

FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION



National Missing and Unidentified Persons System

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) is a national information clearinghouse and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons cases across the United States. The NamUs is designed to help solve *long-term* missing persons cases. The NamUs is not currently resourced to provide immediate investigative support to law enforcement agencies, but instead acts as a repository and resource for long-term missing and unidentified human remains cases. Law enforcement agencies across Florida and the country utilize NamUs to help solve cases where a person has been missing for months or years, namely cold cases.

Florida law currently requires law enforcement to enter a missing person into the NamUs within two hours after a police report has been filed that an adult or child is missing. The NamUs currently has two staff members assigned to review cases submitted by law enforcement agencies in Florida. After Florida implemented this requirement two years ago the NamUs has reported a 2,900% increase in the number of cases submitted in Florida to the NamUs.

The large influx of short-term missing persons cases has clogged the NamUs' system and has made it extremely difficult for NamUs to review any Florida cases, including long-term cases. As a result, Florida law enforcement agencies may no longer be able to utilize the NamUs for its intended purpose – solving long-term missing persons cases.

This legislation will extend the time a missing person can be entered into the NamUs from two hours to 90 days. This will remove the overload caused by short-term missing persons cases being entered into the NamUs and ensure that the NamUs can continue supporting long-term missing persons cases in Florida.

HB 1211 by Representative Abbott and SB 1554 by Senator Collins



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