



Promising Practices for Improved Record Reporting

Many states faced challenges in creating state estimates for the NIAA records report over the three years of data collection. Often, these challenges in estimating were direct results of structural or reporting problems of actual NICS records. This brief presents a strategy that at least one state has implemented to address that problem.

Estimation Problem

Incomplete mental health record estimates.

Reporting Problem

Court staff are unclear which civil mental health dispositions disqualify a person from purchasing a firearm.

Strategy

Work with staff to identify which civil mental health dispositions are disqualifying and create a written document that clearly defines these dispositions.

Identifying Disqualifying Mental Health Dispositions

About this strategy

Sometimes a simple thing like clarifying and identifying the records that should be reported can go a long way towards improving NICS reporting. While criminal records are straightforward, civil mental health records can be less clear when it comes to disqualification for firearm ownership. By working with the court staff to identify exactly which civil mental health dispositions are disqualifying, states can ensure that the correct records are being reported to NICS.

- **Who it may work for:** States that are unclear on which mental health records are firearm disqualifiers.
- **Costs:** Cost of training and creating a written document with guidelines for reporting.
- **Timeframe for implementing:** Can be implemented quickly, depending on availability of staff for training.

Why this strategy makes a difference

If court staff are not clear on which mental health dispositions need to be submitted to NICS, the state is likely not transferring many disqualifying records. If all court staff are up to speed on which dispositions are disqualifiers, this will lead to an increased number of records being made available to NICS.

Who's Doing It? Florida

Florida received a NARIP grant to improve their NICS reporting and is working with their 67 Clerks of Court to identify civil mental health dispositions that are firearm disqualifiers.

For more information:

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More on NICS [here](#)

