A Word About UCR Data

It is important for users of UCR data to remember that the FBI's primary objective is to generate a reliable set of crime statistics for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management, as the data has become a social indicator for monitoring and evaluating policies as well as regulating staffing levels. Additionally, the American public relies on these data sets for information on the fluctuations in the level of crime from year to year, and criminologists, sociologists, legislators, city planners, the media, and other students of criminal justice use them for a variety of research and planning purposes. The FBI provides alphabetical tabulations of states, metropolitan statistical areas, cities, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties, colleges and universities, and state, tribal, and other agencies. Since crime is a sociological phenomenon influenced by a variety of factors, the FBI discourages ranking the agencies and using the data as a measurement of law enforcement effectiveness.

To ensure these data are uniformly reported, the FBI provides contributing law enforcement agencies with a handbook that explains how to classify and score offenses and provides uniform crime offense definitions. Acknowledging that offense definitions may vary from state to state, the FBI cautions agencies to report offenses not according to local or state statutes but according to those guidelines provided in the handbook. Most agencies make a good faith effort to comply with established guidelines. Finally, in a given year, more than 18,000 agencies contribute data to the FBI; however, because of computer problems, changes in records management systems, personnel shortages, or a number of other reasons, some agencies cannot provide data for publication. The FBI appreciates the conscientious efforts made by law enforcement personnel throughout the nation to report accurate and reliable crime data. Their efforts make it possible for the FBI to provide assessments of the nature and type of crime in the United States.

The UCR Program publishes on this site statistics most commonly requested by data users. For more information regarding the availability of the FBI's UCR data, contact a member of the Crime Statistics Management Unit (CSMU) by telephone at (304) 625-2000; by fax at (304) 625-3566; or by e-mail at crimestatsinfo@ic.fbi.gov. E-mail data requests cannot be processed unless requestors include their full name, a mailing address, and a contact telephone number.

Listed below are the UCR Electronic Data Dissemination Standard Operating Procedures.

UCR Electronic Data Dissemination Standard Operating Procedures

One of the operations of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division's CSMU is to disseminate UCR Program data sets to the public. The UCR data are delivered to the public in several ways:

Web publications of traditional UCR offerings such as *Crime in the United States* (which includes Cargo Theft, Human Trafficking, and federal agency data), *National Incident-Based Reporting System, Hate Crime Statistics, Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted,* and other periodic or special compilations, as well as UCR manuals can be accessed at https://ucr.fbi.gov/.

Older publications (1930 to 1994) are available from the FBI's CJIS Division as scanned Portable Document Format (PDF) files on compact discs (CDs).

Master files for each year of the UCR data collection are also available from the FBI's CJIS Division on CD. Master files are fixed-length, written in an ASCII text format, compressed with WinZip software, and require some programming knowledge to extract data. The following master files are available:

Return A Master File. The Return A Master File furnishes the number of Part I Offenses (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson) and additional offense data (e.g., burglary: forcible entry, unlawful entry, and attempted entry) for each agency reporting data to the FBI; the number of clearances which involved only juveniles (individuals under age 18); and the reported number of police officers killed and assaulted. (1960–current)

Supplement to Return A Master File. The Supplement to Return A Master File provides breakdowns for the types of robberies (e.g., bank robberies), information regarding burglary type (i.e., residential or nonresidential), time of burglary (i.e., day, night, or unknown), larceny-type (e.g., shoplifting), and type of value of property stolen and property recovered by the submitting agency. (1960–current)

Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR) Master File. The SHR Master File contains details about the murders for which supplemental data were provided to the FBI: situation type (e.g., single victim/single offender); the age, sex, race, and ethnicity of the victim and the offender; the weapon used in the homicide; the relationship of the victim to offender; and the circumstance surrounding the offense. (1980–current)

Police Employee Master File. The Police Employee Master File furnishes law enforcement employee data for the participating agencies regarding both sworn officers and civilian employees with breakdowns by gender. The file also includes officer assault data indicating whether the officer sustained injury; the officer's shift (e.g., the time of the assault as well as the month of assault); duty-type (e.g., two-man vehicle, etc.); the weapon used in the assault; and the circumstance type (e.g., disturbance call). (1960–current)

Arson Master File. The Arson Master File supplies the number of arson offenses reported or known to law enforcement; the type of structure involved in the arson (e.g., residence, storage, motor vehicle, etc.); the total number of arson offenses cleared and the number of clearances involving only juveniles; the number of unfounded offenses; and the estimated value of property damage. (1980–current)

Arrest Master File. The Arrest Master File provides the total number of arrests for each of the 29 arrest classifications for male, female, and male/female combined. The arrest data by gender are presented by age. The file includes race and ethnicity breakdowns for total juvenile arrestees and total adult arrestees by offense type. (1974–current)

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Flat File. The NIBRS Flat File supplies all incident-based crime data captured by the NIBRS via the Group A Incident Report (comprised of 6 segments with 58 data elements) and the Group B Arrest Report (made up of 13 data elements). (Currently, about a third of UCR crime data are reported via the NIBRS, therefore, data are not yet nationally representative). (1991–current)

Hate Crime Master File. The Hate Crime Master File contains data that are submitted by each participating agency reporting to the UCR Program. For each incident, the file provides the quarter in which the incident occurred, the date of the incident, the victim type, the total number of individual victims, the total number of offenders and their perceived race/ethnicity, the offense, the location, and the bias motivation. (1991–current)

Cargo Theft Master File. The Cargo Theft Master File contains data that are submitted by each participating agency reporting to the UCR Program. For each incident, the file provides the month in which the incident occurred, the date of the incident, the hour the incident occurred or the report date indicator, the cleared exceptionally indicator, the offense(s), location, weapon/force involved, the victim type, property loss type, date, and value of property stolen and property recovered, and the offender and arrest data by age, gender, race and ethnicity.

Special extractions are available from the data masters as text files on CD. Two examples follow:

Crime by County. This print data set provides Part I Offense totals by agency within each county group sorted by state. (1974–present)

Arrest by County. This print data set provides the number of arrests for 29 offense categories reported by participating agencies within each county group sorted by state.

Scanned print data sets (unsearchable PDF files) are available on CD for selected other data extractions (e.g., SHR File List, Return A Record Cards–Cities over 100,000 in population).

In accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002 and the federal government mandate to work toward paperless records, the CSMU has produced high-quality, electronic presentations of UCR data. The CSMU has also transitioned the UCR data to the electronic arena to modernize and improve dissemination methods without sacrificing customer service.

Our Goal

The CSMU's first priority with data dissemination is to meet the needs of customers (law enforcement, academia, media, private citizens, and government). Questions or data requests should be directed to:

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Criminal Justice Information Services Division
Crime Statistics Management Unit
Module E3
1000 Custer Hollow Road
Clarksburg, West Virginia 26306-0159

Telephone: (304) 625-2000
E-mail: crimestatsinfo@fbi.gov

The FBI's UCR Program serves as the national repository for the collection for crime statistics and its primary objective is to generate reliable information for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management. Participation by law enforcement agencies in the program is voluntary. The FBI relies on the good faith reporting of its contributing law enforcement agencies. Although the FBI makes every effort through its editing procedures, training practices, and correspondence to ensure the validity of the data it receives, the accuracy of the statistics depends primarily on the adherence of each contributor to the established standards of reporting. It is the responsibility of each state UCR Program or individual contributing law enforcement agency to submit accurate monthly statistics or correct existing data that are in error.