

Texas Data Broker - Getting Started

The Texas DPS Data Broker is a system that facilitates submitting N-DEx and NIBRS data. Contributing agencies can submit either or both types of data through one system that validates submitted documents against the IEPD and uploads them to the appropriate location.

Definitions

N-DEx - National Data Exchange

The N-DEx system is an unclassified national information sharing system that enables criminal justice agencies to search, link, analyze, and share local, state, tribal, and federal records. N-DEx is also a strategic investigative information sharing system that fills informational gaps and provides situational awareness."

UCR - Uniform Crime Reporting

The objective of the Uniform Crime Reporting program is to produce reliable crime statistics for law enforcement administration, operation, and management. This information is also available as a measure of the fluctuations in the type and volume of crime in Texas through the collection of data on the ten serious Index Crime Offenses.

NIBRS - National Incident Based Reporting System

Implemented to improve the overall quality of crime data collected by law enforcement, NIBRS captures details on each single crime incident—as well as on separate offenses within the same incident—including information on victims, known offenders, relationships between victims and offenders, arrestees, and property involved in crimes.

All UCR submissions now use NIBRS.

Texas-specific NIBRS

Texas has defined additional information for sexual assault, family violence, and drug offenses that must be included with NIBRS submissions, based on state-mandated reporting.

Flat file

NIBRS data was formerly submitted to Texas UCR via a flat file, positional format. The new system uses NIEM XML. The term "flat file" refers to the old format.

Texas Data Broker

A system created by Texas DPS to facilitate submitting data to N-DEx and NIBRS via XML submissions.

NIEM - National Information Exchange Model

The National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) is a common vocabulary that enables efficient information exchange across diverse public and private organizations.

For the purposes of the Data Broker, NIEM is a framework for building an XML specification.

IEPD - Information Exchange Data Packet

An Information Exchange Package Documentation (IEPD) is a collection of NIEM artifacts. They define and describe the context, content, semantics, and structure of one or more implementable information exchanges.

For the purposes of the Data Broker, the IEPD is the specific XML specification for an N-DEx or NIBRS submission.

ICD - Interface Control Document

A document that describes how data is submitted to the Data Broker.

Citation

Information gathered by an officer during a traffic stop.

Data Broker Submission Process

Each of the following steps can be facilitated by documentation provided by N-DEx, NIBRS, and Texas Data Broker.

1. Determine which type of document your agency will be submitting:
 - a. N-DEx only
 - b. NIBRS only
 - c. N-DEx and NIBRS in separate documents

Documentation

- Information about N-DEx: <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ndex>
 - Information about NIBRS: <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr/nibrs>
 - Texas-specific NIBRS Information:
https://www.dps.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ucr/documents/2023_UCR_Texas_CentricTSandEC.pdf
2. Work with your IT department or vendor to generate documents that conform to format and rules described in the relevant IEPD(s) based on the type of document your agency will be submitting.

DPS provides support for questions about connecting to the Data Broker to submit documents. Before contacting DPS with questions, please ensure that you have thoroughly read the IEPD documentation and had the necessary policy and technical discussions between the agency and vendor or IT Department to determine the information you want to send and its source.

Documentation

- N-DEx IEPD

The Texas Data Broker N-DEx IEPD is a set of documents that define the formatting and business rules for the N-DEx XML documents. Key documents are:

1. Texas_Data_Broker_README.pdf - provides an overview of the process and identifies Texas-specific requirements.
2. Texas_Data_Broker_Interface_Control_Document.pdf - information on the web services interface, obtaining API keys, and submitting documents.
3. Flat File to IEPD Mapping with Texas-Specific.xlsx - defines how to map from the legacy flat file format to the XML format.
4. N-DEx_MasterDocument.pdf - overview of the N-DEx IEPD
5. N-DEx_4.0_High_Level_Model.pdf - visual representation of the N-DEx document structure.
6. N-DEx_4.0_AppendixB_BusinessRules.xlsx - specific business rules for each data element.
7. N-DEx_4.0_CMW.xlsx - description of all N-DEx elements.
8. N-DEx_4.0_CodeTables.xlsx - lists of N-DEx codes.
9. iep-samples - a set of valid XML sample files to help illustrate the format.
10. base-xsd - the actual XML specification.

- NIBRS IEPD

The Texas Data Broker NIBRS IEPD is a set of documents that define the formatting and business rules for the N-DEx XML documents. Key documents are:

1. Texas_Data_Broker_README.pdf - provides an overview of the process and explains how to map Texas-specific requirements to the IEPD format.
 2. Texas_Data_Broker_Interface_Control_Document.pdf - information on the web services interface, obtaining API keys, and submitting documents.
 3. NIBRS XML Frequently Asked Questions.pdf - contains useful information about how to convert from the flat file to the XML format.
 4. NIBRS_2019_2_UML.pdf - contains a visual representation of the NIBRS hierarchy.
 5. Flat File to IEPD Mapping with Texas-Specific.xlsx - defines how to map from the legacy flat file format to the XML format.
 6. nibrs_CodesTables.xlsx - lists of NIBRS codes.
3. We recommend use of the XCOTA tool, provided by the FBI, to validate your processes, ensuring the documents you create conform to the format and business rules defined in the IEPD.

Download XCOTA: <https://datastandards.cjis.gov/>

For the custom Texas version, follow the instructions included in the "xcota.custom-xsd-readme".

4. Submit a set of sample documents to be validated by Texas Data Broker and subsequently by the N-DEx and UCR programs. These documents can be flagged in N-DEx as available to your agency only.

Documentation

- Interface Control Document - describes how to submit data.
5. Once your agency has been certified in the test environment, obtain a Texas Data Broker production account. Contact databroker@dps.texas.gov
 6. Begin submitting documents. N-DEx documents will be shared with law enforcement agencies. NIBRS documents will be analyzed to generate statistics for law enforcement and public use.