







# Law Enforcement Cases and Genetic Genealogy Databases

The only two public genetic genealogy (DNA) databases allowing submissions by Law Enforcement (LE) agencies are GEDmatch (via the GEDmatch PRO portal) and FamilyTreeDNA for Unidentified Human Remains (UHR) and/or crime scene DNA. Some important details are specified below.

	 UHR Cases	 Crime Scene DNA	 Both UHR Cases & Crime Scene DNA
LAW ENFORCEMENT SPECIFIC INFORMATION			
Law Enforcement (FIGG) Upload Criteria <sup>1</sup>	"To identify remains of a deceased individual" (Unidentified Human Remains) <sup>2</sup>	"To identify a perpetrator of a "violent crime" defined as murder, non-negligent manslaughter, aggravated rape, robbery, or aggravated assault"	"To identify the remains of a deceased individual" (UHR) or "To identify a perpetrator of, or suspect in, a Violent Crime"
Upload Cost for LE	\$1,000	SAME AS IN UHR CASES ←	\$1,400
Public user Opt In/Opt Out of LE Comparisons	New uploads must specify; "Opt Out" permits UHR comparisons (and makes kit public for matching) <sup>3</sup>	New uploads must specify; "Opt In" permits crime scene and UHR comparisons (and makes kit public for matching)	New tests/uploads auto "Opted In" for UHR & crime scene DNA comparisons; Can "Opt Out" later, but applies to both <sup>4</sup>
Admixture/Ethnicity Estimate Available for LE kit	YES	YES	YES
INFORMATION PROVIDED FOR EACH MATCH			
This is the same for all users; LE kits do not receive additional information. LE kits are NOT seen in public match lists or accessible by non-authorized users. Public uploaders desiring the same may upload to GEDmatch as a "Research" kit, or at FTDNA may "Opt Out" of all relative matching. (Caution: "Research" kits at GEDmatch are NOT automatically compared to unidentified remains, such as those in the Tulsa Race Massacre project.)			
Test Name/Alias & Email Address	YES	YES	YES
Photo of Tester	NO	NO	If user provides
Family Tree of Tester	If user uploads or links	SAME AS IN UHR CASES ←	If user uploads or creates
Family Surnames and/or Locations	If available in uploaded or linked tree	SAME AS IN UHR CASES ←	User can provide list, as well as earliest known paternal/maternal ancestor info
DNA Information Available for Each Match	cMs shared, longest segment, overlap positions and shared X-DNA	"Opted In" matches only: cMs shared, longest segment, overlap positions and shared X-DNA	cMs shared, longest segment, overlap positions and shared X-DNA
Y or mt-DNA Information	Displayed if match provided haplogroup information	SAME AS IN UHR CASES ←	Matches with Y-DNA and/or mt-DNA tests at FTDNA will be specified. (For an additional fee, LE can submit Y-DNA STR markers for comparison to Y-DNA tests)
List of Shared (In Common With) Matches	YES	YES	YES
Positions & Amount of DNA That Matches Share With Each Other or Any Specific Public Kit Number	YES	YES	NO
Additional Free Tools Include	Email lookup, kit # look up (including LE opt in/out status), parent relatedness and admixture for own and/or specific public kit	SAME AS IN UHR CASES ←	FTDNA tests & LE can access owned kit's ethnicity estimate
Fee Based Tools	Segment search, GEDcom surname search, advanced clustering and multi-kit analysis tools	SAME AS IN UHR CASES ←	Public uploaders of DTC tests can pay \$19 to gain access to the otherwise free tools above
Estimated Number of Users in the Database	~ 1.8 Million	~ 750,000	~ 1.2 Million

OTHER DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER (DTC) TESTING COMPANIES	
	Law Enforcement DNA usage is prohibited. Ancestry does not allow DNA uploads of any kind. Ancestry's "Guide for Law Enforcement" additionally states "Ancestry does not voluntarily cooperate with Law Enforcement."
	Law Enforcement DNA usage is prohibited. 23andMe does not allow DNA uploads of any kind. 23andMe's "Guide for Law Enforcement" additionally states they, "...resist requests from Law Enforcement..."
	Law Enforcement DNA usage is prohibited. MyHeritage's "Privacy Policy" additionally states they will not provide any information "... unless we are required by a valid court order or subpoena for genetic information."
OTHER	There are various smaller DNA testing companies and databases such as Living DNA, Geneanet & Geni. None authorize Law Enforcement DNA usage.

\*Please note the following:  
-This chart is intended to clarify key features of LE authorization/access. It is not represented as an exhaustive list. Please refer to current Terms of Service and Law Enforcement policies for each database and your location.  
-Public trust relies upon adherence to authorized uses of these databases. Damage to public trust results in uploaders removing their DNA from databases and harms the future of Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy.  
- This chart assumes LE agencies are using microarray or WGS. Due to the unique design of Kintelligence kits, some of the GEDmatch tools will not be applicable/available. More information is available via Verogen, IMF or the Cold Case Coalition.  
- Situations such as a future change in Terms of Service, lack of adherence to a database's Law Enforcement policy, or search warrants/court orders served upon databases may change what information is provided to users working on Law Enforcement and/or forensic cases.

<sup>1</sup>In many cases, LE agencies are not uploading to, or working with these sites directly; instead a Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy (FIGG) organization is providing this service. Organizations/genealogists working with these uploads/kits fall under the same policies and ToS applicable to law enforcement.  
<sup>2</sup>GEDmatch ToS: "human remains (which, for clarity, excludes fetal remains and remains of stillborn children)"  
<sup>3</sup>In January 2021, the "Opt Out" definition was changed to include UHR comparisons. To exclude these, uploads prior to 2021, must change setting to "Research," which also removes kit from the match lists of biological relatives and makes the kit unavailable for public use.  
<sup>4</sup>In late 2018, users in the FTDNA database were automatically "opted in" for these LE comparisons, except for kits possibly falling under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Those kits remain "Opted Out" unless specifically changed by the user after 2018.