Next Generation Identification (NGI)
Missing Persons Services

Each year more than 100,000 individuals go missing.[1] A missing person might be across town or across the nation and may be endangered, homeless, affected by a medical condition or mental illness, or even deceased. The FBI offers the NGI Missing Persons Services to provide an opportunity to bring the missing person home. The NGI Missing Persons Services resolves active and cold missing person cases when the missing person's fingerprints are reported to the NGI System and a fingerprint match occurs to a civil, criminal, or deceased fingerprint.

Fingerprint retention key to resolving missing persons cases.

Failure to retain fingerprints in the NGI System creates significant identification delays, even when robust fingerprint searches are conducted. Simply put, a fingerprint match cannot occur if the database does not contain fingerprints for the missing person. Many missing persons are reported with biographic information in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Missing Person File, the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), or both, but unless fingerprints for the missing person are retained in the NGI System, subsequent searches of the NGI System have no opportunity to hit to the missing person's fingerprints, ultimately providing the person's potential location. Today, the three databases are not connected.

What are the benefits of fingerprint enrollment through the NGI Missing Persons Services?

If an agency submits a missing person's fingerprints for enrollment, there is an opportunity for the following beneficial outcomes:

- The fingerprints could match to an unknown deceased person's fingerprints, leading to an identification and death notification for the missing person's family.

- The fingerprints could be linked to recent employment, licensing, or firearm background check, or criminal activity, which could potentially lead to the individual's recent whereabouts.

- The fingerprints could establish a missing person identity in the NGI System, and a subsequent fingerprint submission (deceased, civil, or criminal submission) could match to the missing person fingerprints, leading to a death notification or the missing person's location.

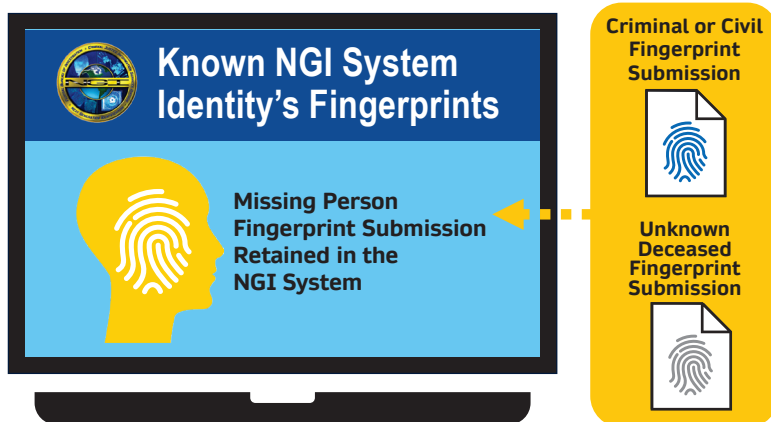## How does the NGI Missing Persons Services generate investigative leads?

At the point a person is reported missing, a law enforcement agency (LEA) should submit the missing person's fingerprints, if available, to the NGI System. This creates a record for the missing person or flags an existing record as that of a missing person. Then, if another agency encounters the missing person for any reason, such as a criminal booking or a license application, captures their fingerprints, and submits them to the NGI System, the submission will match to the missing person's fingerprints in the NGI System. The NGI Missing Persons Services will notify the investigating LEA that submitted the

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[1] NamUs.gov.

missing person transaction of the activity. This could lead the LEA to the individual's current location.[2]

How does the NGI Missing Persons Services identify deceased persons?

When an unknown deceased person is found dead, the responding LEA, medical examiner, or coroner collects fingerprints and submits them to the NGI System in attempt to identify the deceased. If the decedent's fingerprints match to a missing person's fingerprints, or if the decedent's fingerprints are retained in the NGI System and subsequently submitted missing person's fingerprints match to them, an identification occurs, and the FBI sends a notification to the agency that created the unknown deceased identity with the individual's name. The missing person entry contributor is notified that the missing person is deceased.

How are a missing person's fingerprints collected for enrollment?

Fingerprints may already be enrolled in the NGI System for the missing person, in which case the record may be updated to reflect that they are missing. Alternatively, fingerprints may be obtained from local arrests and collections from law enforcement outreach events if maintained by the family.

Who may enroll missing persons in the NGI System?

Federal, state, territorial, local, tribal, and international LEAs may report missing persons to the NGI System with biographic information and fingerprints, when available. An NCIC Missing Person File entry number (NCIC [NIC] Number) is required for missing person fingerprint enrollment. International contributors should work with their FBI Legal Attaches for assistance. The service is provided free of charge.

How should enrollment requests be submitted?

LEAs programmed to submit fingerprints to the NGI System using the Missing Person (MPR) type of transaction (TOT) should do so. LEAs that are not able to submit directly using the MPR TOT should ensure the missing person is entered in the NCIC Missing Person File, then submit the missing person's fingerprints to FBI staff via email. FBI staff will submit the MPR TOT or update the identity as missing on the agency's behalf.

Additional guidance is available at https://fbibiospecs.fbi.gov/biometric-training.

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[2] Lucas, J. and Fisher, J. (March 2024). Police Chief, Volume 91, 52-53.

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