

Welcome to the National Crime Victimization Survey Knowledge Corner.

This video provides an overview of the National Crime Victimization Survey, or NCVS, instruments, which includes the NCVS 500, or the control card, the NCVS-1, which is the basic screen questionnaire, and the NCVS-2, which is our crime incident report.

These instruments can all be located on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' NCVS data collection web page.

When a household is selected to participate in the NCVS, a U.S. Census Bureau representative will go to the house or call to conduct the interview with all household members age 12 or older. Each NCVS interview generally takes about 25 minutes to complete, but that can vary depending on each respondent's unique experiences.

We will walk through each step in the interview process in the following slides.

The control card serves as the basic record for each sample unit. It contains key information about the household and each individual who lives in the household.

Within each household, one individual is identified as the household respondent. The household respondent is asked to provide demographic information for all the people age 12 or older who live in the household. The U.S. Census Bureau representative uses this information to create the household roster, which is captured through the control card, and to determine who else should be interviewed.

Each member of the household age 12 or older completes the basic screen questionnaire.

The basic screen questionnaire contains questions designed to determine whether any crimes were committed against the household as a whole, which is property crime, or against an individual household member, which is personal crime, during the past six months. All household members are asked about personal crimes, which include rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and personal larceny. Additionally, the household respondent is asked about property crimes, which include burglary or trespassing, motor vehicle theft, and other types of theft.

If the respondent does not report any incidents in the screener, the crime incident report is not administered. The respondent is asked a final set of demographic questions, and the interview concludes.

However, if an incident is reported, the respondent then completes a crime incident report, or the CIR, for each incident reported.

The CIR is used to gather detailed information about each crime incident reported in the screener.

Questions are focused on details regarding the crime. The CIR doesn't explicitly ask if a person experienced a certain type of crime—like rape or sexual assault—but rather, it asks a series of questions about the incident, which are then used to classify the type of

crime. In addition, the CIR collects key information, such as the presence of a weapon, whether injury occurred, characteristics of the offender, and any actions taken against the offender. Of the utmost importance, the CIR collects information about crimes, regardless of whether the crime was reported to the police.

For additional information on the NCVS, please see the NCVS page on the BJS website, which includes all of the survey instruments described. You can also see the NCVS technical documentation for more information about the methodology.

Please email askbjs@usdoj.gov with any questions and your email will be forwarded to BJS statisticians with topical experience.

Finally, you can access the NCVS public-use data files at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data.

Thank you.