



NamUs for Loved Ones of the Missing

The nation's only centralized federal program that provides forensic, investigative, and analytical services for investigative agencies and families.

Challenges for Loved Ones

When a family member or loved one goes missing, every day that passes is a painful reminder of that person's absence. What's more, the search process can be overwhelming and complex. Databases containing case records can be difficult to locate and access and analysis of results requires investigative expertise that most members of the general public don't have.

Finding lost and missing people is not an easy task, but it's a critical responsibility we have to the families of the missing, as well as their communities.

A Comprehensive Solution

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) empowers family members of missing persons to enter and search case information and connects them with criminal justice professionals to assist in the search for their missing loved ones.

Administered by NIJ, NamUs provides a unified and secure database for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons records, allowing for searching, cross-matching, and sharing of case records. NamUs relies on voluntary entry of case information from family members and loved ones, law enforcement, and medical examiners and coroners. Because NamUs cases are publicly viewable, resolutions can also occur through assistance from the general public and families of the missing.

The cases entered into NamUs do not necessarily reflect all missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons cases across the United States or in any one state or jurisdiction.

66 cases have been **resolved** by NamUs by NamUs through family recognition of their loved ones' photograph or images of their personal effects in the 2024 calendar year.



As of 2024, NamUs contains **58,252 case records** available to families and investigative agencies.


Free Services for Families

In addition to the database, NamUs has program staff to help ensure state and local criminal justice agencies have the tools they need to help families and further investigations and to provide free investigative services to families, such as:

- Technical assistance.
- Forensic analysis.
- Case status information including assistance with next of kin notification.
- Other analytical support.



Families can also be involved in data collection efforts to facilitate case resolution. Family members supply DNA reference samples that help investigative agencies identify forensic specimens and resolve cases. In 2024, families provided 170 DNA reference samples that were added to the NamUs database.

	Traditional DNA Requests	Annual Goal	Yearly Progress	Amount in Queue
	••••• Family Reference Samples	110	149	553
	••••• Direct Reference Samples	5	6	54
	••••• Unidentified Remains Samples	120	140	547

Training and Missing Persons Days

The expert staff at NamUs provide outreach, training, and technical assistance for families. This includes database assistance and education through training conferences where public attendance is allowed.

NamUs also assists with local “Missing Persons Days” — events that allow those with a missing loved one to gather and learn about resources to help. These gatherings also enable collection of family DNA reference samples, personal and descriptive information, records, and photos of the missing loved one; and collection of the missing person’s items (preferably unshared), such as a toothbrush, that might be a viable source for their DNA.

Become a Public User

Family members and loved ones can register to become NamUs public users and have access to this national database and critical support resources.

NamUs.gov/Registration

The more cases that are entered into NamUs from our users, the higher the likelihood of finding the missing and resolving cases.

namus.nij.ojp.gov

Who is NIJ? The National Institute of Justice is the research, evaluation, and technology agency of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Want to learn more?
Review these [FAQs](#) and [User Guides](#), or [submit an inquiry](#).
[namus.nij.ojp.gov/contact](#)



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