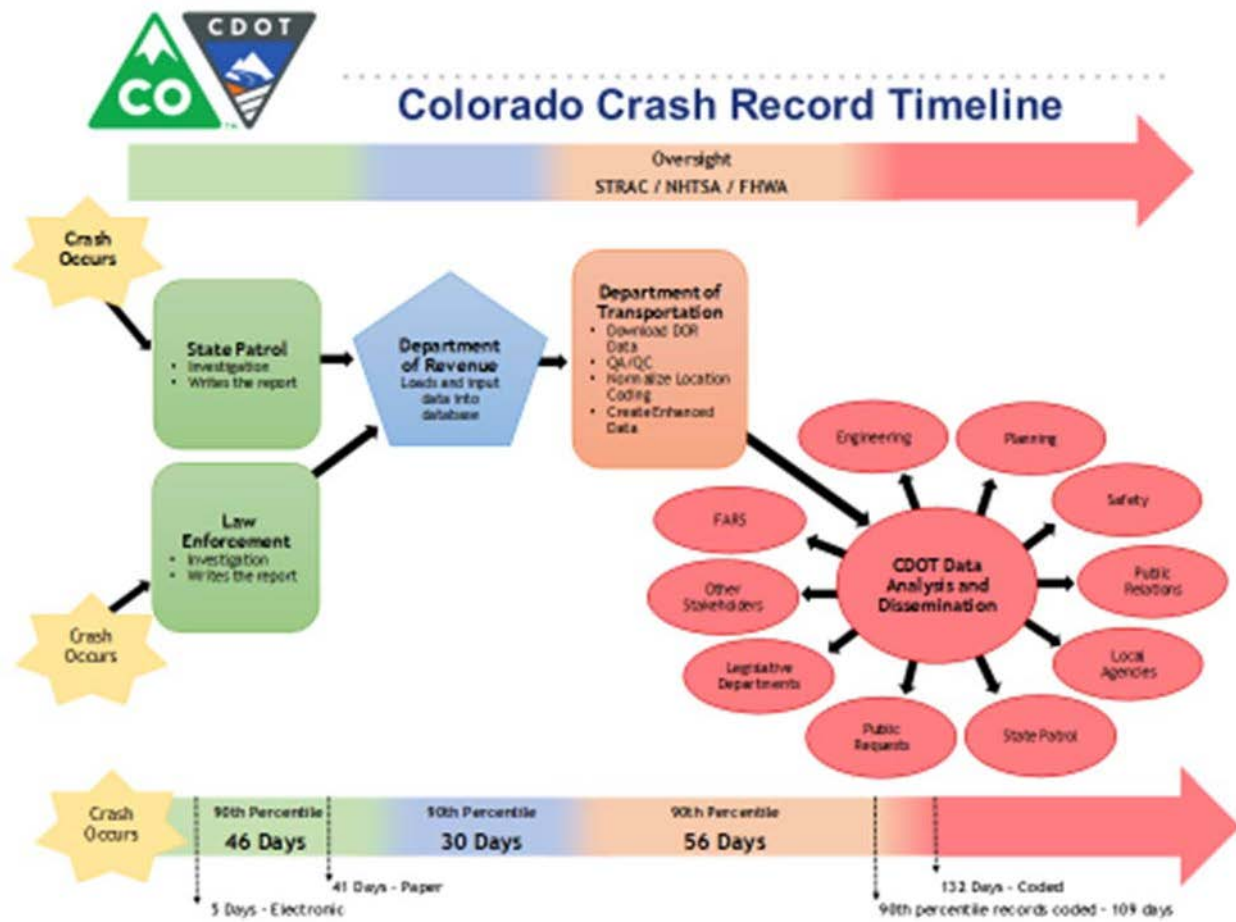


The Colorado Department of Transportation Crash Data Process

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) maintains a crash database for purposes of improving traffic and highway safety as required by 23 U.S.C. 148, 23 U.S.C. Section 405, requirements of the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) as well as other federal and state rules and guidance.

When a crash occurs, after an officer investigates and fills out a crash form (DR2447), the form is sent to the Department of Revenue (DOR). DOR processes the records and enters them into a database called DRIVES where the official, legal record is maintained. CDOT receives data from the DRIVES system for all crashes, excluding private property and counter reports. (Counter reports are self-reported by drivers and are not investigated by a law enforcement officer.)



CDOT processes or “codes” the crash data received from DOR. This process adds an additional field for crash type, corrects common errors, updates location information where available, and normalizes the data. This cleansing process creates a working database that CDOT then analyzes for various programs and safety projects. Some examples of how this data is used is to identify crash patterns, over representation of crashes for a specific roadway type or volume, statewide planning, development of

crash mitigation projects, identification of behavioral patterns for the development of behavioral programs such as “click it or ticket” and Holiday DUI campaigns.

CDOT typically compiles data and releases the data in 6 month increments, with approximately a 3 month delay when data is available. CDOT may delay the release of data to address known deficiencies allowing for data corrections or to download additional data that is delayed through the DOR process.

FARS is a separate database containing only fatal records and contains more detailed fields than the more general state database that includes all crashes. FARS is a nationwide census providing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Congress, and the American public yearly data regarding fatal injuries suffered in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Fatal data is finalized and published on December 31 of the following year. For example, 2015 fatal data was published on December 31, 2016. This allows for a thorough examination of records to ensure the most accurate data possible. The information in the FARS database is collected through a variety of sources, including coroner toxicology results, death certificates, initial fatal blotter notifications, and fatal supplement information. Fatal crashes included in the database meet the NHTSA definition of a fatal crash, which may not include all crashes involving a death. Examples of crashes that are not in the FARS database include deaths not resulting from the injuries sustained in the crash such as suicides or medical conditions.

Data requests:

CDOT provides summary data upon request. Summary data is in tabular format and is provided for a specific location or geographic area, filtered for a specific type of crash, weather condition, and/or date range.

CDOT does not release personal identifying information including names, driver’s license numbers, addresses, birth dates, license plate numbers, VIN numbers, local and state identifiers such as case numbers, etc.

CDOT only provides summary data and does not provide or publish the database in its entirety.

To improve timeliness and help ensure that the data provided meets the requestor’s needs, it is recommended that the following information be included by the requestor:

Location. The location that data is being requested for. Provide mile posts if possible for highways or at a minimum, cross street information for the beginning and end points on a corridor. LAT/Long and GIS data is not available for most non highway crashes so if local roads are included in the request, CDOT will attempt to provide the data as close to what is requested as possible.

Date. Beginning and end dates for the request, such as January 1, 2015 – June 30, 2015, or the most recent five years of data. For engineering analysis, we generally recommend 3 years of data for high volume roadways in urban areas and 5 years of data for more rural, low volume roadways. This typically provides sufficient information for safety analyses and is a general rule of thumb for engineering analysis.

CDOT does have older data, but the data formats have changed, and not all fields were collected historically or the data may require research or manipulation to obtain. Contact the CDOT Traffic Engineering Branch, Data Unit, if you have larger requests going back more than 10 years to discuss your specific data needs and determine if CDOT has the data desired.

Desired information/fields. Include as much detail regarding the information that is being requested and when the data is needed. CDOT will make every attempt to provide data by the requested timeline, but requests for less than three working days or large requests requiring significant staff time may require additional time. CDOT will provide a standard set of fields if nothing is specified.

Standard fields may include:

- Highway
- Section
- Milepost
- Date/Time
- Crash severity
- Location
- Roadway description
- Number of vehicles
- Roadway Contour
- Road and weather conditions
- Lighting
- Ramp (y/n)
- Accident type
- Crash location

For vehicles 1 and 2:

- Vehicle direction
- Vehicle type
- Driver impairment (suspected/preliminary only)
- Human contributing factor
- Speed
- Vehicle movement

Additional fields may be available upon request. For specific requests, contact the CDOT traffic data unit to discuss your data needs and identify if the data is readily available.

Format. CDOT will provide data in an excel spreadsheet and a brief summary sheet. For data requests in a different format, please contact the CDOT Traffic Engineering Branch, Data Unit if another format is desired.

Data that is NOT available from CDOT:

- Personal identifying information
- Data requested in such a way as to make personal identifying information available
- Copies of individual crash records (DR2447)
- Most location data (LAT/Long) for local roads
- Mapped crash data, except reports that are already published and publically available

- Requests that require CDOT to develop new reports that do not already exist, require significant analysis to produce, require connectivity to other data not easily available to CDOT, other requests that require the development of a CDOT work product, etc.
- Crash data that has not been released
- Copies of the entire crash database
- Citation, charging, or adjudicated data

Data Requests:

For requests of raw– un-coded data or copies of cash records, requests should be sent to the Department of Revenue (DOR). CDOT is not the legal custodian of these records and will refer requests to DOR. Copies of original crash records may also be available directly from the responding law enforcement agency.

DOR's request form can be found here: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/revenue/cora>

DOR has contracted with Colorado Interactive to meet large or bulk data requests. The contact information for this type of data is:

Colorado Interactive, LLC
[\(303\) 534-3468 x109](tel:3035343468)

To request data from CDOT use the following link:

<https://www.codot.gov/topcontent/contact-cdot>

A general request form can be found here: <https://www.codot.gov/library/forms/cdot1092.pdf> or requests may be emailed to Andrew.Hogle@state.co.us

Data requests go through the CDOT Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) process. Requests requiring more than 1 hour of staff time may require CDOT to charge the requestor. Additional information on CDOT's CORA process and procedures can be found here:

<https://www.codot.gov/topcontent/cora>

For local government agencies, data requests may be sent directly to the CDOT data unit manager, Alisa Babler at alisa.babler@state.co.us

Media inquiries may submit a CORA request or contact the Public Relations office directly at:

Amy.Ford@state.co.us or Andrew.Hogle@state.co.us

Fatal or FARS data requests

CDOT publishes fatal crash data on the FARS website. All official fatal data may be accessed here:

<https://www-fars.nhtsa.dot.gov/Main/index.aspx>

For requests regarding summary toxicology data, current year fatal information, or other questions specific to fatal crashes, a CORA request may be made or contact the CDOT traffic data unit directly by emailing alisa.babler@state.co.us.