

# NamUs for Tribal Communities

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

## Challenges for Tribal Justice Agencies and Communities

Indigenous people make up only three percent of the population nationwide, but they experience higher rates of violent crime, such as murder and sexual assault ([Rosay 2016](#))<sup>1</sup>. Further, many missing persons databases don't contain records of all American Indian and Alaska Native people who have gone missing.

There are many reasons for this data gap, such as lack of clear law enforcement protocols related to missing adults, complex tribal jurisdictional issues, and lack of awareness of the vast resources available to tribal law enforcement agencies, tribal leaders, and family members of missing Indigenous persons.

## A Comprehensive Solution

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) connects tribal law enforcement with tools and resources to resolve missing persons cases and empowers loved ones of the missing to enter and search case information and connect them with justice professionals.

Administered by NIJ, the NamUs provides a unified and secure database for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons records, which allows for searching, cross matching, and sharing of case records. The database includes fields to capture information specific to American Indian and Alaska Native people.

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.

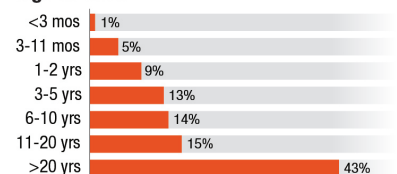
<sup>1</sup> NIJ Research Report: Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men, André B. Rosay, Ph.D.

## American Indian/Alaska Native Missing Persons Cases Demographics Bi-Annual Report - January 2025

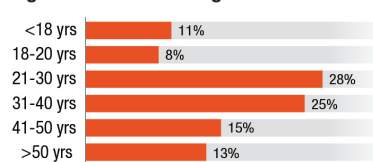
### Average Age of Case

**19.4  
YEARS**

### Age of Case



### Age at Time of Missing



### Sex Assigned at Birth

31% Female 69% Male

## Free Services for Tribal Justice and Communities

In addition to a database, NamUs has program staff that offer free support services for case investigation and resolution. Staff includes a Tribal Liaison, who is a member of the Navajo Nation, as well as others who are dedicated to ensuring that missing Indigenous persons data is counted and shared, along with sharing knowledge about NamUs throughout tribal communities.

To support law enforcement practitioners, NamUs provides assistance with forensic analysis and other forms of analytical support. Practitioners can work with the NamUs Cold Case Advisory Team and gain access to Consolidated Lead Evaluation and Reporting (CLEAR) investigation software through NamUs analytical staff, which is only available to investigative agencies for searching millions of public records.



### Training and Outreach

NamUs staff provide free training, technical assistance, and culturally responsive outreach across tribal law enforcement agencies and communities, including:

- Database instruction.
- Customized online or in-person training.
- Presentations at local, state, and national training conferences.
- Assistance with “Missing Persons Days” coordination.

### Missing Persons Days

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.



The NamUs database has been updated with case information from **over 300** federally recognized tribal law enforcement agencies.

### Become a Professional or Public User

Tribal justice practitioners and advocates for the missing can [register to become a NamUs user](#) and have access to this national database and critical support resources.

#### NamUs.gov/Registration

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

[namus.nij.ojp.gov](https://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](https://namus.nij.ojp.gov/contact)



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