hope: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.226
 - ii. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women USA Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.227
 - iii. Missing and Murdered Native Americans Facebook Group: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 4.228

Appendix D: Missing Persons Investigation Funding

Finding Grant Opportunities

- A. Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA): <https://bja.ojp.gov/>
 - 1. Link to Grant Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.1
- B. Department of Justice (DOJ): <https://www.justice.gov/>
 - 1. Link to Grant Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.2
- C. Office of Justice Programs (OJP): <https://www.ojp.gov/>
 - 1. Link to Funding Opportunities [HERE](#) or Reference 5.3
 - 2. Link to DOJ Program Plan [HERE](#) or Reference 5.4
 - 3. Link to 2023 Grant Awards [HERE](#) or Reference 5.5
- D. Lexipol:
 - 1. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.6

Previous Grants

- A. **NOTE:** While these grants are not currently being offered (as of January 2024), they may be on a cycle or may be opened again for application in the future. Continue to monitor the Bureau of Justice Assistance website for further information.
- B. **Missing and Unidentified Human Remains Program (MUHR)**
 - 1. This grant provides funding which enables all levels of law enforcement (statewide, counties/units of local government, and small, rural or tribal) to improve reporting, transportation, forensic testing, and identification of missing persons and unidentified human remains.
 - 2. Link to their program, previous award winners, funding and resources is below:
 - a. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.7

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- b. Link to a Previous Award Winner [HERE](#) or Reference 5.8
- c. Link to a Successful Application (DeKalb County District Attorney's Office): Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.9

C. Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Program

- 1. This grant provides funding to prosecute violent cold case crimes and to decrease the number of pending prosecutions of unresolved violent cold case crimes. Specifically, it is aimed towards providing resources for agencies to prosecute cases where a suspect has been identified through DNA evidence.
- 2. Link to their program, previous award winners, funding and resources is below:
 - a. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.10
 - b. Link to a Previous Award Winner [HERE](#) or Reference 5.11

D. Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program

- 1. This grant provides funding to states and local agencies to help improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including serviced provided by laboratories. The funds are used to address forensic issues and technology through implementation of new technology and processes in laboratories.
- 2. Link to their program, previous award winners, funding and resources is below:
 - a. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.12
 - b. Link to a Previous Award Winner [HERE](#) or Reference 5.13

Tips For Grant Writing / Resources

- A. NOTE: Some law enforcement agencies or county/state offices have dedicated grant writers or have resources that will specifically meet your agency's needs. Check with your agency or local county/state offices for further information.

Appendix D: Missing Persons Investigation Funding

B. BJA video on different steps associated with applying for funding:

1. Link to Video [HERE](#) or Reference 5.14

C. DOJ Application Submission Checklist:

1. Link to Resource [HERE](#) or Reference 5.15

D. JustGrants Application Submission training page:

1. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.16

E. BJA Funding Webinars:

1. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.17

F. OJP Grants 101:

1. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.18

G. OJP Grant Recipient Resources:

1. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.19

H. How to Write Winning Grant Proposals:

1. Link to Website [HERE](#) or Reference 5.20

Appendix E: Solving the Problem / Raising Awareness

A. Ambiguous Loss

1. Part of the trauma that follows families of missing and/or unidentified persons stems from a term known as “ambiguous loss”. This is defined as grief that has no definitive time frame for closure. Unlike anticipatory grief or general grief experienced directly as the result of a loss, sufferers of ambiguous loss often are stuck in a state of limbo. In one part of this limbo, they are hoping for the safe return of their loved one, but in another, they are trying to accept the loss and move forward. It is this back and forth of emotions that leads sufferers to develop feelings of anxiety or depression that don’t dissipate, feelings of loneliness, and even feelings of shame or guilt. Often, these families just need closure, even if that closure does not mean that the missing person is found alive. The closure that they experience can more easily allow them to move forward from their grief and live a more fulfilling life (Reference 6.1).
2. This term plays such an important role in solving the current missing and unidentified persons problems as it can create ethos and public action that might lead to the resolution of these cases. Additionally, it is just as important for law enforcement to understand how the families are suffering in addition to aiding with search and recovery efforts for those missing loved ones as it can create trust amongst the public for law enforcement.

B. Missing Persons Days

1. A few states across the US offer an annual event for the public that is meant to aid law enforcement and families of missing persons with reporting, investigation, and support efforts regarding missing and unidentified persons cases.
2. These events often have several law enforcement agencies from the area and NamUs representatives show up to help with taking missing persons reports from families that

Appendix E: Solving the Problem / Raising Awareness

may not have felt comfortable going to an agency directly. Additionally, there are often areas for family DNA reference samples to be taken that could aid in identification of their loved ones. Finally, these events not only can provide new information that could lead to the resolution of some of these cases, but it also provides greater awareness of the national issues surround missing and unidentified people as well as potentially provide support groups and resources for the families.

3. Oklahoma Missing Persons Day 2023: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.2
4. NYC Missing Persons Day 2019: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.3
5. Ohio Missing Persons Day 2023: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.4
6. Wisconsin Missing Persons Advocacy Inc. Missing Persons Day: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.5

C. Social Media and Community Groups

1. Community groups can provide support for missing and unidentified persons and their loved ones in two ways. The first is that these groups can sometimes help to get the word out to a greater population of the state/area faster than law enforcement might be able to. Additionally, they can also provide a larger scale dissemination of information on a missing person, should that case not qualify for an alert. These groups also can provide law enforcement with tips and information that could aid their investigative efforts that they might not have gathered so easily otherwise. The second way that community groups can help is that they can provide families of the missing a support group as well as might allow them to find additional resources that can help them through the feelings of ambiguous loss.

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2. Private businesses can donate resources such as the use of billboards or other advertisement space.

D. Conferences / Continuing Education

1. Missing and Unidentified Persons Conferences can provide law enforcement and other medicolegal personnel greater access to resources, working groups, and collaborative support on their cases. Additionally, these conferences can bring greater awareness to the national issue surrounding missing and unidentified persons by having speakers who have experienced what it was like to have a family member go missing, which can help create a greater initiative for solving the problem.
2. Consider attending yourself and requesting your prosecutor to accompany you to training associated with No-Body homicide case development and prosecution, especially if you are currently working a case you believe falls into that category.
3. National Missing and Unidentified Persons Conference 2024: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.6
4. International Conference for Families of Missing Persons: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.7
5. Mississippi Division of the International Association for Identification 2024 Educational Conference – Cold Case Investigation: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 6.8

Appendix F: Continued Reading / Other Resources

Additional Resources

A. Flow Chart for DNA

1. Link to Flow Chart [HERE](#) or Reference 7.1

B. Situational Examples

1. Jane is transient but keeps in touch with her family periodically. On occasion she will go extended periods of time without contacting her family. Jane's family hasn't heard from her in 8 months and are worried about her. They decide to report her missing. Due to the extended period since last contact with Jane (8 months), the responding officer and/or investigator should go ahead and ask for the family to submit a DNA reference sample.
2. A set of unidentified remains comes into the Medical Examiner's office. After conducting a thorough examination of the remains, the examiner determines that this individual is most likely male, age 20-25, height 5'6" – 5'10", and the facial features indicate a potential Caucasian ancestry. The examiner presents this information to the investigator as a lead for their missing person investigation. The investigator runs a query through NCIC or NamUs for the exact specifications that the examiner presented them, and there are a few profiles that match. He conducts the rest of his investigation and concludes that none of the missing person leads were that of the remains. He later returns to query the databases again, this time excluding the previous cases and including all ancestries. After following these leads and testing DNA from a family reference, that this individual is positively identified as a male, aged 23, height 5'8", and of mixed Caucasian and African ancestry. Had the investigator left the ancestry search blank, he might have followed the correct lead earlier in his investigation.

Appendix F: Continued Reading / Other Resources

C. Proper Buccal Swab Collection Information: Link to Full Website [HERE](#) or Reference 7.2

1. CODIS Collection Kit Instructions: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 7.3
2. DNA Buccal Collection Training Video: Link [HERE](#) or Reference 7.4

D. DNA/Medical Consent Form

1. CODIS DNA Reference Sample - Buccal Swab Consent Form
 - a. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 7.5
 - b. NamUs DNA Donor Consent Form
 - c. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 7.6
2. NCIC Missing Persons Entry Guide – Medical Records Consent Form
 - a. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 7.7

E. Native American/Alaskan Native Resources:

1. DOJ Guide for Community Response Plan for Missing Persons
 - a. Link [HERE](#) or Reference 7.8

Continued Reading

General Missing Person Resources:

1. Missing People, DNA Analysis, and Identification of Human Remains:
https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc_002_4010.pdf
2. Identifying Victims Using DNA: A Guide for Families -
<https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/nij-209493.pdf>
3. SWGDAM Missing Persons Casework Guidelines:
https://media.wix.com/ugd/4344b0_2ba78a46a2664b29948c60bc0aebc902.pdf
4. VICAP Brochure: <https://centerforimprovinginvestigations.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ViCAP-Brochure.pdf>

Appendix F: Continued Reading / Other Resources

5. NamUs Reports and Statistics: <https://namus.nij.ojp.gov/library/reports-and-statistics>
6. Reporting & Investigating Missing Persons: A Background Paper On How To Frame The Issue: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/255934.pdf>
7. Arkansas Adult Missing Resource Guide:
https://issuu.com/rahenson/docs/missing_persons_guide_6-28-18__2
8. Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains: The Nation's Silent Mass Disaster:
<https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/jr000256a.pdf>

Native American/Alaskan Native Resources:

1. Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) | Events and Trainings | OVC:
<https://ovc.ojp.gov/topics/missing-murdered-indigenous-persons/events-and-trainings>
2. The Repatriation of Culturally Unidentifiable Human Remains: https://coah-repat.com/system/files/atoms/file/The_repatriation_of_culturally_%20unidentifiable_human_%20remains.pdf
3. Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP): Overview of Recent Research, Legislation, and Selected Issues for Congress: <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R47010.pdf>
4. Federal Law Enforcement Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Violence against NA/AN:
<https://www.justice.gov/tribal/page/file/1553226/dl?inline>
5. Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons: Law Enforcement & Prevention:
<https://www.justice.gov/usao/page/file/1362691/download>
6. Operation Lady Justice: Final Report -
<https://www.justice.gov/otj/page/file/1511621/download>
7. Unresolved Cases: A Review of Protocols and Resources for Supporting Investigations for NA/AN: <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/content.ashx/cops-p456-pub.pdf>

Appendix F: Continued Reading / Other Resources

8. Tribal Justice and Safety | Resource Basket for Law Enforcement:

<https://www.justice.gov/tribal/mmip/resources/law-enforcement>

9. Missing or Murdered Indigenous People Information and Resources | The Center:

<https://htcbc.ovc.ojp.gov/mmip>

10. MMU's Service Area and Jurisdiction | Indian Affairs: <https://www.bia.gov/mmujurisdiction>

11. When a Loved one Goes Missing: https://www.justice.gov/d9/fieldable-panel-panes/basic-panes/attachments/2023/01/17/olj_when_a_loved_one_goes_missing_web.pdf

Forensic Information:

1. Ancestry Estimation: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ajpa.24212>

2. Forensic Identification of Human Remains:

https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file_plus_list/4154-forensic_identification_of_human_remains.pdf

3. Illinois State Police – Evidence Packaging Procedures: https://www.crime-scene-investigator.net/evidence_packaging_IL.pdf

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APPENDIX A: QUESTION LISTS

Investigator Question List

1. How many years of experience do you have in Adult Missing Persons and what is your background in Adult Missing Persons?
2. What are your agency's protocols for Adult Missing Persons? Is there a wait period before you can file a report?
3. Where do you send you statistics on missing persons? Is there a database kept only for agency (departmental) jurisdiction, is it sent to the state NCIC database, is it sent nationally to NCIC, NamUs etc.?
4. If NamUs is used, is there an allowed time gap after reporting before you are mandated to put the case into NamUs?
5. Do you retroactively enter cold cases into NamUs?
6. When do you transfer a case from active to inactive or cold case – what is the minimum time (if any) Same as homicide?
7. What procedures does your agency have that differentiates your department from other large cities departments, smaller agencies, and/or states?
8. Would having an established, universal protocol and procedure handbook and field guide for adult missing persons across the nation or state be beneficial? Why or why not?
9. What are some of the most important steps that you take, from initial report to finding the person, that have the biggest impact towards finding more missing persons?

10. Do you think that mandatory reporting of Adult Missing persons (similar to that of Child Missing Persons), without a 24 hour or 48 hour wait period, is a major factor in finding more Missing Persons? Why or Why not?
11. From your experience, what do you feel would be the most beneficial protocol or procedure to establish when investigating Missing Adults and why is that?

Tribal Investigator Question List

1. How many years of experience do you have in Adult Missing Persons and what is your background in Adult Missing Persons?
2. What are your agency's protocols for Adult Missing Persons? Is there a wait period before you can file a report?
3. Where do you send you statistics on missing persons? Is there a database kept only for agency (departmental) jurisdiction, is it sent to the state NCIC database, is it sent nationally to NCIC, NamUs, etc.?
4. If NamUs is used, is there an allowed time gap after reporting before you are mandated to put the case into NamUs?
5. When do you transfer a case from active to inactive or cold case – what is the minimum time (if any)? Same as for homicide?
6. What procedures does your agency have that differentiates your department from other large cities departments, smaller agencies, and/or states?
7. Would having an established, universal protocol and procedure handbook and field guide for adult missing persons across the nation or state be beneficial? Why or why not?

8. What are some of the most important steps that you take, from initial report to finding the person, that have the biggest impact towards finding more missing persons?
9. Do you think that mandatory reporting of Adult Missing persons (similar to that of Child Missing Persons), without a 24 hour or 48 hour wait period, is a major factor in finding more Missing Persons? Why or Why not?
10. From your experience, what do you feel would be the most beneficial protocol or procedure to establish when investigating Missing Adults and why is that?
11. What have been some challenges for Indigenous tribes when it comes to investigating missing persons? Is there a discrepancy when searching/investigating child vs adult missing persons?
12. What sort of aid, whether that be from the US government or from private entities, would benefit you in these searches? Why would that benefit you?
13. What sort of advice or guidelines would you give to the people in your area that might help to prevent these missing person issues?

APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL LETTERS

Investigator Interview Approval



118 COLLEGE DRIVE #5116 • HATTIESBURG, MS | 601.266.6756 | WWW.USM.EDU/ORI

Feb. 22, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

Acting on behalf of The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board, in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University guidelines, I have reviewed the following project and have determined that review by USM's IRB is not necessary.

Principal Investigator: Hunter Smith

Honors' Thesis Project: "Adults Matter Too: An Examination of State Adult Missing Persons Policies and Procedures to Implement a Best Practices Handbook."

Date Submitted: Feb 22, 2023

Formal IRB review is not required in this instance, as the project does not meet federal or institutional definitions of "human subjects research."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samuel Bruton", is enclosed within a red rectangular box.

Samuel V. Bruton

Director of the Office of Research Integrity

Tribal Investigator Interview Approval

Office of Research Integrity

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NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI using the Incident form available in InfoEd.
- The period of approval is twelve months. If a project will exceed twelve months, a request should be submitted to ORI using the Renewal form available in InfoEd prior to the expiration date.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 23-0714
PROJECT TITLE: Adults Matter Too: An Examination of State Adult Missing Persons Policies and Procedures to Implement a Best Practices Handbook
SCHOOL/PROGRAM: Criminal Justice, Forensic Science & Security
RESEARCHERS: PI: Hunter Smith
Investigators: Smith, Hunter~Danforth, Marie Elaine~
IRB COMMITTEE
ACTION: Approved
CATEGORY: Exempt Category
APPROVAL STARTING: 22-Sep-2023

Lisa Wright

Lisa Wright, Ph.D., MPH
Senior Institutional Review Board Analyst

APPENDIX C: EMAIL/CONTACT TEMPLATE

Investigator Email Template

Hi _____,

I am an Honors Student at the University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting research for my thesis regarding Adult Missing Persons Policies and Procedures across the nation in order to establish a handbook encompassing intake, investigation, completion, and data requisition.

The interview would be over Zoom or Microsoft teams and last about 30 – 40 minutes. The questions are strictly kept to department policies and will not discuss confidential information regarding actual missing persons. I would also like to record the interview if possible so I may go back and reference the information at a later date, however, that recording will not be posted or sent anywhere and is only for my review for writing my thesis.

The handbook and thesis created as a result of all of the information gathered from police departments will be published through our school's research database, Aquila.

I have attached the interview questions for your review. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
Hunter Smith

P.S. – I have linked the Honors College Curriculum website in case you need more information regarding the program.

Honors College Curriculum:
<https://www.usm.edu/honors/honors-college-student-handbook.php#curriculum>

Aquila:
<https://aquila.usm.edu/>

Tribal Investigator Email Template

Subject: Interview Request regarding Adult Missing Persons Research

Hi **(Specific Tribal Nation)** Representative,

My name is Hunter Smith, and I am an Honors Student at the University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting research for my thesis regarding Adult Missing Persons Policies and Procedures across the nation in order to establish a handbook encompassing intake, investigation, completion, and data requisition.

I am specifically asking to interview an investigator with Tribal Police as with the continued push towards solving the indigenous missing persons problems, I felt it necessary to include information in the handbook that would aid in these searches and provide culturally relevant material.

The interview would be Microsoft teams and last about 30 – 40 minutes. The questions are strictly kept to department policies and will not discuss confidential information regarding actual missing persons. I also request that interview be recorded so I may go back and reference the information at a later date, however, you have the right to refuse being recorded and only handwritten notes will be taken. A consent form approved by the IRB at the University of Southern Mississippi has been attached for you to fill out upon confirming an interview time.

Additionally, I have attached the interview questions for your review. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,

Hunter Smith
USM Honors Student
HCLC Ambassador
Founder of Golden Eagles Swim Team
678-778-2004

P.S. – I have linked the Honors College Curriculum website as well as the IRB website in case you need more information regarding the program and certification process.

<https://www.usm.edu/honors/honors-college-student-handbook.php#curriculum>

<https://www.usm.edu/research-integrity/institutional-review-board.php>

**This project has been approved by the University of Southern Mississippi
Institutional Review Board.**

APPENDIX D: LIST OF AGENCIES CONTACTED

Arizona:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Phoenix PD
 - b. Mesa PD
 - c. Tucson PD
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Prescott PD
 - b. Maricopa PD
 - c. Oro Valley PD

Montana:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Billings PD
 - b. Missoula PD
 - c. Great Falls PD
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Whitefish PD
 - b. Havre PD
 - c. Anaconda PD

Wisconsin:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Milwaukee PD
 - b. Madison PD
 - c. Brown County SO
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Bayfield County SO
 - b. West Bend PD
 - c. Wausau PD

Texas:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Austin PD
 - b. Dallas PD
 - c. Harris County SO
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. League City PD
 - b. Bryan PD
 - c. Galveston PD

Mississippi:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Harrison County SO
 - b. Jackson PD
 - c. Hattiesburg PD
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Ocean Springs PD
 - b. Southern Miss UPD
 - c. Pascagoula PD

New York:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. New York PD
 - b. Albany PD
 - c. Suffolk County PD
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Syracuse PD
 - b. Mt. Vernon PD
 - c. Yorktown PD

Georgia:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Atlanta PD
 - b. Richmond County SO
 - c. Bibb County SO
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Marietta PD
 - b. Valdosta PD
 - c. City of Canton PD

Florida:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Miami PD
 - b. Tallahassee PD
 - c. Jacksonville SO
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Clearwater PD
 - b. Daytona Beach PD
 - c. Escambia County SO

New Jersey:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Trenton PD
 - b. Newark PD
 - c. Jersey City PD
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Hoboken PD
 - b. Manchester Township PD
 - c. Atlantic City PD

California:

- 1. Large Departments:**
 - a. Sacramento PD
 - b. Los Angeles PD
 - c. San Diego PD
- 2. Small Departments:**
 - a. Santa Rosa PD
 - b. Burbank PD
 - c. Palo Alto PD

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