



Update on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Relatives Task Force



Picture By: UNM Center for Social Policy and UNM Native American Budget & Policy Institute

Courts, Corrections & Justice Committee
November 9, 2021

Lynn Trujillo Cabinet Secretary
Stephanie Salazar General Counsel for IAD
Kelly Gilbreth, Clinical Director, Crossroads for Women
Mattee Jim, HIV Prevention Coordinator, First Nations Community HealthSource
Major W. Troy Weisler, Acting Deputy Secretary of DPS



New Mexico Indian Affairs Department

MMIW = MMIWR

Task Force considers all genders, rather than focusing exclusively on women. The need to be comprehensive in our focus became clear as the task force began conversations with the wider community.

The quote below reflects suggestions made by the community to broaden the work of the task force.

“They – and I mean ‘they’ like boys, men and our LGBTQ – should have been included at the beginning...because this is not just a crisis with our women and girls. The more research we do, there are more men that are missing or murdered than there are women. But a lot of people are not talking about that.”

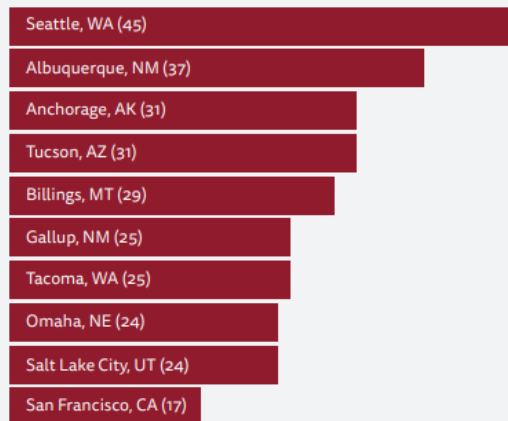
– Community Member



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MMIWR National Reports

TOP 10 CITIES WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF MMIWG CASES



See Appendix for data from all 71 cities surveyed.

Source: Urban Indian Health Institute

AI/AN peoples experience violence at more than **TWICE** the national average.

Rates of violence on reservations can be up to **10x** the national average

MURDER is the **THIRD** leading cause of death of AI/AN women.

Source: K. Huyser UNM Native American Budget & Policy Institute





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National Missing Persons Data (NamUs)

Unresolved Missing Person Cases with Tribal Enrollment/Affiliation

Males and Females

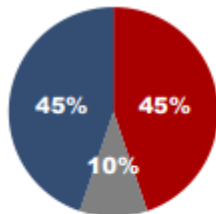
Published in NamUs as of August 1, 2021

119
missing

from

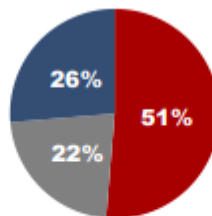
21
tribes

Missing from Tribal Land



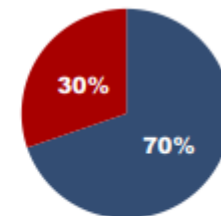
● Yes ● Unknown ● No

Residence on Tribal Land



● Yes ● Unknown ● No

Investigating Agency



● Non-Tribal ● Tribal Law Enforcement



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MMIWR in New Mexico

MMIWR in New Mexico

Albuquerque and Gallup, New Mexico are amongst the **TOP TEN CITIES** in the *United States* for the **HIGHEST NUMBER** of MMIWG cases.



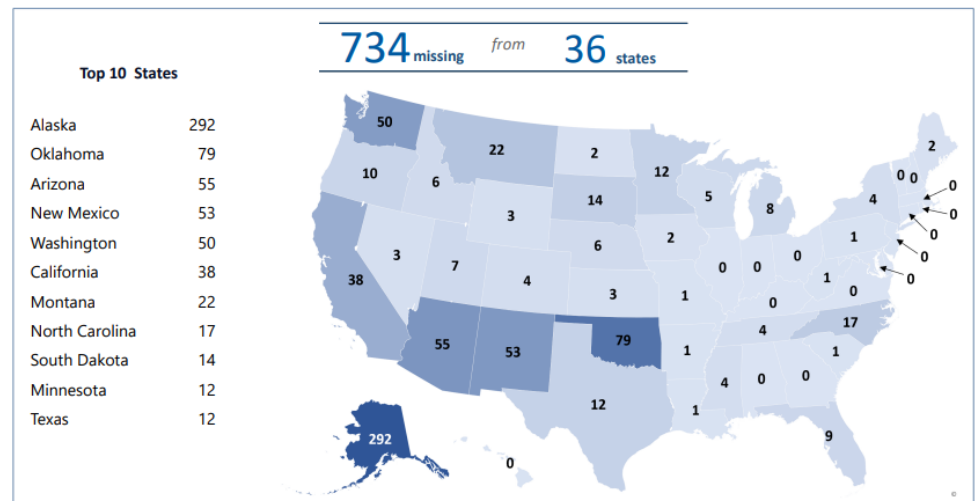
Native American women in **New Mexico** have the **highest rate of homicide** among **ALL** racial and ethnic groups.

Citations:

Ronet Bachman, Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and the Criminal Justice Response: What Is Known, National Institute of Justice (Jan. 2009); New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force Report (Dec 2020)

American Indian/Alaska Native Missing Persons Cases

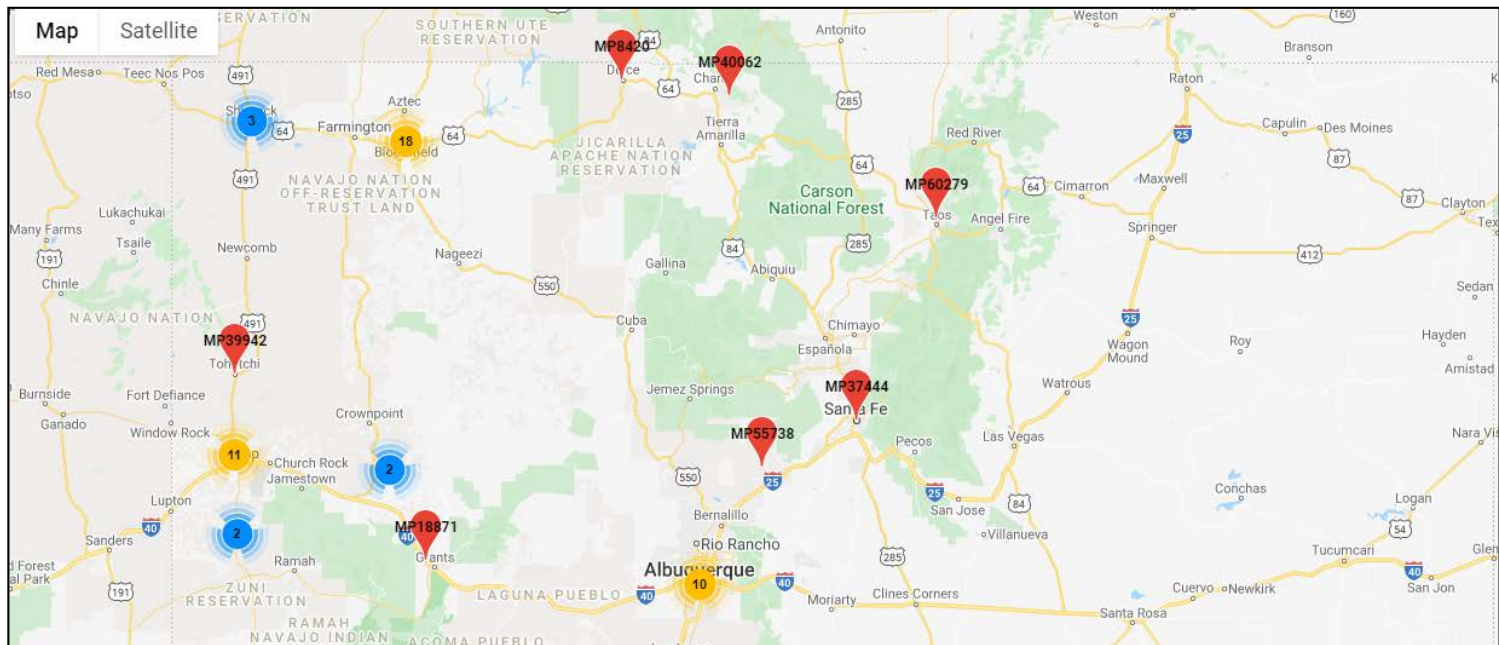
Unresolved Cases Published in NamUs as of August 1, 2021





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New Mexico Missing Persons Data (NamUs)



There are currently 53 Missing Persons Entries of American Indian Alaska Native in New Mexico

<https://namus.nij.ojp.gov/missing-indigenous-persons#download-monthly-american-indian-alaska-native-namus-case-update>



New Mexico Indian Affairs Department

Justice for all Indigenous Relatives

Navajo Nation Missing Persons Updates
MISSING FEMALE
Tanya Teresa Begay
 March 3rd, 2017
 Tohatchi, New Mexico

NAME: Tanya T. Begay
 NICKNAME: Tan
 AGE NOW(2017): 35
 HEIGHT: 5' 5"
 WEIGHT: 135 lbs
 HAIR: Brown
 EYES: Brown
 RACE: Native American(Navajo)
 SCAR: Left eye
 TATTOOS: 2 Rose tattoos on chest & unknown tattoo on left foot
 DENTAL: Partial top denture
 LAST SEEN INFORMATION: Tanya was last seen in Tohatchi, NM leaving her aunt's house, she has not been heard from since. Police has since found the vehicle abandoned. Her boyfriend was questioned & released. She may be in the Gallup, NM - Albuquerque, NM - Tohatchi, NM - Mentmore, NM - Dilkon, AZ area

If you have any information on this case please call:
 Gallup Police Department 505-722-2231
 New Mexico Department of Public Safety 1-800-457-3463
 Crimestoppers 505-722-6161

Navajo Division of Public Safety
MISSING/ENDANGERED

ELLA MAE BEGAY

Age: 62
 Sex: Female
 Height: 5' - 5'11"
 Eyes: Brown
 Weight: 110-120 lbs / Slender Build

THIR: Ella went missing from the Sweetwater, Arizona area. She may be in a Sit 2005 Ford F-150 with ARIZONA license plate: AFE7101

REFERENCE ONLY
 JMO SILVER FORD F-150
 ARIZONA LICENSE PLATE: AFE7101

MISSING PERSON
JAMIE LYNETTE YAZZIE

June 30, 2019
 Pinon, Arizona

Age: 20
 Sex: Female
 Height: 5' 7"
 Eyes: Brown
 Weight: 110 lbs
 Hair: Black
 Race: American Indian/Alaskan
 Occupation: Nursing Assistant

REWARD
 Offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons.

MISSING FEMALE
Melanie Marie James
 Farmington, New Mexico
 April 20th, 2014

AGE LAST SEEN: 23
 AGE NOW(2017): 26
 HEIGHT: 5'0"
 WEIGHT: 116
 HAIR COLOR: Brownish Blonde
 EYE COLOR: Brown
 TATTOOS: Spade ♠ tattoo on right index finger

Melanie was last seen walking the area of 20th St. & Bulter in Farmington, NM

If you have any information on this case please call:
 Farmington Police Department 505-883-3000

Navajo Nation Missing Persons Updates
MISSING
Eugena Martinez
 Gallup, New Mexico
 March 9th, 2019

NAME: Eugena Martinez
 NICKNAME: Gena
 AGE LAST SEEN: 28
 RACE: Nat Amer Female
 LAST SEEN: 3/9/2019
 Gallup, NM
 HEIGHT: 5' 4"
 WEIGHT: 120 lbs
 HAIR COLOR: Dark Brown
 EYE COLOR: Brown
 PIERCINGS: Both ears
 TATTOOS:
 -On back left side (unknown)
 -Right shoulder (unknown)
 CIRCUMSTANCES:
 Gena was dropped off at the east side Taco Bell in Gallup, NM on 3/9/2019 by her relative. Gena is a resident of Crownpoint, NM. She was meeting her boyfriend "Travis White "Dino" (different right photo) in Gallup, NM. He is also missing.

If you have any information about this case please contact:
 Navajo Nation Police Department 908-655-3000

Navajo Nation Missing Persons Updates
MISSING
Tiffany Reid
 Shiprock, New Mexico
 May 17th, 2004

NAME: Tiffany Reid
 NICKNAME: Kay-C
 AGE LAST SEEN: 16
 HEIGHT: 5' 3"
 WEIGHT: 115 lbs
 HAIR COLOR: Dark Brown-Black
 EYES: Brown
 RACE: Nat Amer Female
 SCARS:
 -Under right eye
 -On arm (unknown which side)
 CIRCUMSTANCES:
 Tiffany was last seen on 5/17/2004 at home. She may be in New Mexico, Arizona or Mexico.

If you have any information about this case please contact:
 Navajo Department of Criminal Investigations 908-368-1390
 National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) 1-800-843-5878
 CASE #: 020608735. Navajo MP#: 4352. MCACD #: 596719

Navajo Nation Missing Persons Updates
HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

TANYA TERESA BEGAY
 is my name.
 I was last seen leaving my relative's house in Tohatchi, NM - 3/3/2017 I was with my boyfriend. He was questioned & released.
 If you have any information about me please contact:
 Gallup Police Department 505-722-2231
 New Mexico Dept of Public Safety 1-800-457-3463
 Crimestoppers 505-722-6161

Navajo MP# 39942
 Case #: 2017-12065

JULIA VICENTE
 Missing Person - Other

Date of Birth: 10/07/1958
 Date Missing: 06/03/2018
 Age Now: 63
 Sex: Female
 Race: American Indian/Alaskan
 Hair Color: Brown
 Eye Color: Brown
 Height: 5 ft 00 in
 Weight: 110
 Missing From: Aztec, NM

MISSING: Julia Vicente was last seen June 3, 2018 in Aztec, New Mexico. If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of Julia Vicente please contact the San Juan County Sheriff's in Aztec at (505)334-6107.

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT
 New Mexico Department of Public Safety
 1-800-457-3463

MISSING
MARK AGUILAR
 Santa Fe, New Mexico

Mark Aguilar, 5L, was last seen in Santa Fe, New Mexico on October 6th 2020 and has not been seen or heard from since. When last seen, Mark was wearing a green Army jacket, a black stocking cap and was carrying a black backpack. He is described as 5'8" tall, weighing 150 pounds with black/gray hair and brown eyes. Mark also has a tattoo on his right shoulder and multiple scars on the back of his head. It is believed that Mark is known to frequent the area of Pete's Place Shelter and the Raffine Street area.

Anyone with information regarding Mark's whereabouts is asked to contact the Santa Fe Police Department at 505-438-3710.

MISSING
PEPITA MADALYN REDHAIR
 Missing Person - Other

Date of Birth: 08/04/1992
 Date Missing: 03/27/2020
 Age Now: 28
 Sex: Female
 Race: American Indian/Alaskan
 Hair Color: Brown
 Eye Color: Brown
 Height: 5 ft 01 in
 Weight: 141
 Missing From: Albuquerque, NM

MISSING: Pepita Madalyn Redhair was last seen March 27, 2020 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of Pepita Madalyn Redhair please contact the Albuquerque Police Department at (505)242-0677.

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT
 New Mexico Department of Public Safety
 1-800-457-3463



State Response Outcomes of House Bill 278 (2019)

- The MMIWR Task Force worked hard to meet the requirements of House Bill 278 to:
 - “determine the scope of the problem, identify barriers, create partnerships to improve reporting of and investigation of missing and murdered Indigenous women and relatives.”
- A final report & additional resources were developed by the task force and were published in December 2020. The final report was the foundation for current and future task force work.





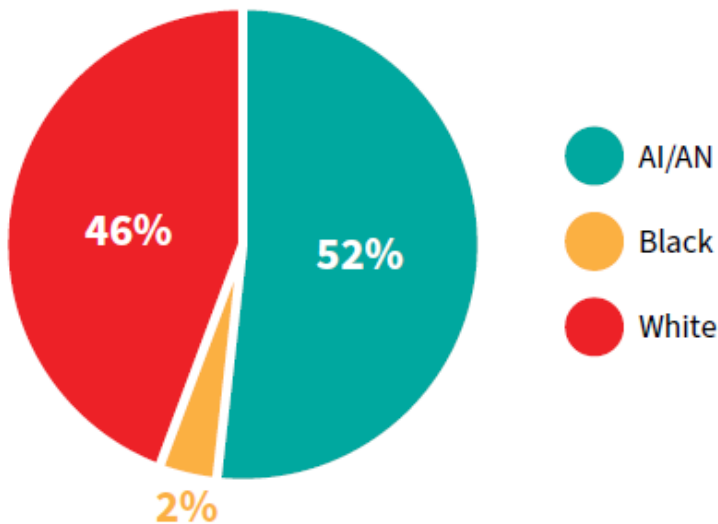
Data Findings Based on Task Force Work

- Farmington reported 73 missing persons between 2014-2019 (70 cases were resolved). Of this total, 48.5% were Native American and **66% were missing Native American females.**
- In Gallup, out of 675 missing persons in Gallup, 53% were women, and Native Americans comprise **76% of ALL missing persons.** Gallup police department data indicates that from 2014-2019 *87% of all homicide cases were Native Americans.*
- Between 2014-2019, Albuquerque reported 660 Native American missing persons, *287 of those cases are women* **Representing 43% of all Native American missing persons.**



Data Findings

Missing Persons by Race in Two NM Counties* (Years 2014-2019)



*San Juan and McKinley Counties

- Among missing persons in these two counties, female missing persons were younger than male missing persons.
- In addition, Native American missing persons were younger than all other racial and ethnic groups.
- Data from the two counties show that half of all missing Native American women are younger than 27 years of age.



Additional Findings

- Law enforcement needs training & support to increase data-gathering capacity across law enforcement agencies.
- Additional law enforcement agreements such as cross-commission and one-way commissions are needed.
- Rural areas of the state and border towns need culturally relevant support services including access to shelters and safe housing.
- Tribal justice systems need access to state training and technical support.
- Strengthen community responses through education and trainings.



2021 Legislative Session Outcomes

- IAD introduced legislation to establish a permanent MMIWR Task Force in January 2021.
- The Indian Affairs Department received an appropriation for MMIWR work during the 2021 Legislative Session of \$57,000.



Executive Order 2021-013

Task Force Directives

“The Task Force, through the subcommittees, shall **develop a MMIWR State Response Plan** that will advise the Executive Branch on initiatives, programs, and policy changes that will support implementation of Task Force report recommendations.

The Task Force shall **evaluate policies and explore legislation** that can be presented to the appropriate interim legislative committees and introduced during the 2022 Legislative Session to improve the state's efforts surrounding prevention and response to MMIWR incidents...”



Task Force Goals and Objectives

1. Develop a State Response Plan for how 2021 MMIWR Final Report recommendations should be implemented.
 - ✓ Legislation
 - ✓ Department Policies/Collaboration/MOUs
 - ✓ Staffing/Budget
2. Develop a long-term plan for MMIWR work in state government.
3. Continue collecting data from law enforcement agencies for 2020 missing persons data, homicide data, accidental deaths.



Task Force Collaborations

- **University of Nebraska Omaha** would like to submit a joint application to the National Institute of Justice grant to collect data on MMIWR incidents in NM and create a framework for future data collection in the state.
- **Strengthening Partnerships** with City of Albuquerque, Albuquerque Police Department, and Second Judicial District Attorney's Office, New Mexico Attorney General's Office.



Task Force Recommendations

- **Establish a permanent MMIWR office/position** to track MMIWR incidents in the state, assist families, educate communities on MMIWR with a focus on prevention; Authorize the office to establish a state-led cold case task force to review cold cases involving Indigenous relatives.
- **NM Missing Persons Day** – Establish an annual missing persons day that provides an opportunity for individuals and families to provide new or updated information on missing individuals/relatives.
- This event will bring together multiple partners to assist families and communities during this one-day event to update existing missing person reports, file a report, or submit critical records necessary to match unidentified remains.



New Mexico *Indian Affairs Department*

Thank you!

We welcome your feedback and participation in future task force meetings.

Please contact:

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(505) 690-4079

Stephanie.Salazar@state.nm.us