

# Agency Transition to NIBRS in Texas

**Step 1** The law enforcement agency will need to contact the Department of Public Safety's Uniform Crime Reporting Bureau regarding their intent to move to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). This should be done via email (to: [nibrs@dps.texas.gov](mailto:nibrs@dps.texas.gov)) early in the process of acquiring the new NIBRS-compliant records management system (RMS) as there will need to be ample time to coordinate testing and training of system and users.

From the testing standpoint, in Texas there are basically two types of RMS systems: those that are known to DPS (are currently submitting NIBRS data monthly from another agency) and those that are not known to DPS. Please make sure you include pertinent information, especially the vendor name and software version when contacting DPS. This distinction between known and unknown software/vendors plays a significant role in the testing of the system in the note in Step 4.

**Step 2** When the software has been installed, integrated and tested at the agency level, a test of the data extraction process must occur. Data is submitted to DPS from the NIBRS compliant RMS systems via a text flat file. The flat file submission will be composed of an extraction of the necessary data from the incident reports within the RMS, and will be forwarded to DPS to be uploaded into the DPS repository system. During the ingestion process, DPS will verify the formatting and perform edit checks on the NIBRS flat file. Multiple attempts may be required to produce an errorless flat file.

**Step 3** DPS provides staff training on the national guidelines regarding NIBRS processes and procedure. Training consists of a detailed day-long on-site (or nearby) review of offense classifications and data segments/elements (the actual pieces of data that is extracted.) Agencies are encouraged to have multiple personnel attend this training session, and DPS will always try to make single sessions available for nearby agencies.

**Step 4** At this point the testing and validation of the NIBRS system can begin. Testing is done by having the agency produce a monthly Summary report, and for the same month a NIBRS flat file. The Summary report should be created independently from the new NIBRS software, which may require the agency to perform this by hand on paper forms (please contact DPS if you are in need of help with this).

Agencies will only need to produce the Summary files once per each testing month; Summary files must be as correct as possible to allow for proper comparison with the NIBRS data. All changes will be on the NIBRS side and might possibly require multiple flat file submissions to reach the necessary goal of the 4% or less error rate.

DPS will first ingest the flat file into the NIBRS repository system looking for any upload errors that may occur. If the file uploads correctly, then DPS will look at errors in the data that are thrown by our internal error-checking process. These initial errors may require vendor intervention for correction and resubmission of a new flat file, the agency will act as a liaison between DPS and their vendor for all corrections identified by the Department.

Once ingestion is complete, DPS will "convert" the NIBRS data to Summary format and review the output against the original Summary paper file that was also submitted. We will review every aspect

of the output including: offense counts, property, arrests, arsons, etc. Agencies are required to have a less than 4% error rate between the two sources.

**NOTE:** Agencies using a vendor that is already submitting NIBRS data to DPS (from another agency) will only be required to produce one month of data for testing and validation. Agencies using an unknown-to-DPS vendor will need to produce three consecutive months of data. This process will not only certify the agency for NIBRS participation, but will also certify the vendor/software which will then only require one month of data (at 4% or less error rate) for future agencies using the same product to be certified. **The DPS reserves the right to require more than one month of data if deemed necessary.**

**Step 5** The agency will be emailed a copy of both Summary reports for approval/disapproval by the agency's highest authority (Police Chief or Sheriff)

**Step 6** Upon email approval of the data comparison by the agency authority, a NIBRS acceptance letter will be emailed to the agency. This acceptance letter must be signed by either the chief of police or the sheriff, and the signed original must be mailed back to DPS. The process will not be complete until the signed original is received by the DPS/UCR office.

**Step 7** Upon receipt of the original (signed) acceptance letter, the agency will officially be a NIBRS reporting agency.

**Step 8** A final notification of approval will be mailed to the agency.