

Intro to NamUS

Challenges in Washington State





U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Innovation * Partnerships * Safer Neighborhoods

NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System





NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System

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- [Volunteer Information](#)
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Missing Persons



Unidentified Persons



Watch a 6-minute video:
NamUs Behind the Scenes:
How It Works, Why It Matters

The National Missing and Unidentified

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Missing Persons System

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Unidentified Persons System

The **Missing Persons Database** contains information about missing persons that can be entered by anyone; before it appears as a case on NamUs, the information is verified. NamUs provides the ability to print missing persons posters and even map out possible travel routes in a search for a missing person. Other resources include links to state clearinghouses, medical examiner and coroner offices, law enforcement agencies, victim assistance groups and pertinent legislation.

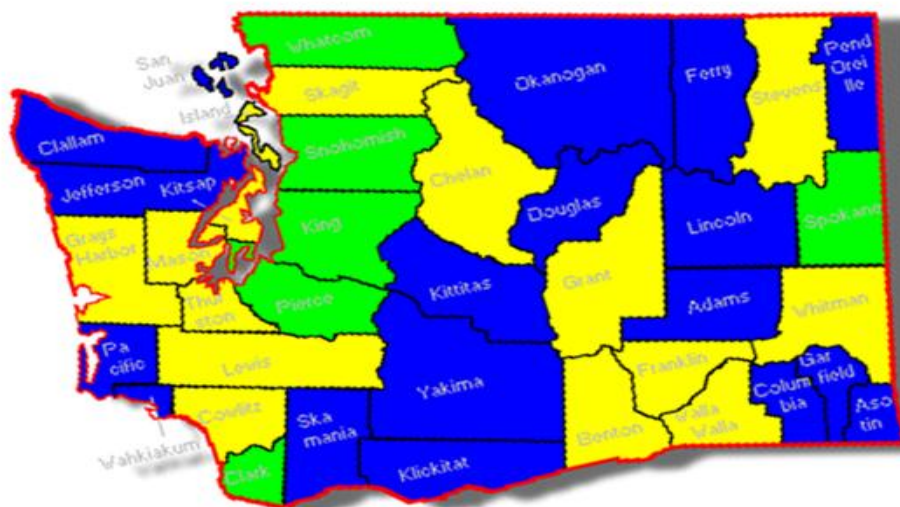


NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System



WASHINGTON STATE

- Medical Examiner
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Coroner



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NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System

Missing Persons Database

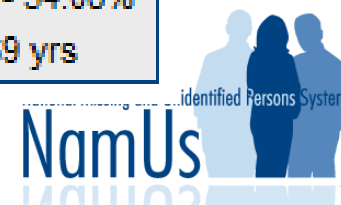
- www.findthemissing.org
- **Guests**
 - Quick Search
 - » Name, Sex, State
 - » State Breakdowns
- **Registered Users**
 - Add missing person cases
 - Add critical data
 - Advanced search functions
 - Create MP posters

MP Case Breakdown

Total Cases:	8357
Open Cases:	6460 - 77.30%
Closed Cases:	1897 - 22.69%
NamUs Aided:	105 - 5.53%

State Case Breakdown

Washington	
Total Cases:	294
Open Cases:	237 - 80.61%
Closed Cases:	57 - 19.38%
Missing Males:	135 - 45.91%
Missing Females:	159 - 54.08%
Average Age:	26.69 yrs





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Unidentified Database

- www.identifyus.org
- Only ME/Center cases
- Guests
 - Basic search
- Registered Users
 - Public
 - LE
 - Forensic Specialist
 - ME/C
 - Administrators

UP Case Breakdown	
Total Cases:	8219
Open Cases:	7769 - 94.52%
Closed Cases:	450 - 5.47%
NamUs Aided:	55 - 12.22%

State Case Breakdown	
<input type="text" value="Washington"/>	
Total Cases:	54
Open Cases:	52 - 96.29%
Closed Cases:	2 - 3.70%





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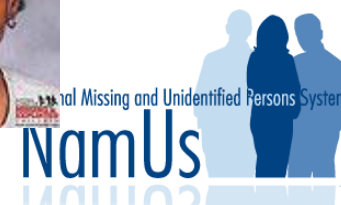
The Faces of Washington

Washington NCIC Stats

as of (08.22.2011)

1873 missing persons

112 unidentified





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Challenges in Washington State

- **Lack of NamUs Awareness**
 - Only 48% of Unidentified Persons in NCIC are in Namus (54 vs 112)
 - Only 15% of Missing Persons in NCIC are in NamUs (294 vs 1873)
- **NCIC**
 - Medical Examiner cannot enter, edit or search entries
 - Lack of Training for Law Enforcement
 - Clerical Entry errors (example. DLC field)
 - Possible matches are sent to LE and they are filed instead of investigated because of a lack of training
 - Unidentified/Missing Persons are purged.





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Challenges in Washington State

- **Dental**

- Even though it is state mandated to get dentals entered within 30 days, most agencies for a variety of reasons are out of compliance.
- Sometimes cases are delayed in identification because of initial dental not be collected and or entered into NCIC.

- **DNA**

- Lack of knowledge and training by LE
- DNA collection also mandated by law
- Lack of Family Reference Samples on past and present cases.





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Challenges in Washington State

- Numerous Websites

- No search engines
- Not linked

Training Issues

- Rural areas with lack of technology
- Lack of training for smaller agencies
- Mindset-perception by some LE that missing persons and old unidentified remains case are not a priority





NamUs *National Missing and Unidentified Persons System*



What is NamUs

- **One stop shop**
 - Separate Missing & Unidentified databases
 - Standardized data collection
- **Multidisciplinary**
 - Law Enforcement
 - Medical Examiner/Coroner
 - Forensic Specialists (DDS, Anthro)
 - Victim Advocates
 - General public (families/cyber sleuths)
- **One more tool in addition to.**
 - IAFIS, NCIC, CODIS



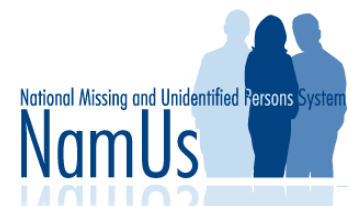


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What NamUs offers

- **Searchable databases**
 - Comprehensive data
 - Efficiency
 - User friendly
- **Exclusionary capability**
- **Increases solvability**
 - Quality Control
- **Secure**
 - keep sensitive data protected
- **FREE, FREE, FREE**



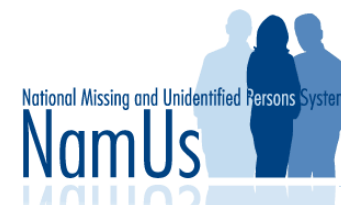


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NamUs Resources

- Links to state and missing persons clearinghouses, State and Federal Law Enforcement, Attorney General's Offices and legislation details.
- *Geo-mapping technology to locate LE and Medical Examiners/Coroners in an area or travel route.*
- **FREE TRAINING**
 - Online pre-recorded training sessions
 - On site training by system administrators and or state teams
 - Live WebEx sessions



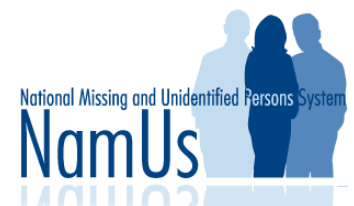


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NamUs Resources cont.

- Law Enforcement has access to forensic services and support.
 - Anthropologists
 - Odontologists
 - Fingerprint Experts
 - DNA Testing
- All this at not cost to their Department



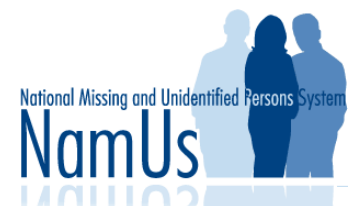


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What NamUs is NOT!

- **A substitute for:**
 - NCIC/IAFIS/CODIS
- **Static**
 - There is no “cold case”
 - continuously querying
- **Restrictive**
 - Accessible to everyone





U.S. Department of Justice

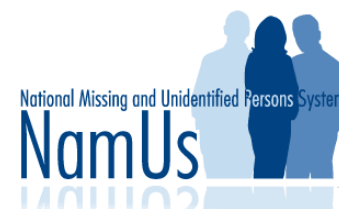
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Why is NamUs important?



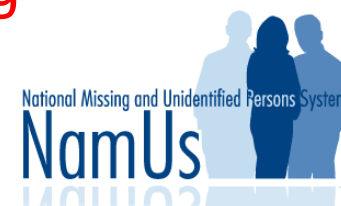


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Medical Examiner

- Improved quality control
 - ME/C controls data and is able to track exclusions
- Unrestricted access
- Standardized data entry
- Decreased dependence on LE
- Centralized repository
 - Increased solvability
- User friendly
- Allows Missing Person Search including entries by families.
- FREE



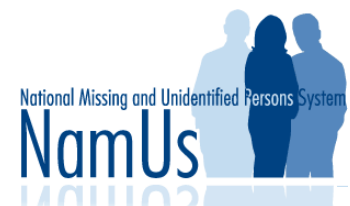


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MP/UP Clearinghouse

- **Another tool/resource**
 - Increase productivity
 - Increase solvability
- **Another set of eyes**
- **Improved access**
 - Decreased dependence on LE
- **User friendly**
- **Enhanced capabilities**
 - MP Posters
 - UP Press releases
 - Identifying Images





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Forensic Specialists

- Real time consulting
- Standardized data entry
 - Best practices
 - SOP's
- User friendly
- Quality control
 - Data is amenable to comparison
- FREE



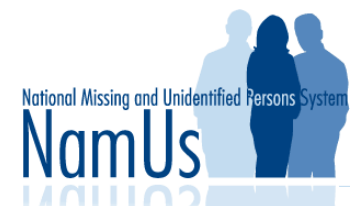


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Victim Advocate

- Family empowerment
- Case is living, not a historical document
- Gives missing and unidentified a voice
- Works for the victim/family, not LE
- Provides resources and support to families
 - They are in control





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Public Side of NamUs

- Gives families an easy to use resource tool
- Provides families with a sense of being a part of the investigation
- An on-line tool accessible to anyone
- Free family reference DNA testing is available through the NamUs system.
- Families can create missing persons posters which can be printed and emailed to spread the word.
- Extensive search capabilities including tattoos, jewelry, clothing, vehicles, demographics and physical features.



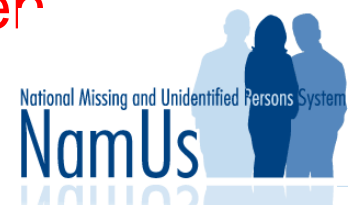


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Law Enforcement

- Another set of eyes
- Ability to restrict sensitive information
- User friendly
 - Minimal training
- Variable Scope
 - Local/Regional/National
- Improved access to subject matter experts
- NamUs has partnered with ViCAP & NCMEC to strengthen case management between systems and improve data





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Law Enforcement continued

- All case information and digital images are uploaded into the case file which allows case reports to be viewed.
- All sensitive case data is locked and can only be viewed by medical examiners, coroners, law enforcement and personnel from missing persons agencies.
- Provides a side by side comparisons of matches between UP and MP cases is an extremely useful feature for LE and ME personnel.
- Mapping Capability.
- Ability to print comprehensive reports and posters.



NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System



- The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) estimates that there are **40,000** unidentified remains in the United States
- There are as many as **100,000** active missing persons cases at any given time
- There are no national laws or protocols on how law enforcement deals with unidentified remains
- This has been called the “Nation’s Silent Mass Disaster”





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Why should you consider NamUs?

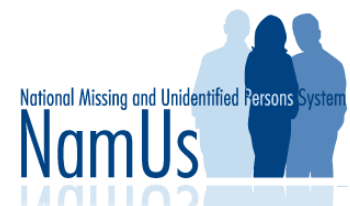
Why Not?

- For Law Enforcement, it's secure
- For Family Members, it's accessible
- For ME/Coroners, it's centralized

Cost = Zero

Effort = Minutes

Benefit= Priceless



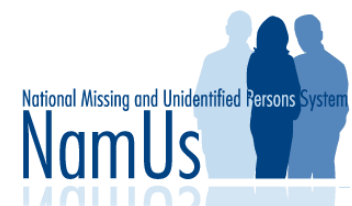


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Future Considerations

- Funding
- Dedicated staff
 - Case management
 - System maintenance
- 100% ME/C participation
 - NAME accreditation
- Critical Mass



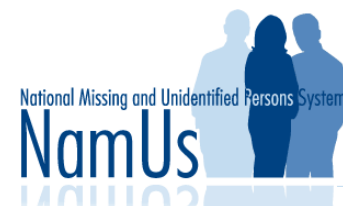


NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System



– Resources

- www.namus.gov
 - www.findthemissing.org
 - www.identifyus.org
- www.justice.gov (US Dept of Justice)
- www.ojp.gov (Office of Justice Programs)
- www.nfstc.org (National Forensic Science Training Ctr)
- <http://www.waspc.org/mp/missing.php> (WA Missing Persons)
- www.doenetwork.org (The Doe Network) Private
- www.porchlightusamissing.1colony.com (Porchlight USA) Private



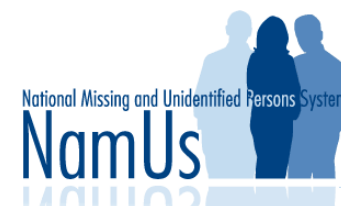


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Resources continued.

- www.lbth.org/ncma/index.php (Let's Bring Them Home/National Center for Missing Adults)
- Christina.palazzolo@leo.gov (Vicap Representative)
- www.charleyproject.org (Private)
- www.wsp.wa.gov/crime/mcservic.htm (Washington Missing Persons Clearinghouse)
- www.missingkids.com (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children)
- www.ancestry.com (Ancestry)
- <http://www.nampn.org> (North American Missing Persons Network)
- HITS (Attorney Generals Office)



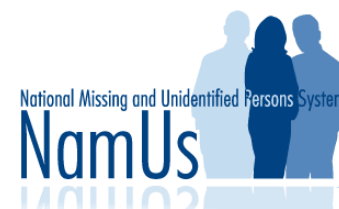


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Bottom Line....

Identify the unidentified's
and find our missing.





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TEAM WASHINGTON

Katherine Taylor, Ph.D.
King County Medical Examiner

Nancy Hawley
Director of Victim Services
Family & Friends of Violent Crime Victims

Detective Andrea Blume
Kittitas County Sheriff's Office

Elizabeth Nelson
Medicolegal Investigator
Spokane County Medical Examiners Office

Detective Tina Drain
Seattle Police, Missing Persons Unit (Retired)





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Washington Goals

- Get information about NamUs to all local, county, state and victim advocacy agencies in Washington
- Facilitate County Coroners Offices to have a working knowledge of NamUs
- Expand public knowledge of NamUs
- Continue with training for LE at basic Academy at WLEA
- Facilitate Coroner Training

