

**INDIGENOUS
VICTIMS OF
HOMICIDE AND
MISSING PERSONS
IN WYOMING**

2026 UPDATE

Introduction

Wyoming is home to a little over 16,500 Indigenous residents, who make up about three percent of the state's population. However, Indigenous people in Wyoming continue to experience disproportionately high rates of homicide and disappearances compared to White residents. This means they go missing and are killed more often than their population size alone would predict.

The Wyoming Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Task Force is dedicated to tracking and sharing data on these cases. This sixth-annual publication includes the latest available information on Indigenous homicide victims and missing persons in Wyoming, along with updates on a recent effort to combat and raise awareness for teen dating violence.

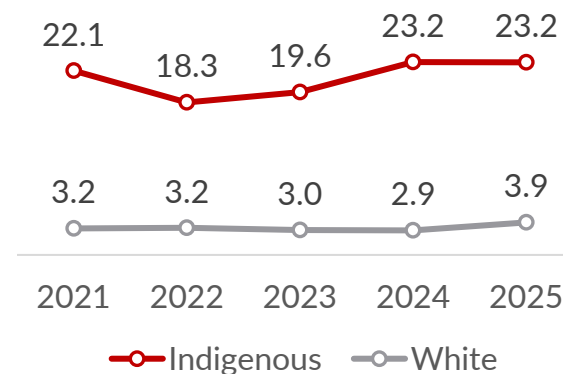
Indigenous Victims of Homicide

We use homicide death data from the Wyoming Department of Health to learn about homicide victims in the state. A death is classified as a homicide when another person causes it. Instead of just counting cases, we compare homicide rates to see how Indigenous people are affected. Because Wyoming has a small population, we use a five-year moving average to smooth out big yearly changes. We also use the latest data available, so sometimes homicide numbers are compared to a prior year's population. However, Wyoming's racial breakdown remained consistent during this timeframe, with Indigenous people making up 2.8%, so this does not affect the analysis.

The homicide rate for Indigenous people in Wyoming remains much higher than for White people. In 2025, the five-year homicide rate for Indigenous people was 23.2 per 100,000—six times higher than the rate for White people (Figure 1). While the Indigenous five-year homicide rate decreased slightly from 2021 to 2023, it remains significantly elevated.

Figure 1: Homicide Rates per 100,000 Five-Year Average

All Sexes



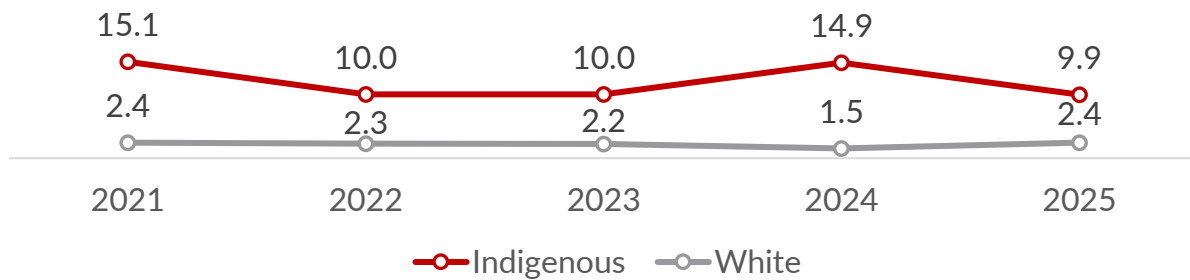
Source: Wyoming Department of Health, Vital Statistics Services

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This trend is consistent for both Indigenous males and females. The 2025 five-year homicide rate for Indigenous females was 9.9 per 100,000 compared to 2.4 per 100,000 for White females (Figure 2). Fortunately, this marks a decrease in the homicide rate for Indigenous females from the previous five years.

Figure 2: Homicide Rates per 100,000, Female

Five-Year Average



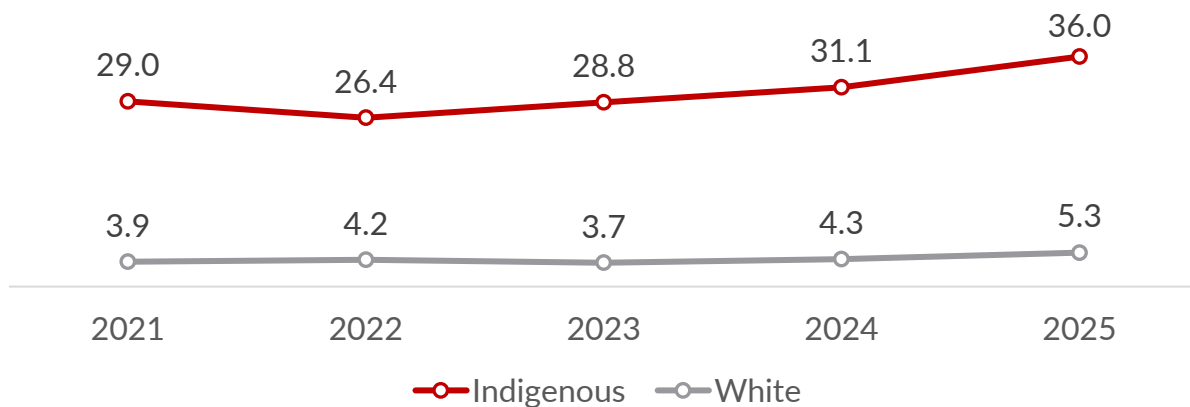
Source: Wyoming Department of Health, Vital Statistics Services

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In 2025, the five-year homicide rate for Indigenous males was 36.0 per 100,000 compared to 5.3 per 100,000 for White males (Figure 3). This continues the elevated five-year rate trend despite a decrease in 2022 and is the highest observance in recent years.

Figure 3: Homicide Rates per 100,000, Male

Five-Year Average



Source: Wyoming Department of Health, Vital Statistics Services

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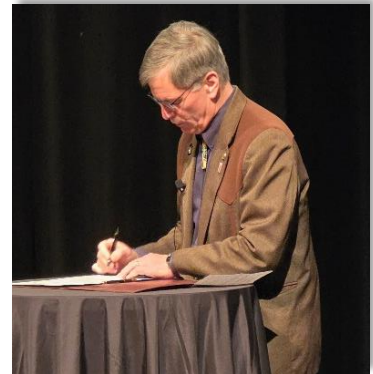
Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month



In 2025, the Wyoming MMIP Task Force worked to develop a teen dating violence (TDV) awareness campaign. The campaign was developed in response to a strong interest in a community-centered awareness initiative supported by the tribal MMIP liaisons, the governor’s liaisons to the tribes, and tribal business councils. The campaign took place in February 2026, nationally recognized as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

The campaign aimed to broaden community understanding of TVD to include coercion, digital abuse, harassment, and boundary violations. Messaging was designed to reflect modern adolescent relationships and highlight how early patterns of control and coercion can escalate into more severe forms of violence, including MMIP. The planning process prioritized collaboration with school leadership to ensure messaging was appropriate, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed. Posters were created to hang in the school hallways, and information and resources were distributed to students.

On February 3, 2026, Governor Mark Gordon, Tribal Leaders, the MMIP Task Force, and local service providers came together to host the event. The event was attended by over 1,000 students and held at two locations, Central Wyoming College in Riverton and Lander Valley High School in Lander. The event began with prayers and cedarizing. Tribal leaders emphasized respect, love, and community support as foundational to preventing TDV, and a tribal resolution for TDV awareness and prevention was presented. Governor Gordon shared key statistics on TDV and stressed that youth play a critical role in creating change. He signed a proclamation declaring February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month for Wyoming.



At the Riverton event, tai Simpson (Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho) gave an interactive talk on healthy relationships, TDV, and the intersection with MMIP. Students were engaged, and many asked questions afterwards. Local service providers also distributed materials and engaged with students after the event.

The MMIP Task Force plans to build upon the success of this TDV awareness initiative in future years.

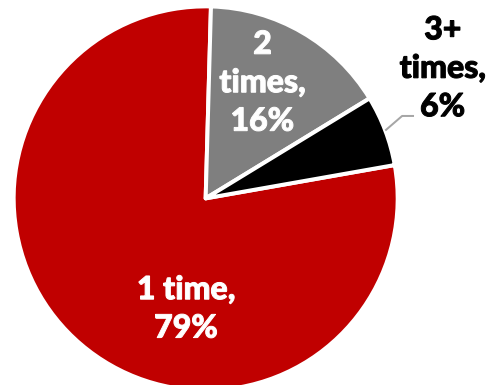
Missing Person Records in NCIC

Indigenous people in Wyoming make up a disproportionate number of the missing people entered into NCIC. In 2025, law enforcement added 147 missing person records for 108 unique Indigenous people into NCIC. This means 19% of all missing person cases entered into NCIC are Indigenous, despite Indigenous people only accounting for about three percent of the state's population. White people make up 92% of the state's population, but made up only 74% of all missing person records in 2025. There were more records than individual people because one person can be reported missing multiple times in the same year. Of the 108 Indigenous individuals with records in NCIC, 79% (n=85) had one record, 16% (n=17) had two records, and 6% (n=6) had three or more records (Figure 4).

In 2025, Indigenous people were reported missing from nine counties across the state: Albany, Campbell, Carbon, Converse, Fremont, Laramie, Natrona, Sublette, and Sweetwater. Most Indigenous missing person cases (82%) originated in Fremont County, nearly half of which were from the Wind River Indian Reservation. The Bureau of Indian Affairs entered 56 missing person records into NCIC in 2025.

The majority (59%) of missing Indigenous people were female (Figure 5). Most reports (89%) involved people between the ages of 5 and 17 when they were reported missing.

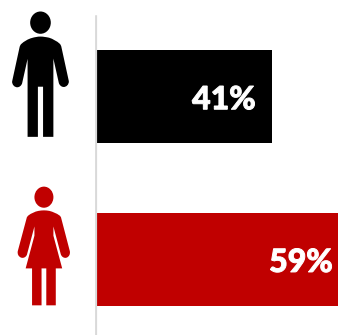
Figure 4: Most Indigenous missing people were only reported missing one time



Note: Percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Source: Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation

Figure 5: Most Indigenous people reported missing in 2025 were female



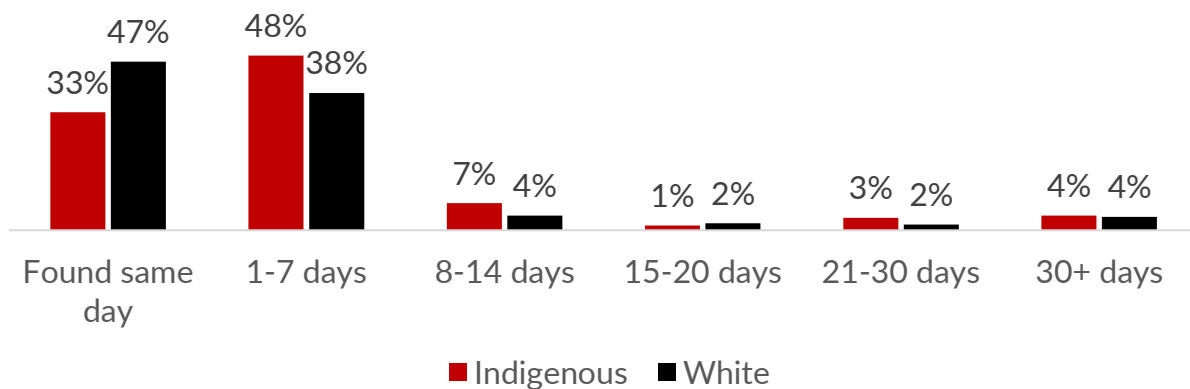
Source: Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation

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Days Missing

Indigenous people in Wyoming remain missing for longer than White people. The longer a person is missing, the higher the risk of danger. The days between when a person is reported missing and when they are found vary. Of all cases entered in 2025, 45% were cleared on the same day they were entered into NCIC, and 39% were cleared between one and seven days after being entered.

Figure 6: Most missing person cases are cleared the same day, but White people are more often found the same day they are reported missing than Indigenous people



Note: 23 White and 4 Indigenous cases were excluded either because of missing data in NCIC, or because the cases had not yet been cleared. As a result, percentages do not equal 100.

Source: Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation

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There is a difference in the average number of days an Indigenous person stays missing and the average number of days a White person stays missing. Of cases entered into NCIC in 2025, Indigenous people were missing for an average of 8 days, while White people were missing for an average of 5 days.

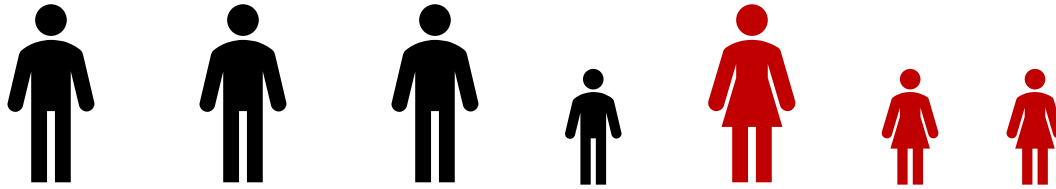
On average, Indigenous people are missing for almost twice as long as White people.

1.6X

Actively Missing Indigenous People

There were 93 actively missing people listed in NCIC records at the time of this report.¹ Of these, 7 were Indigenous people (Figure 7). The Indigenous person who has been missing for the longest in NCIC records was reported missing in July 2019 and has been missing for 2,432 days.

Figure 7: Three Indigenous females and four Indigenous males are actively missing in Wyoming



Note: The smaller figure size represents individuals who were juveniles at the time they were recorded as missing.

Source: Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation

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The U.S. Department of Justice runs the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), a free, secure database for missing persons, unidentified remains, and unclaimed decedents. Law enforcement, medical examiners, coroners, and families can upload and access information to help resolve these cases. However, NamUs remains underutilized. As of March 5th, 2026, only two missing Indigenous individuals—both adult males—are recorded in the database for Wyoming.

Conclusion

The Wyoming MMIP Task Force remains dedicated to addressing this crisis through policy changes, education, and public awareness. By analyzing the data, we can better identify priority areas, allocate resources effectively, and measure the impact of our efforts to support the safety and well-being of Indigenous communities in Wyoming.



¹ As of January 7th, 2026