



COLD CASES AND OWED DNA. A SNAPSHOT OF CASES AND PRACTICES AMONG IDAHO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

From August 2023 to August 2024, Boise State University surveyed all law enforcement agencies in Idaho, collecting information on their cold cases (CCs), owed DNA practices, and use of victim advocates. Forty-seven usable responses were collected. The results are reported below.

OWED DNA

- All agencies were asked whether their local sheriff's office collects owed DNA. The responses were:
 - Yes (48.5%)
 - No (51.5%)
- Only 3 of the 13 responding sheriff's offices reported collecting owed DNA in 2022.
 - Number of samples collected were 0, 3, and 10.
- Part of CJ system responsible for collecting owed DNA, as reported by responding agencies:

Investigations (30.7%)	Probation (7.7%)
Patrol (7.7%)	Sheriff's office (7.7%)
Medical personnel (7.7%)	Courts or jails (7.7%)
Jail (7.7%)	Detention Center (7.7%)

VICTIM SERVICES

- 35.7% of agencies have a victim witness coordinator (VWC).
 - Of those, 60% work with the VWC on victim contact for CCs.
- Of agencies who do not have a VWC, 88.9% work with a local DV/SV advocacy organization.
 - Of those, 29.2% work with DV/SV advocacy organizations on victim contact for CCs.



COLD CASES

- Agencies were asked to report the number of CCs they had across 7 crime types.
 - For homicides and missing persons reports, most agencies have at least one CC.
 - Most agencies have 0 UHR, sexually motivated crime, robbery, and aggravated assault CCs.
- 19 agencies reported 37 total cases could benefit from additional DNA analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Revise Idaho Statute 19-5507 to clarify owed DNA collection and tracking procedures.
- Create a standardized cold case, missing persons, and UHR reporting system for police agencies.
- Implement best practices or established protocol for interaction with victims and/or surviving family members .