

CODIS PROGRAM

THE COMBINED DNA INDEX SYSTEM (CODIS) PROGRAM

The Washington State Patrol Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) is composed of different categories (or indexes) of samples, including:

- Offender: contains DNA profiles of Washington convicted offenders.
- Forensic: contains DNA profiles generated from crime scene evidence.
- Missing Persons: contains DNA records of missing persons and deduced missing persons.
- Relatives of Missing Persons¹: contains DNA records from the biological relatives of individuals reported missing.
- Unidentified Humans: contains DNA records from recovered living persons (e.g. children who can't and others who can't or refuse to identify themselves) and recovered dead persons (including body parts and tissues) whose identities are not known.

DNA casework forensic scientists contribute the DNA profiles for all indexes except the Offender Index. The forensic scientists in the CODIS Laboratory contribute the DNA profiles for the Offender Index. If a DNA profile is generated from an evidence sample submitted to any of the DNA casework laboratories, it will be searched against the database if the sample meets the eligibility requirements. The database searched (national- or state-level) will depend on the relevant CODIS (national or state) Procedures in effect at the time the profile is initially entered. If the database eligibility requirements change after a profile is initially entered, profiles may be moved from one database to the other, or removed from the database entirely. If removal occurs, the submitting agency will be notified. Samples eligible for upload to the state CODIS database are automatically searched against the appropriate indexes and may result in an investigative lead for the submitting agency. Investigative leads may be due to a profile in the Forensic Index matching another Forensic Index profile (a forensic hit) or matching a profile in the Offender Index (an offender hit).

All fifty states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Laboratory, and Puerto Rico submit eligible DNA profiles to the FBI-sponsored National DNA Index System (NDIS). DNA profiles at NDIS are searched on a regular basis against the appropriate indexes resulting in hits between WA State DNA profiles and profiles submitted by other NDIS participating laboratories across the nation. In addition to the indexes listed above, NDIS maintains additional indexes such as the Arrestee Index, Detainee Index and Juvenile Index which are populated by entities that have the legal authority to collect DNA samples from these individuals.

To facilitate the searching of arrestee Rapid DNA profiles generated by FBI-approved Rapid DNA booking systems, the FBI created a virtual index in CODIS called the DNA Index of Special Concern (DISC) that local law enforcement agencies (LEA) can opt to additionally participate in. The DISC consists of a subset of unsolved forensic unknown DNA profiles that are currently being searched in CODIS from homicide, sexual assault, kidnapping and terrorism cases. Any qualifying samples from these case types can be requested to be DISC-enabled and searched against the Rapid-enrolled arrestee samples (while the arrestee is in custody) from participating booking facilities. Our state does not have arrestee DNA collection laws; therefore, these rapid booking stations are currently located outside the state of WA. To be DISC-enabled, the investigating agency must commit to take immediate action upon hit notification and must be willing to seek extradition. If these criteria are met, the investigating agency can request to DISC-enable the profile

¹ Currently the laboratory does not accept family reference samples for the sole purpose of upload and search in CODIS. These samples are referred to the National Missing and Unidentified Person System (NAMUS). For more information, contact NAMUS at NamUs_West@rti.org.

by completing and submitting to the laboratory the form titled “Casework Metadata to DISC-enable Crime Scene Evidence DNA Profiles” found at <https://wsp.wa.gov/crime/crimelab-resources/>.

CONVICTED OFFENDER DNA SAMPLE COLLECTION

Convicted Offender DNA samples are collected by law enforcement agencies across the state using Convicted Offender DNA collection kits provided at no charge by the CODIS Crime Laboratory. To order DNA collection kits, request training, or if you have any questions, please contact the CODIS Crime Laboratory at (206)262-6020 or email the laboratory at confel@wsp.wa.gov.

Convicted Offender DNA samples must be collected using the supplied DNA collection kits and mailed to the CODIS Laboratory at 2203 Airport Way, South, Suite 250, Seattle, WA, 98134. Postage is required on the mailing envelope included with each kit. If multiple samples need to be submitted, they may be sent together in a larger mailing envelope. Please send samples to the CODIS Laboratory within 1-2 weeks of collection.

Washington State law (RCW 43.43.754) allows for the collection and testing of a DNA sample for any person convicted of a felony or any of the following non-felonies:

- Stalking
- Harassment
- Communicating with a minor for immoral purposes
- Assault 4 with sexual motivation
- Assault 4 where domestic violence was pleaded and proven
- Custodial sexual misconduct 2
- Patronizing a prostitute
- Sexual misconduct with a minor 2
- Indecent exposure
- Violation of a sexual assault protection order granted under chapter 7.90 RCW
- Anyone required to register as a sex or kidnapping offender
- Failure to register
- Collection from a deceased offender who was previously convicted of a qualifying offense.

DNA samples submitted for the purposes of entry into the Offender Index are not considered evidence samples and do not take the place of a suspect reference sample. If reference samples of any kind are submitted for a criminal case using Convicted Offender DNA collection kits, they may be rejected by the casework laboratory. For more information on casework reference samples please see the Biological Evidence section of this guide.