



# MISSING PERSONS STATE REVIEW



May 27, 2020

ASCIA review: missing person programs

An overview of survey responses provided by ASCIA states to determine the scope and extent of missing persons programs across the nation.



---

*Produced by the Montana Division of Criminal Investigation*

---

## OVERVIEW

The *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974* was amended in 1985 to provide States with assistance to either establish and operate or to expand and operate statewide clearinghouses for information regarding missing and exploited children.

Missing child clearinghouses exist or are developing in each of the 50 states, providing resources to missing children and their families as well as professionals who work with them. Each state determines the location of the clearinghouses within a state agency, as well as the scope of services, training protocols, and data collection according to their own laws and codes. Many states expanded the missing child clearinghouse to include adults, missing endangered adults, and/or missing persons with dementia or other mental disabilities.

Over the past few years, significant attention has been drawn on missing persons, in particular indigenous persons. Many state criminal investigative agencies with tribal lands in their region are being asked to take additional steps, develop stronger protocols, participate in task forces, and provide more support on the subject. *Savanna's Act* is pending in Congress, and in November 2019 U.S. Attorney General Barr launched a national strategy to address missing and murdered indigenous persons. This is clearly a growing topic of concern and should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen missing persons response and protocols.

**According to the National Council of State Legislatures, in 2019 "... 28 measures in 11 states were introduced to address those issues. Most (18 measures) were introduced by native legislators; six were enacted. Broadly, the bills addressed: creating task forces/increasing awareness; training/working with law enforcement; reporting and data collection; and congressional action."**<sup>1</sup>

In October 2019, a survey of Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCA) members was conducted to determine the scope and extent of missing persons' programs across the nation with the goal of sharing responses among the membership. The survey included the following questions:

1. Is there a missing person's task force?
  - a. Who are the stakeholders?
  - b. What authority do they have?
  - c. Were they appointed by statute or state authority?
2. Have any recent laws been passed on the subject of missing persons?
  - a. Are there any under consideration?
  - b. Has the state agency been directed to be more involved and in what way?
3. Is there any appropriation for the Task Force?

States that responded had a variety of answers that are included below. Resources and additional information are available on pages 13-14 of this report.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncsl.org/bookstore/state-legislatures-magazine/trends-census-native-american-deaths-vaccines-and-more.aspx>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ 13 out of 49 states responded.
- ❖ **Colorado** has a Human Trafficking Task Force and a Colorado Cold Case Task Force; there are two federally recognized Tribes and reservations in Colorado; no legislation is pending to form a missing person or MMIW Task Force.
- ❖ **Illinois** has a Silver Search Task Force established in 2016; there are no federally recognized Tribes in Illinois; there is pending legislation to create a *Missing and Murdered Women in Chicago Act*.
- ❖ **Kansas** has pending legislation to address human trafficking and missing and murdered indigenous women; there are four federally recognized Tribes and reservations in Kansas but no missing person or MMIW Task Force.
- ❖ **Maryland** has a Task Force on Missing Vulnerable Adults, established by legislation in 2004; there is a Maryland Task Force for the Missing and Unidentified, Adults and Children which is a coalition of state and local agencies; there are no federally recognized Tribes and no legislation pending to create an MMIW or missing person Task Force.
- ❖ **Minnesota** legislation, in 2018, created the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force to study the issue; a report to the legislature is due September 2020; there are eleven federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota; state statute allows for the use of a Driver's License image for aid in the location/identification of a missing person.
- ❖ **Missouri** legislation created the AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee; there are no federally recognized tribes in Missouri; no legislation is pending to form a missing person or MMIW Task Force.
- ❖ **Montana** legislation created the Montana Missing Indigenous Persons Task Force in 2019; a report to the legislature is due September 2020; recommendations from the Task Force will be made to the State-Tribal Relations Committee for legislation in the 2021 session; there are eight federally recognized reservations in Montana; the Department of Justice completed the first phase of data analysis on missing persons in 2020.
- ❖ **North Dakota** legislation created the North Dakota Human Trafficking Commission; the code was amended in 2019 to include attention to missing and murdered indigenous persons; there are five federally recognized reservations in North Dakota; **Savannah's Act** was created in response to the disappearance and brutal murder of tribal member Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind in 2017; there are five federally recognized Tribes and reservations in the state.
- ❖ **Oregon** legislation crafted in 2019, directed Oregon State Police (OSP) to conduct a study on increasing and improving reporting, investigation and response to missing and murdered Native American women; there is a Missing and Murdered Native American Work Group to conduct listening sessions throughout Oregon; a report to the legislature is due September 2020; there are seven reservations and 9 federally recognized Tribes in Oregon.
- ❖ **South Dakota** proposed legislation in 2020 to establish a missing persons clearinghouse; in 2019, state code was amended to include guidelines and training in response to missing and murdered indigenous women and children; there are nine federally recognized Tribes and reservations in the state; there are no missing persons or MMIW Task Forces.
- ❖ **Tennessee** legislation established the Tennessee Human Trafficking Task Force in 2014; there are several bills to establish additional Alert programs in the 2020 session; there are no missing person or MMIW Task Forces; there are no federally recognized tribes in the state.
- ❖ **Utah** State Legislature recently enacted the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Task Force; a report to the legislature will be due before the next general session in 2021; there are eight tribal nations in the state.

- ❖ **Washington** State Legislature tasked the Washington State Patrol to conduct one of the first studies on missing and murdered indigenous women in 2018; a report to the legislature, one of the first in the nation, was released in June 2019; there are 29 federally recognized Tribes in the state.

## STATE BY STATE

### COLORADO

The Colorado Bureau of Investigation, housed within the Colorado Department of Public Safety, houses the Missing Persons Unit which includes the Missing Person Clearinghouse Manager and the AMBER Alert program.

- The Colorado Cold Case Task Force centers around cold cases including many cases that fall into the missing person category.
- The Cold Case Task Force includes sixteen (16) members including law enforcement agencies, district attorneys, victim advocates, family representatives, and a forensic pathologist.
- There are two federally recognized Tribes in Colorado, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- No recent laws have passed regarding missing persons.
- There are no missing persons or MMIW Task Forces in the state.

### ILLINOIS

The Illinois Endangered Missing Person Advisory program provides a regional system for rapid dissemination of information regarding high-risk missing persons, including the AMBER Plan Task Force, the Silver Search Task Force, and the Child Safety Coordinator who acts in dual capacity as the coordinator for both child safety and Silver Search programs.

- The Silver Search Program was created and enacted in 2016 by the passage of the Public Act 099-0322 ([20 ILCS 2605-485 e\(1\)](#)). The Silver Search Task Force was created to bring agencies and organizations together to create the Silver Search program and assist in missing persons cases involving those with dementia or Alzheimer's. The members are appointed by the State Police Director and meet at least twice a year. Personnel and resources for the Task Force are allocated to the Illinois State Police
- The Silver Search Task Force is made up of stakeholders including:
  - Illinois State Police
  - Illinois Tollway Authority
  - Alzheimer's Association
  - Illinois Broadcasters Association
  - Illinois Associations of Chiefs of Police
  - Illinois Department of Aging
  - Illinois Department of Transportation
  - AARP
  - Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board
  - Illinois Secretary of State
  - Illinois Lottery
- Two laws currently going through legislation include:
  1. IL HR0640 - Urges county authorities throughout the state to utilize the Silver Search program more frequently.

2. IL HB3932 – Will create the *Task Force on Missing and Murdered Chicago Women Act* to examine and report on systemic causes behind violence against Chicago women and girls, methods for tracking and collecting data on missing and murdered Chicago women and girls, polices and institutional practices that impact violence against women and girls and the investigation and prosecution of crimes of gender-related violence, measures to reduce violence and to help victims', victims' families, and victims' communities hear from violence against Chicago women and girls. There are no details on appropriations at this time.
- There are no Native American reservations in Illinois.

## KANSAS

In February 2020, Kansas HB 2646 was introduced to address training on human trafficking and missing and murdered indigenous people. Under the bill, the Kansas Attorney General will develop training protocols with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) and the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center to coordinate responses to MMIW.

- KBI has developed a new [website](#) to increase public interest in Kansas missing persons cases.
- The Statewide Intelligence System houses missing persons information including suspicious activity, human trafficking tips, runaway reports, and Immediate Response Team activation.
- Potential new legislation, Francine's Law, will require missing persons data to be entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs).
- KBI works closely with the Department for Children and Families (DCF) and their contractors to activate the Immediate Response Team if a child (under 18 years old) reports a human trafficking situation to law enforcement.
- Kansas is home to four Indian reservations--the Iowa, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, and Sac and Fox.
- Kansas does not have a missing person or MMIW task force at this time.

## MARYLAND

Maryland State Police has established missing persons guidance through Operations Directive OPS08.04. The guidance includes definitions and procedures for missing person response including: AMBER Alert System, Endangered persons, Involuntary missing, Missing Adult, Missing Child, Missing Persons, and the Silver Alert program.

- In October 2004, the state formed the Task Force on Missing Vulnerable Adults through legislation (Chapter 528, Acts of 2004). The Task Force has 17 members representing law enforcement, state government, telecommunications and broadcasters, and aging adult organizations.
- The state has the Maryland Task Force for the Missing and Unidentified, Adults and Children, a coalition of Maryland missing person organizations, advocates, law enforcement and families of the missing.
- Maryland has three state recognized tribes but does not have an MMIW Task Force.

## MINNESOTA

Minnesota created the *Minnesota Missing Persons Act* through Statutes 299C.51-299C.5655. Sections include the Minnesota Missing Children and Endangered Persons Program; Missing Person Report and Duties of Commissioner and Law Enforcement Agencies; Request for Additional Information on Missing Person; Missing

Children Bulletin; Training; Release of Medical Data; Missing Person Report; and Standardized Reports and Procedures.

- Minnesota State [MSS 171.07Sbd.12\(2\)](#) allows for the use of a Driver's License image for aid in the location/identification of a missing person.
- HF 3375, passed in 2018, created the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force](#). The 11-person task force has three subcommittees: systems, data, and community impact.
  - Systems works on identifying organizations that can provide improved prevention and response.
  - Data is looking at Minnesota's current MMIW data, gaps in data collection, and whether agencies are sharing data.
  - Community Impact works at identifying how communities are impacted by the MMIW crisis, healing resources, and potential legislative action.
- Members include:
  - Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association
  - Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
  - United States Attorney's Office
  - Local, tribal, and state law enforcement
  - Minnesota County Attorneys Association
  - Minnesota Coroner's Association
  - Minnesota Dept. of Health
  - Tribal representatives
  - Statewide Victim service providers for indigenous victims of violence
  - Indigenous survivors of gender violence
- The Task Force meets quarterly and will propose institutional policies and practices to effectively reduce gender violence and increase the safety of indigenous women and girls.
- The [MMIW Task Force](#) is administered through the Minnesota Office of Justice Programs and requires coordination with the Commissioner of Public Safety, state, federal, tribal, and non-governmental agencies to develop methods for tracking and collecting data.
- The bill provided onetime appropriations for \$105,000 for the first year and \$45,000 for the second year for expenses related to the task force.

## MISSOURI

The Missouri General Assembly established § 43.402 to institute the Missing Persons Unit within the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP). The Missing Persons Unit is the clearinghouse for the state of Missouri. MSHP has established missing persons procedures through General Order 44-02-1652.

- The Division of Drug and Crime Control Missing Persons Unit is responsible for aiding in the location of missing persons, collecting data, establishing missing person procedures, and implementing the AMBER Alert, Missouri Endangered Person Advisory, and the Endangered Silver Advisory.
- Missouri Title 12 § 210.1012 established the [AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee](#) to be housed within the department of public safety. The committee consists of ten (10) members, seven appointed by the Governor, representing law enforcement and broadcasting organizations, highway patrol and state departments of safety and health.
- There are no tribal reservations in Missouri.
- There are currently no missing persons or MMIW Task Forces.

## MONTANA

Montana legislature created the *Missing Children Act of 1985*, establishing the Montana Missing Persons Clearinghouse within the Department of Justice. The department implemented an [online searchable database](#) in March 2008. Several pieces of legislation were passed in the 2019 legislative session to address the issue of missing Native Americans in Montana.

- Senate Bill 312 created the Montana Missing Indigenous Persons Task Force.
  - The Task Force is composed of representatives from the Attorney General's Office, State Highway Patrol, Department of Justice, and each tribal government located on the eight federally recognized Indian reservations.
  - The Task Force will provide a report to the State-Tribal Relations Committee by September 2020 that identifies jurisdictional barriers, ways to improve interagency communication and collaboration to increase reporting and investigation of missing indigenous persons, and recommendations based on listening sessions in tribal communities.
  - The bill also requires the creation of a Looping in Native Communities Network (LINC), a grant-funded program to collect and share data on missing people from the state's reservations.
  - \$25,000 in general funds were appropriated to provide matching funds to tribal agencies to implement the LINC program.
- House Bill 54 was created in response to the disappearance and death of Henny Scott in 2018.
  - The bill requires all law enforcement agencies in the state to accept reports of missing persons.
  - The bill also established the minimum information that must be collected with a report.
  - Anyone under the age of 21 must be added to the nationwide database of missing persons within two hours of a report being made; reports for those 21 and over must be entered within eight hours.
- House Bill 21, known as Hanna's Act, is in remembrance of Hanna Harris, a Lame Deer woman who was murdered in 2013 on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.
  - The Act requires the Department of Justice to assist in the investigation of all missing persons cases when requested.
  - The Department must also employ a missing persons specialist to function as a liaison between local, state, federal and tribal law enforcement on missing persons cases.
  - The legislature allocated \$205,000 of state special revenue to fund the missing persons specialist position.

“In Montana, we recognize that Native American women face too much violence, and too often go missing and are murdered,” said U.S. Attorney for the District of Montana Kurt Alme. “The missing need to be found and brought home, murderers and abusers must be brought to justice, and violence against women must stop.”<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-william-p-barr-launches-national-strategy-address-missing-and-murdered>

The Montana Department of Justice reviewed missing persons data from 2017-2019, resulting in a comprehensive analysis of over 5,500 entries in the Missing Persons Clearinghouse.<sup>3</sup> Key observations include:

- 81% of individuals who went missing during the time period were under the age of 18.
- 60% of the entries represent people who have gone missing more than once.
- Indigenous persons are more than four times as likely to go missing as non-indigenous persons.
- Most people reported missing are found; out of the 3,277 individuals entered in the system, 97.7% of those reported missing during the three-year period are recovered or located.

The full report can be found [here](#).

## NORTH DAKOTA

The North Dakota Human Trafficking Commission was established by the North Dakota Century Code 54-12-33 to promote training on human trafficking investigation and prosecution in connection with the state's attorney's associations, the North Dakota peace officers standards and training board, and state and local law enforcement.

- The code was amended under HB 1311 in 2019 to require the Commission to promote investigation and prosecution training on missing and murdered indigenous people in addition to the existing responsibilities of the commission.
- The 2019 Legislature also passed HB 1313 which requires the office of attorney general to implement a missing person repository for authorized users to enter missing person information in accordance with rules established by the bureau of criminal investigation.
- Missing person information, including demographic data related to indigenous people, which is entered by an authorized user or made available to an authorized user by a federally recognized tribe in the state, must be included in the repository.
- There are five federally recognized reservations in North Dakota.

Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind, a pregnant Spirit Lake tribal member from the Fargo area, was brutally murdered and dumped into the Red River in 2017. *Savanna's Act* requires more reporting on missing and murdered Native Americans and directs the U.S. Departments of Justice and Interior to consult with tribes in developing national law enforcement guidelines. The bill also calls for more information sharing between agencies and training for law officers.

- The Fargo Native American Commission formed an MMIW task force in 2018 in response to Savanna's death and to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women.

## OREGON

Oregon HB 2625, introduced in the 2019 Oregon Legislative session, directed Oregon State Police (OSP) to conduct a study on increasing and improving, reporting, investigation and response to missing and murdered Native American women.

- The Oregon State Police are charged to work with the Oregon Director of the Legislative Commission on Indian Services to conduct a study and craft a report to the Legislature by September 2020

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://dojmt.gov/missing-persons/data-project/>



- The OSP Deputy Superintendent established a Missing and Murdered Native American Work Group to conduct listening sessions throughout Oregon. The bill requires the OSP to provide a report to the Legislature.
- The work group will determine the scope of MMIW, identify barriers, and create partnerships to improve reporting, identification, investigation and response to cases of missing and murdered Native American women in Oregon.
- The work group is composed of legislative members, law enforcement agencies, state police and department of justice representatives, and the US Attorney's Office.
- No appropriation was attached to the bill.

Oregon is a Public Law 280 state, with criminal and civil jurisdiction of tribal lands, and has nine federally recognized tribes:

- Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians
- Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- Coquille Indian Tribe
- Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
- Klamath Tribes

The following tribes have gone through Retrocession with both the tribes and the Oregon state government agreeing that the PL 280 basis for state criminal jurisdiction should be eliminated.

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

## SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota established statute §23-3-18 in 1939 by establishing the Division of Criminal Investigation as the official agency to train law enforcement officers.

- Senate Bill 164, in 2019, codified §23-3-18.1 focused on the guidelines and procedures for reporting and investigation of missing persons, murdered indigenous women and children, and runaways. The DCI director establishes training programs to address the conduct of investigations into missing persons, including missing and murdered indigenous women and children.
- In 2019, the Legislature added §23-3-18.2 to include the collection and sharing of information on missing and murdered indigenous persons.
- South Dakota has proposed legislation for the 2020 Legislature, Senate Bill 27, to establish a missing persons clearinghouse and duties/responsibilities for the Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse would be established within the Division of Criminal Investigation. Six new sections would be added to §23-3-18 to include:
  - 23-3-18.3 – Definitions
  - 23-3-18.4 – Missing persons clearinghouse—Establishment—Purpose
  - 23-3-18.5 – Missing persons clearinghouse—Administration—Requirements
  - 23-3-18.6 – Missing persons clearinghouse—Report—Notification
  - 23-3-18.7 – Missing person clearinghouse—Purpose
  - 23-3-18.8 – Missing person located—Purging of information
- Proposed language includes that a website may contain information on names and photos of missing persons enabling pictures and other personally identifiable information to be posted without signed releases allowing such action.

- There are no established missing persons or MMIW Task Forces.

“In South Dakota, proponents of SB 164 asked for even less than a task force: They simply proposed that law enforcement keep track of cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) in their records. Without proper documentation, Native women’s cases remain invisible to the state.”<sup>4</sup>

## TENNESSEE

Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) §38-6-102 established the criminal investigation division which is responsible for training law enforcement officers and other government officials who are involved with human trafficking to understand best practice uniform protocols and procedures. The Division includes the Criminal Intelligence Unit/Fusion Center which manages the formal missing persons programs.

- The Tennessee Human Trafficking Task Force was developed in 2014.
- T.C.A. § 38-6-117 created the Missing Children Registry to include information about children reported missing, a picture of the child, and the missing child’s status. Additionally, the statute requires that the bureau of investigation will place, maintain, and update the missing child registry on the state’s internet home page.
- The Care Alert program was established under § 38-6-121 to aid in identification and location of missing citizens with physical impairment, dementia, physical and intellectual disability or mental health conditions, as well as coordination with the state’s Alzheimer’s groups.
- The state also established the Blue Alert system to provide a statewide system for rapid dissemination of information regarding law enforcement officers injured, killed, or missing while in the line of duty.
- There are several new alert bills going before the General Assembly in 2020 including:
  - Green Alert for missing veterans
  - Silver Alert for older adults aged sixty (60) or over, for a person of any age who suffers from a documented case of dementia, or for those over eighteen (18) with intellectual, developmental or physical disabilities.
  - Holly Bobo Alert to allow Tennessee’s endangered alert system to include missing or endangered young adults under 21; currently the program issues endangered alerts for those missing children under 18.
- There is no established missing persons Task Force and there are no federally recognized tribes in Tennessee.

## UTAH

The Utah Missing Persons Clearinghouse was established in 1997 to provide a central location for resources to identify and assist state and national efforts to locate Utah’s missing persons and assist in identification of unidentified decedents. The Clearinghouse is administered by the Utah Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Identification. Utah State Legislature established missing persons language under §53-10-203.

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://thecirclenews.org/cover-story/governments-seek-answers-as-crisis-of-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-persists/>

- §53-10-701, effective 5/14/2019, established the Utah Silver Alert Notification System (Silver Alert) for missing and endangered adults.
- Utah ranks 8 out of the top 10 states with the highest number of MMIWG cases.<sup>5</sup>
- In response to the high number of missing indigenous women in the state<sup>6</sup>, Utah lawmakers passed HB 116, Utah Code Annotated §36-29-107.<sup>7</sup> The Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Task Force is composed of nine (9) members including members from the state legislature, state government to include Division of Indian Affairs and Department of Human Services, the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Public Safety, in addition to a tribal representative, a tribal victim advocate, and a nonprofit tribal service provider. Requirements include:
  - Consultation with tribal governments on the scope and nature of the issues regarding missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.
  - Development of model protocols and procedures to apply to new and unsolved cases including law enforcement and prosecution response and investigation, collection and sharing data, and use of existing criminal databases.
  - Incorporation of multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional representatives from tribal law enforcement and federal agencies to provide input on how to review cold cases involving missing and murdered women and girls.
  - Clarification on roles, authorities, and jurisdiction in communicating with affected families from inception of an investigation through closure or case resolution; and education and outreach campaigns to identify and reduce crime resulting in missing and murdered indigenous women.
  - Development of a report to the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee on the Task Force's finding and recommendation for improvements in the criminal justice and social service systems for preventing and addressing crime involving missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Utah.
  - Utah HB 116 requested a one-time general fund appropriation for \$9,200 for compensation, per diem, and travel reimbursement of task force members.
- There are eight tribal nations in Utah.

The Utah Department of Public Safety hopes to address the underlying violence and vulnerability causing individuals to be murdered or missing in the first place through evaluation of the broader criminal justice and social services systems.

## WASHINGTON

In 2004, the Washington State Attorney General convened a Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains Task Force, to review law enforcement's response to missing persons cases and unidentified remains. The Task Force, composed of law enforcement agencies and victim organizations, created model policies and training guidelines for police agencies statewide; the Missing Persons Toolkit was created by the Task Force to educate the public on the steps needed to report a person missing, what the investigation process may look like for families, and a list of resources.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.uihi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Missing-and-Murdered-Indigenous-Women-and-Girls-Report.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.heraldextra.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/it-s-my-top-priority-utah-lawmaker-wants-task-force/article\\_1a06ca86-52df-5958-bc2f-83075d0959f5.html](https://www.heraldextra.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/it-s-my-top-priority-utah-lawmaker-wants-task-force/article_1a06ca86-52df-5958-bc2f-83075d0959f5.html)

<sup>7</sup> <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title36/Chapter29/36-29-S107.html>

The Washington State Patrol houses the Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit (MUPU) but does not take missing person reports as this responsibility falls to the city, county, or tribal jurisdiction where the person went missing.

- MUPU is the repository for dental records, assists in coordinating efforts for missing persons, AMBER, Silver, and other endangered missing person alerts, and serves as a resource for other jurisdictions. Washington State Law requires law enforcement to attempt to obtain dental records if a person is missing over 30 days.
- In 2017, a [Washington State Cold Case Working Group](#) was established to review specific cold cases with recommendations to the primary agency for potential follow up. The working group included the state Attorney General's Office, the state's Forensic Anthropologist, WSP MUPU representatives, and detectives from around the state with specific interest in cold/unsolved cases that include missing persons and unidentified human remains.
- Washington HB 2951, passed in 2018, required the Washington State Patrol (WSP) to work with federally recognized tribes, tribal law enforcement, urban Indian organizations and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs to study and determine the scope of the issue, identify barriers, and find ways to create partnerships to increase reporting and investigation of missing Native American Women.
  - WSP was tasked with working with the federal Department of Justice to increase information sharing and to coordinate resources for reporting and investigating cases.
  - WSP was also tasked with providing a report to the Legislature on the results of the study, including data analysis, identified barriers with state resources, and recommendations and proposed legislation to address the problem.
  - The Washington State Patrol [Missing and Murdered Native American Women Report](#) was released in June 2019.
  - The Legislature appropriated \$100,000 to WSP for resources to compile the study.
- In 2019, the Washington State Legislature passed SSHB 1713 to hire two liaison positions to build relationships and increase trust between governmental organizations and native communities in responding to missing indigenous persons.
  - The Legislature appropriated \$545,000 for the liaison to work with the state's 29 tribes, urban Native Americans and law enforcement agencies and to improve data collection.

Tribal and urban Indian communities called for the formation of a community-led statewide task force to continue the work within Washington State to address missing and murdered indigenous women. The request was not included in a bill this session.

## OTHER STATES

### IDAHO

<https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/politics-government/state-politics/article240235801.html>

(2/12/2020, Sewell) reports "A proposal to designate May 5 as a day of awareness for missing and murdered indigenous people in Idaho sailed through a legislative committee on Wednesday. 'This is a pretty tough issue to talk about,' Rep. Caroline Troy, R-Genesee, told the House Health and Welfare Committee while introducing House Concurrent Resolution 33." Troy "said that when it comes to violence against women in the U.S., 'indigenous women face the highest rates per capita of any other race.'" The Statesman adds, "Tribes do not have the authority to prosecute non-Natives who commit violent crimes on tribal lands. 'This piece of legislation simply draws attention to this terrible issue and designates a day of awareness,' Troy

said. In 2019, Congress and at least eight Western states enacted legislation or executive orders pertaining to the missing and murdered indigenous women crisis, which is being called an epidemic. Idaho is not yet among those states. If Troy's resolution is approved, it would be Idaho's first official action in addressing this crisis."

## WYOMING

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/wyoming/articles/2020-03-10/bills-address-missing-murdered-indigenous-people-in-wyoming>

The AP (3/10) reports from Casper, Wyoming, "Information on missing or murdered Indigenous people in Wyoming could improve under legislation that would better manage missing persons reports and potentially coordinate work between multiple jurisdictions." According to the AP, "Law enforcement agencies will be required to report missing persons and include their biographical information under a bill signed by Gov. Mark Gordon on Monday, the Casper Star-Tribune reported. The state will then compile an annual report on the number of missing people in Wyoming." The state "would also help its two tribes implement their own Amber Alert system, require state officials to provide training on crimes involving missing and murdered indigenous people and mandate cooperation between law enforcement agencies. Another bill that would coordinate reporting and investigative efforts between jurisdictions operating in and around tribal land is scheduled to be signed Tuesday."

## FEDERAL LAW

### SAVANNAH'S ACT

[House Resolution 2733](#), *Savannah's Act*, named after Savanna LaFontaine-Greywind who was murdered in 2017, directs the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and criminal justice protocols to address missing and murdered Native Americans. The bill requires DOJ to take the following actions:

- Provide training to law enforcement agencies on how to record tribal enrollment for victims in federal databases,
- Develop and implement a strategy to notify the public of the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System,
- Conduct specific outreach to tribes regarding the ability to publicly enter information through the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System or other non-law enforcement sensitive portal,
- Develop regionally appropriate guidelines for response to cases of missing and murdered Native Americans,
- Provide training and technical assistance to tribes and law enforcement agencies for implementation of the developed guidelines, and
- Report statistics on missing and murdered Native Americans.

The bill authorizes DOJ to provide grants for the purposes of:

1. Developing and implementing policies and protocols for law enforcement regarding cases of missing and murdered Native Americans, and

2. Compiling and reporting data relating to missing and murdered Native Americans. Federal law enforcement agencies must modify their guidelines to incorporate the guidelines developed by DOJ. The Federal Bureau of Investigation shall include gender in its annual statistics on missing and unidentified persons published on its website.

## OPERATION LADY JUSTICE

In November 2019, during a visit to the Flathead Reservation in Montana, Attorney General Barr launched a national strategy to address missing and murdered Native Americans. President Donald Trump signed an [executive order](#) creating the [Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives](#). The task force, designated [Operation Lady Justice](#), will convene listening sessions and consultations with tribal leaders and citizens on the scope and nature of the issues; develop model protocols and procedures to apply to new and unsolved cases; establish a multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional team to review cold cases; and address the need for greater clarity regarding roles, authorities, and jurisdiction throughout the life cycle of cases.

The strategy also provides \$1.5 million in funding to place Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) coordinators in U.S. Attorney's Offices in 11 states including Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Oklahoma, Michigan, Utah, Nevada, Minnesota, Oregon, New Mexico, and Washington State. These coordinators will develop protocols for a more coordinated law enforcement response to missing cases. The plan also includes deploying the FBI's most advanced response capabilities when requested, improved data collection and analysis, and training to support local response efforts.

The Task Force is required to develop and submit a report to the President by November 26, 2020 that will include:

1. The activities and accomplishments of the Task Force
2. The status of projects the Task Force has not yet completed; and
3. Specific recommendations for future action of the Task Force.

A Final written report to the President regarding activities and accomplishments of the Task Force is due by November 26, 2021.

## RESOURCES

### News Articles

New York Times: [Rural Montana Had Already Lost Too Many Women. Then Selena Disappeared.](#)

New York Times: [In Indian Country, a Crisis of Missing Women. And a New One When They're Found](#)

Billings Gazette: [Northern Arapaho Woman Found Dead in Central Wyoming](#)

Billings Gazette: [Second Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Group Could Form in Wyoming](#)

Helena IR: [Tribal Members Voice Frustration as Task Force Shares Work on Missing Indigenous People Crisis](#)

Great Falls Tribune: [New Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Documentary Premieres Today](#)

Flathead Beacon: [Movement to Highlight Missing Native Women Expands to Males](#)

### Film Clips

Somebody's Daughter (trailer):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NscqDqTOL18&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3AgMtb6uT5YtS8EqX-ZpDdisK9Rk3AobfF0nHLjyqgtj4Wtu7la73sK3s>

When They Were Here (clip): <https://www.whentheywerehere.com/>

[The Search: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women | Fault Lines](#)

[Finding Ashley: A Native American Family's Desperate Search for Their Missing Relative](#)

### Additional Materials

#### MINNESOTA

- [Minnesota Missing Person Report](#)
- [Brandon's Law Model Policy](#)

#### OREGON

##### Missing and Murdered Native American Women Work Group

- [Invitation to Participate Letter to Tribe](#)
- [Event Outline](#)
- [Tour Checklist](#)
- [PL 280](#)
- [Flyer](#)
- [Agenda \(1\)](#)
- [Agenda \(2\)](#)
- [Resources/Oregon State Police Data](#)
- [Blank Request for Information on Missing Person](#)

## REPORTS

[Washington State Patrol Missing and Murdered Native American Women Report](#)

[Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

[Urban Indian Health Institute: We Demand More](#)

[Our Bodies, Our Stories](#)

## ONLINE RESOURCES

National Native American Law Enforcement Association: <http://nnalea.org/wordpress1/>

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: <https://www.missingkids.org/HOME>

National Missing and Unidentified Persons System: <https://www.namus.gov/>

Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women: <https://www.csvanw.org/mmiw/>

Sovereign Bodies Institute: <https://www.sovereign-bodies.org/mmiw-database>

Urban Indian Health Institute: <https://www.uihi.org/projects/our-bodies-our-stories/>