



## Promising Practices

### How States Use Byrne JAG Funding for Information Sharing and Data Management

Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) investment purpose areas are intentionally broad, allowing states and territories the flexibility to invest funding in ways that meet their individual needs and to allow them to test new and innovative approaches. One example of this is the planning, evaluation and technology improvement programs purpose area.

States across the country fund information sharing and data management projects through this purpose area. Initiatives in this area include enhancing data systems to make information more accessible and accurate, purchasing information technology systems to deploy in patrol cars, and much more. Given that information and data are critical to fair and efficient justice systems, it is an area worthy of priority. States understand this. In NCJA's 2018 data collection at least seven states reported spending Byrne JAG funding on information sharing projects, 11 reported using funds to improve compliance with the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and at least 15 states included an information sharing or data management initiative in their Byrne JAG strategic plans.

Below we will highlight three ways Byrne JAG funds can be invested to improve information sharing and data management: NIBRS compliance, criminal data and justice system records. We will also briefly describe some of the projects states have engaged in using Byrne JAG funds.

#### Byrne JAG Funding for NIBRS Compliance

Accurate and complete crime data from states and territories is essential to the Byrne JAG program since the award formula is based, in part, on each state's reported level of crime. As the federal government completes its transition from the FBI's [Uniform Crime Reporting \(UCR\)](#) system—based on a Summary Reporting System (SRS)—to NIBRS—the [National Incident-Based Reporting System](#)—it has signaled its importance by requiring that [3 percent](#) of states' Byrne JAG awards be used to achieve NIBRS compliance. The requirement only applies to states that are not yet NIBRS-compliant.

NIBRS data collection is more detailed than UCR data and thus requires a greater investment of time to train staff (see table on next page). Whereas the summary UCR system collects data on only eight Part I crimes (the most serious), NIBRS collects 24 crime categories composed of 52 specific crimes, called Group A offenses, and arrest data for 10 Group B offense categories.

In NCJA's most recent data collection looking at 2018 Byrne JAG investments, 11 states reported devoting some of their award toward meeting NIBRS compliance or training staff on the new system requirements. These include Alabama, Alaska, California, Delaware, Guam, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey and West Virginia.

## Comparison of Information Captured by Summary Reporting Systems (SRS) and Incident-Based Reporting Systems

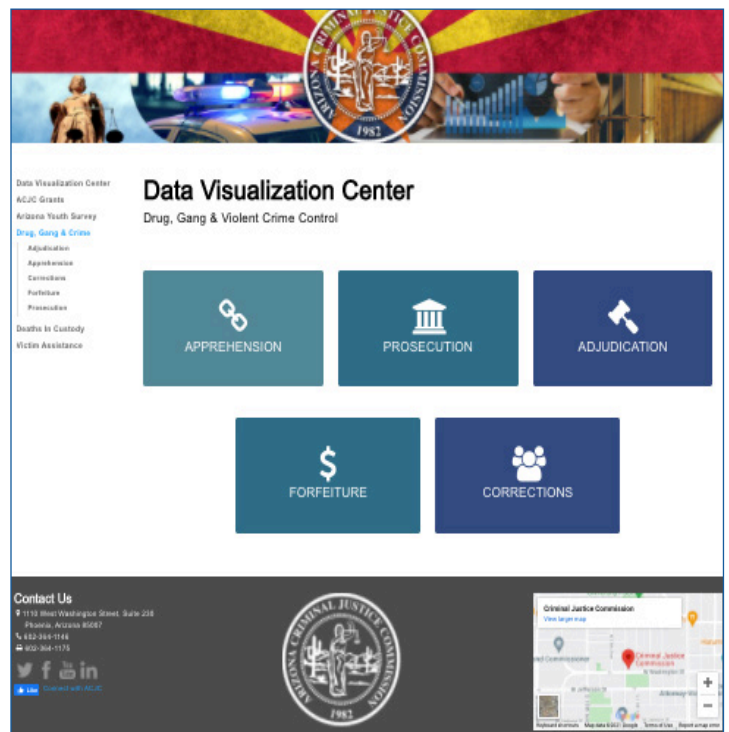
	Time/location of incident	Weapon used	Demographics	Relationship to victim	Property description & \$\$ value	Clearance date
<b>OLD Reporting System (SRS)</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>NEW Reporting System (NIBRS)</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Byrne JAG Funding for Criminal Data

Another area that is important to the effective and fair functioning of justice systems is criminal data. Law enforcement and courts need access to accurate and timely data to make decisions that impact the safety of communities and individuals. For example, in 2018 the [Arizona Criminal Justice Commission](#) reported setting aside 5 percent of its Byrne JAG funding for criminal justice records improvement projects, including a courtroom-based mobile fingerprinting pilot project. The intent of the project was to assess the ability of mobile technology to improve defendant identification and justice system processes.

Likewise, in 2018, Utah reported investing Byrne JAG funds to improve the state's [Concealed Firearms Permit \(CFP\)](#) screening process. The project involved creating software to run nightly comparisons of Utah CFP holders with a variety of national databases, including the FBI's [National Instant Criminal Background Check System \(NICS\)](#), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Wanted Person list, the Interstate

Identification Index (III) and the NICS Denied Person list. These checks reduce the risk of issuing a CFP to individuals that have committed criminal offenses outside the state of Utah.



Arizona has created a user-friendly crime data visualization center.

## Byrne JAG Funding for Justice System Records



Byrne JAG funds have also been employed to create or improve records management or data sharing systems to ensure that critical records are collected, stored and appropriately shared.

For example, Massachusetts invested Byrne JAG funds to support the state's [Statistical Analysis Center \(SAC\)](#) in the creation of a statewide youth gang records management system. SAC efforts focused on ensuring accurate data collection and appropriate back-end features.

In New Jersey, Byrne JAG funds have been used to support Criminal Justice Information System improvement projects, including upgrading access to expunged records and other information in New Jersey's Computerized Criminal History system. [Legislative mandates](#) led to an increase in the number of Expunged Final Orders processed annually. The Byrne JAG-funded project was intended to make expunged criminal history record information available to New Jersey's criminal justice agencies in real time.

In Oregon, Byrne JAG funds support the Criminal Justice Commission's efforts to improve and update the [Oregon Specialty Court Case Management System](#). This management information system assists with improving court performance and accountability, data collection, grant monitoring and future drug court evaluations.

Do you have a Promising Practice  
from your jurisdiction you  
want to share?  
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