Counting Rules

The figure Counting Illustration shows how the data law enforcement agencies (LEAs) collect are reported to the NIBRS as an incident and how that information is ultimately included in the crime counts used in this publication's tables.

In addition to the administrative information reported about the entire incident (e.g., date of the incident, time of day), information or prescribed data elements and data values about offenses, victims, property, offenders, and arrestees are collected. These facts are categorized into six segments (Administrative, Offense, Victim, Property, Offender, and Arrestee). For example, a police report with information involving the murder and robbery of three victims by two offenders, where one was arrested, would be reported as one Administrative Segment, two Offense Segments, one Property Segment, three Victim Segments, two Offender Segments, and one Arrestee Segment for a total of ten segments in the NIBRS incident. The LEA then combines the segments, indexes them by a unique agency and incident number which identifies all ten segments as belonging to one incident of crime, and submits the incident to the state UCR Program or directly to the FBI UCR Program along with other incidents that have occurred.

To count the number of offenses in this example, however, the FBI UCR Program makes a distinction for crimes occurring against persons, as opposed to those occurring against property or society. In the previous example, two offense types correlating to the two Offense Segments were reported, one for Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter and one for Robbery. Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter is considered a Crime Against Person since the victim is always a person. To count a Crime Against Person, count one for each victim. Robbery is considered a Crime Against Property. To count the number of offenses, count one for each occurrence (incidence). Thus, the number of offenses for Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter is three (three victims) and the number of offenses for Robbery is one (one incidence). Based on these distinctions, readers should be aware of the counting rules by which the data were aggregated into tables.

For a further explanation of the counting rule used in a particular table, see Methodology. For a listing of offense types with an indication of whether the offense type is a Crime Against Person, Crime Against Property, or Crime Against Society, see NIBRS Offense Codes.