



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. When do I have to submit my UCR data?

- There are two UCR submission periods:
  - A. Annual – the Annual UCR data submission includes data for the entire 12 months (January 1 – December 31) of a reporting year. The submission cycle for Annual data begins on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year and ends on January 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - B. Semi-Annual – the Semi-Annual UCR data submission includes the first 6 months (January 1 – June 30) of a reporting year. The submission cycle for Semi-Annual data begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> of that same year and ends on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

### 2. Where can I download a copy of the UCR Guide Manual?

- The UCR Guide Manual is available on FDLE's website.  
(<http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FSAC/UCR/UCRGuideManual.aspx>)

### 3. When should I report an offense that occurred many years ago but has just now been reported to my agency?

- UCR reporting is based on “when an offense becomes known to law enforcement.” This means if an offense is reported this year but is determined to have occurred five years ago, it should still be reported with this year's numbers.

### 4. An arrest was made on an offense from two years ago. How should we report the clearance for UCR?

- Like offenses, clearances are also reported during the reporting period in which they occur, no matter when the original offense occurred. So, if an arrest is made this year for an offense that occurred two years ago, the reporting agency will report the clearance with the current year's number. No additional offense data should be reported. This may yield a clearance rate of greater than 100 for an offense category which is absolutely allowable.

## 5. Can previously submitted data be corrected/updated?

- Yes. Corrections can be made in the FDLE UCR database via the web-based input system; however, changes will not be reflected in any previously published reports. Data sets that are available on the FDLE website will reflect any corrections made before the updated date. Corrections to the data are not transmitted to the FBI after the FBI submission deadline in accordance with the FBI corrections policy. See the UCR Guide Manual (<http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/FSAC/UCR/UCRGuideManual.aspx>) for specifics on how and when to make data corrections.

## 6. Can I clear an offense by exception if the victim does not want to prosecute or is uncooperative?

- Clearing an offense by exception requires that ALL of the following conditions be met. If any of these are missing, the offense cannot be cleared by exception:
  - The identity of the offender has been established,
  - The location of the offender is known,
  - There is enough information/evidence to establish probable cause to support the arrest of the offender, AND
  - There is something beyond law enforcement's control preventing the arrest from being made.
    - There are many of circumstances that could prevent an arrest from being made (e.g., death of offender, offender is incarcerated in another jurisdiction and extradition will not be allowed, etc.).
    - A State Attorney's unwillingness to prosecute the offense can meet this requirement, as long as the reason is not for a lack of probable cause. If the State Attorney will not prosecute an offense because the victim does not want to pursue prosecution or is uncooperative, or they believe a conviction is unlikely then you can clear the offense by exception, as long as the other three conditions are met.

## 7. How is the Crime Rate calculated?

- Crime Rate is calculated by taking the total number of Index (Part I) Offenses (Murder, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny, and Motor Vehicle Theft) and dividing it by the population served by the reporting agency. That number is then multiplied by 100,000. This yields the number of Index Offenses per 100,000 citizens.

$$\text{Crime Rate} = \left( \frac{\text{Total Index Offenses}}{\text{Population}} \right) \times 100,000$$

An agency's population is based on the UCR guideline that police departments count the number of offenses reported within its incorporated city limits and Sheriffs' Offices count the number of offenses reported within the unincorporated areas of their county. FDLE receives annual state, county, and city population estimates from the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research and assigns the population values accordingly.

## 8. How is the Clearance Rate calculated?

- Clearance Rates are calculated by taking the total number of clearances (By Arrest + By Exception) and dividing it by the total number of offenses reported. That number is then multiplied by 100 to yield the number of clearances per 100 offenses.

$$\text{Clearance Rate} = \left( \frac{\text{Total Clearances}}{\text{Total Offenses}} \right) \times 100$$

## 9. How is the percent change for offense categories calculated?

- Percent change, or the ratio of change from the previous year to the next, is calculated by subtracting the previous year volume from the current year volume, dividing by the previous year volume. Then multiply by 100 to yield a percent value.

$$\text{Percent Change} = \left( \frac{\text{Current Year Volume} - \text{Previous Year Volume}}{\text{Previous Year Volume}} \right) \times 100$$

- \* When the previous year's volume is zero the value becomes mathematically impossible to calculate and the percent change will be indicated with a "-".

## 10. Why doesn't FDLE compile rankings of agencies and/or counties based on UCR data?

- While UCR data is an excellent metric for comparing an agency (or county) to itself from year to year, it was never designed nor intended to be used as a tool for comparing a single agency against other agencies. Florida's UCR Program, like the national program, applies uniform standards for classifying and counting crime data. This uniformity, though essential for analysis on statewide and national levels, ignores the uniqueness of each locale. There are numerous factors that impact the volume and type of crime that occurs from place to place but are not part of the UCR Program's data collection. Even cities and counties with similar-sized populations have unique circumstances that affect their crime numbers. As a result, neither FDLE nor the FBI ranks agencies or counties based solely on UCR data. Visit the FBI's UCR website (<https://ucr.fbi.gov/ucr-statistics-their-proper-use>) for more information on the pitfalls of using UCR data to rank agencies, factors affecting crime volume, and the proper use of UCR statistics.

## 11. If my agency arrests someone for another agency, do we count that arrest?

- No. Regardless of what agency actually makes an arrest, for UCR reporting the arrest should be counted by the agency covering the geographic location where the offense occurred. The arrest totals in UCR are not "the number of people your agency arrested" but rather "the number of people who were arrested for offenses occurring within your agency's jurisdiction."