

NIBRS Coding Scenarios

Arrestee Was Armed With

Issue: *Two male subjects were arrested for ingesting and possessing drug paraphernalia. As they were seated in their vehicle, in plain sight in the center of the seat was a shotgun. Do we report this arrest as armed with shotgun even though it was not used against officers during the traffic stop? Is being in possession of a firearm considered armed in all cases?*

Yes, the arrestee in the scenario above should be shown as armed 14=Shotgun. This data element simply wants to know was the arrestee armed when arrested and that includes situations where the weapon is in what we say "constructive possession" (close proximity). If the weapon was in the trunk of the car, we would not show the arrestee as armed.

According to the FBI, "This data element should be used to indicate whether the arrestee was armed with a commonly known weapon at the time of his/her apprehension. Up to two entries can be made."

If the weapon was an automatic firearm, an "A" should be added as a suffix to its code, e.g., 13A=Automatic Rifle.

Example 1: When a man was arrested, he had in his possession a .357 caliber revolver and a pen knife. The entry should be 12=Handgun. Because a small pocket knife is not generally considered to be a weapon, it does not qualify for reporting.

Example 2: A female resisted arrest using a liquor bottle and a chair as weapons before being subdued. The entry should be 01=Unarmed. Although the subject used items as weapons, they were not commonly known weapons.

Reference: *NIBRS Volume I: Data Collection Guidelines (blue cover), Arrestee Was Armed With, page 102.*

***NIBRS I, NIBRS II &
NIBRS Coding Scenarios
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Note that the preceding gives general examples. It is not meant to be all inclusive. Coding is based on individual case circumstances. Please direct NIBRS questions to:

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