



Statistical Brief

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Victim Service Providers in the United States, 2017

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A total of about 12,200 victim service providers (VSPs) operated in the United States in 2017 (table 1). Those included non-profit, governmental, health-care, tribal, for-profit, educational, and other organizations that served victims of crime or abuse as their primary function, or that had dedicated staff or programs to serve victims. (See *Terms and definitions*.) The four largest states (California, Texas, Florida, and New York), which made up about a third of the U.S. population, had nearly a quarter (23%) of the VSPs (map 1).

Findings are based on the 2017 National Census of Victim Service Providers (NCVSP), the first nationwide data collection on VSPs. The census asked organizations whether they had served victims in the 6 months prior to the survey. From October 2016 to July 2017, the NCVSP gathered data on location and type of organization from VSPs. These data were compared to U.S. Census Bureau population estimates to develop rates of VSPs per state. The rate of VSPs ranged from about 2 VSPs per 100,000 U.S. residents in Florida and New Jersey, to almost 15 VSPs per 100,000 U.S. residents in Wyoming and the District of Columbia. Six states (Alaska, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming) and the District of Columbia had 8 or more VSPs per 100,000 U.S. residents (map 2).

Selected findings

- Almost 90% of VSPs were non-profit or faith-based organizations (45%) or governmental agencies with staff or programs to serve crime victims (43%).
- Most governmental VSPs operated in prosecutors' offices (18% of all VSPs) or law enforcement agencies (15%).
- Hospital, medical, or emergency facilities with dedicated victim programs made up 3% of VSPs.
- About 2% of VSPs were located in tribal organizations.
- About 2% of VSPs were located on university or college campuses or in other educational institutions.

TABLE 1
Victim service providers, by type of organization, 2017

Type of organization	Number	Percent
Total	12,196	100%
Non-profit/faith-based	5,505	45.1%
Governmental	5,297	43.4%
Prosecutor's office	2,220	18.2%
Law enforcement agency	1,886	15.5%
Other ^a	1,191	9.8%
Hospital/medical/emergency	358	2.9%
Tribal ^b	262	2.1%
University or college campus/educational	245	2.0%
Informal ^c	179	1.5%
For-profit ^d	138	1.1%
Unknown ^e	212	1.7%

Note: Includes victim service providers (VSPs) in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes VSPs within the U.S. military.

^aIncludes juvenile justice facilities, offender custody and supervision organizations, social services, and other governmental agencies.

^bIncludes tribal law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, courts, juvenile justice facilities, offender custody and supervision organizations, advocacy programs, coalitions, social services, and other tribal organizations.

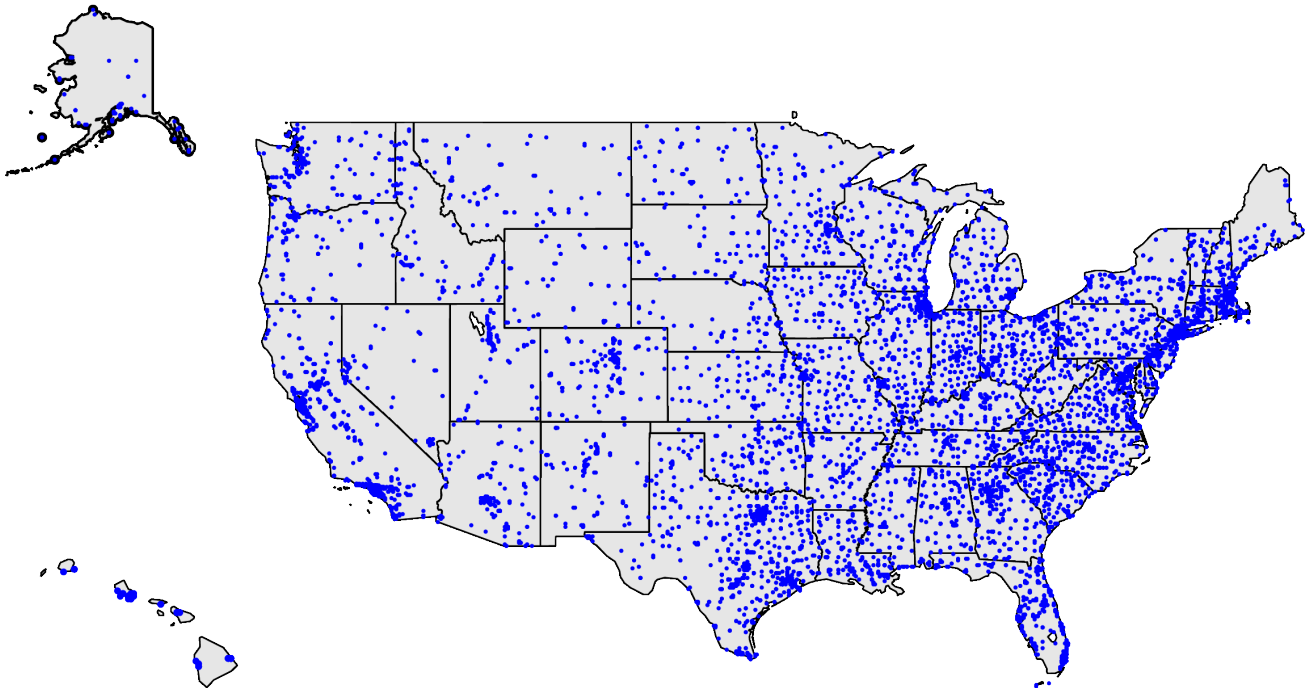
^cIncludes independent support groups; volunteer, grassroots, or survivor networks; or other programs not formally part of a governmental agency, registered non-profit, or business.

^dIncludes private counseling/other mental-health care providers, private legal offices/law firms, and other businesses.

^eIncludes non-responding VSPs that could not be categorized based on public information.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Census of Victim Service Providers, 2017.

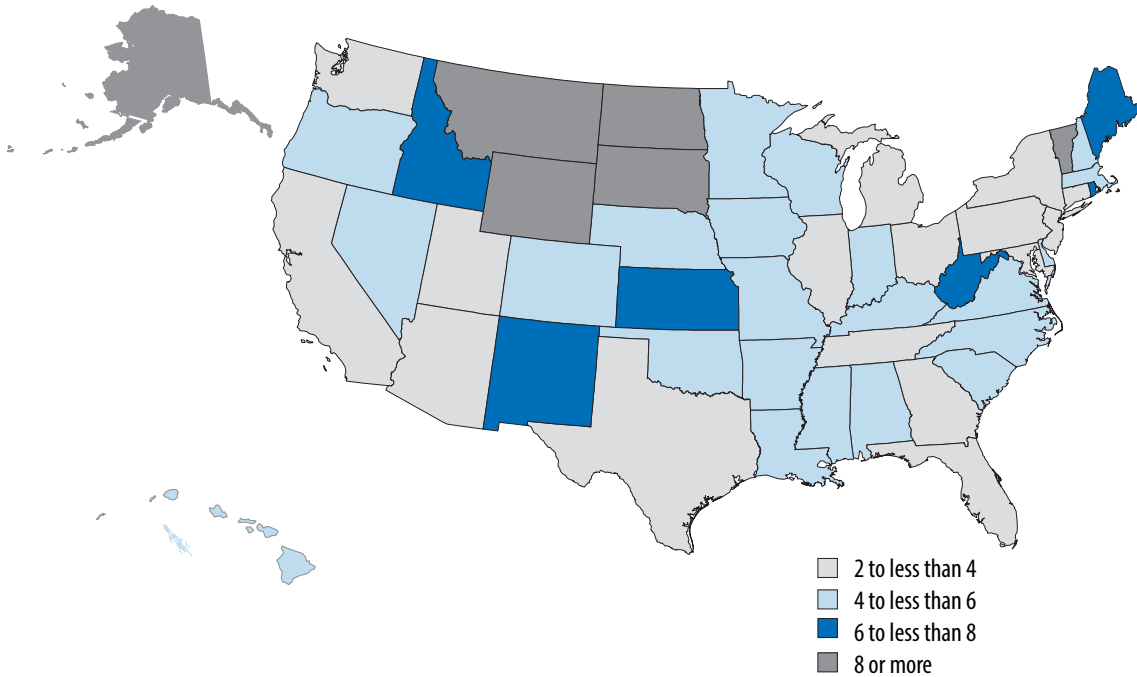
MAP 1
Victim service providers, by location, 2017



Note: Includes victim service providers (VSPs) in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes VSPs within the U.S. military. See appendix table 1 for estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Census of Victim Service Providers, 2017.

MAP 2
Rates of victim service providers per 100,000 residents, by location, 2017



Note: Includes victim service providers (VSPs) in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes VSPs within the U.S. military. The rate per 100,000 residents is calculated as the number of VSPs divided by the state population and multiplied by 100,000. There were 8 or more VSPs per 100,000 residents in the District of Columbia. See appendix table 1 for estimates.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Census of Victim Service Providers; and U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2017.

Methodology

The 2017 National Census of Victim Service Providers (NCVSP) is the first data collection on all types of victim service providers (VSPs) in the United States. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), with support from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), conducted the NCVSP through a cooperative agreement with the RAND Corporation, NORC at the University of Chicago, and the National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC), under award number 2012-VF-GX-K025. RAND provided survey development and analytical expertise, NORC administered the NCVSP, and NCVC and OVC provided content expertise and led outreach activities.

Roster development

Prior to conducting the NCVSP, there was no roster of all VSPs across the nation. Roster development was conducted from 2013 to 2016 and involved compiling a list of all publicly available VSPs, canvassing for VSP lists across all states and the District of Columbia, and running an awareness campaign to encourage participation in the NCVSP. Military VSPs were excluded from the roster because they are typically inaccessible to the general public.

National-level organizations provided VSP lists, such as the OVC's Online Directory of Crime Victim Services, the NCVC's Connect Directory, and the Office on Violence Against Women's Measuring Effectiveness Initiative. BJS also added questions to its Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies and its National Census of State Court Prosecutors to assess whether any of the responding organizations qualified for the roster because they had dedicated staff or programs to serve victims.

Meanwhile, state-by-state web-canvassing revealed more than 120 national- or state-level VSP lists, including lists specific to a victimization type (like domestic violence or child abuse), a location (like a particular state), or a program type (like hospital-based intervention programs or tribal justice programs). These VSP lists were identified by working with professionals and organizations that had access to the VSP field and with state and local officials connected to regional VSPs. For the purposes of frame development, VSPs are generally easy to identify because they

need to be publicly accessible or known to crime victims in their community to fulfill their mission of serving victims.

Development of this initial roster produced a list of 29,646 organizations that were likely providing victim services. Many organizations were present on multiple lists or even duplicated on a single list. Duplicates were removed while erring on the side of inclusion, to maximize the chance of reaching all eligible VSPs. For example, two organizations with the same address but different names remained on the roster because they could have been separate organizations located in the same building. Lack of current, complete contact information also presented challenges in eliminating duplication during this stage. For example, VSPs might have had similar names, but if one was missing an address, it was unclear if they were duplicates.

From August 2015 to January 2016, a pilot test was conducted with 725 organizations to determine the quality of the roster and to test the procedures for surveying the VSP organizations.¹ The pilot test revealed that 35% of organizations in the pilot study were not VSPs. (See *Terms and definitions*.) In addition, 17% of organizations reported a problem with how the roster listed their organization's name, and 20% reported a problem with their mailing address. These findings, combined with the lack of descriptive information about VSPs on the roster, indicated that the roster was not complete or accurate enough to use as a VSP sampling frame. It was important to contact all organizations on the initial roster to remove those that were not actively serving victims, to remove duplicates, and to collect descriptive information on the universe of active VSPs nationwide.

Census administration and roster cleaning

From October 2016 to July 2017, NORC administered the NCVSP to the 29,646 organizations on the roster. The NCVSP was administered primarily online (86%) or by telephone (14%). Eleven VSPs completed a paper copy of the census.

¹B. Oudekerk, L. Langton, H. Warnken, S. Greathouse, N. Lim, B. Taylor, V. Welch, and S. Howley, *Building a National Data Collection on Victim Service Providers: A Pilot Test* (NCJ 251524), research funded by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. (February 2018).

During the process of collecting up-to-date contact information and analyzing census data, 10,867 duplicate organizations were removed from the roster (table 2). The majority of duplicate organizations were identified during data collection (87%; not shown in tables). A few months into data collection, after updating contact information for most VSPs, statistical fuzzy matching was conducted to determine the level of agreement between phone numbers, organization names, postal addresses, email addresses, and contact names for each pair of duplicate organizations.² Each likely pair of duplicates was reviewed and, when possible, telephone interviews were conducted to confirm the duplication.

The other 13% of duplicates were identified after data collection ended (not shown in tables). Another effort to eliminate duplications was conducted based on the most up-to-date contact information (organization name and address information) and manually reviewed survey data for matching VSPs. When VSPs with matching contact information and survey data were identified, one VSP was removed if it reported—

- no dedicated staff or programs
- no directly served victims and no hotline calls during the past year (the survey’s reference period)
- more missing data on organization type, crime types served, and number of staff and victims than the other VSP did
- more missing data on the first half of the survey than the other VSP did
- more missing data on the second half of the survey than the other VSP did.

For the remaining duplicates, one VSP was selected at random to remove from the frame.

Another 4,598 VSPs were ineligible for the NCVSP because they had closed down, merged with other organizations, or not served victims of crime or abuse during the past 6 months. If outreach efforts or web searches did not provide conclusive evidence that an organization was ineligible for the NCVSP, the organization remained on the roster. At the conclusion of the NCVSP, the census included

²Fellegi, I. P., & Sunter, A. B. (1969). A theory for record linkage. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 64(328), 1183-1210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01621459.1969.10501049>

TABLE 2
Number and percent of organizations on the National Census of Victim Service Providers roster, by final status, 2017

Final status	Number	Percent
Total organizations on original roster	29,646	100%
Victim service providers on final roster ^a	14,181	47.8%
Organizations removed from roster	15,465	52.2%
Duplicate organizations	10,867	36.7
Organizations not serving victims ^b	4,598	15.5

Note: Organizations include victim service providers (VSPs) and other agencies not serving victims.

^aIncludes VSPs in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes VSPs within the U.S. military.

^bIncludes organizations that did not serve victims of crime or abuse during the past 6 months.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Census of Victim Service Providers, 2017.

TABLE 3
Number and percent of victim service providers, by response and eligibility status, 2017

Response and eligibility status	Number	Percent
Total VSPs on final roster	14,181	100%
Responding VSPs	11,567	81.6%
Included in analysis	9,640	68.0
Excluded from analysis ^a	1,927	13.6
Non-responding VSPs ^b	2,614	18.4%
Included in analysis	2,556	18.0
Excluded from analysis ^a	58	0.4

Note: Includes victim service providers (VSPs) in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Excludes VSPs within the U.S. military.

^aIncludes organizations that served victims but had no dedicated staff or programs to serve victims or were located outside the U.S. These organizations are excluded from table 1, figures 1 and 2, and appendix table 1.

^bVSPs that did not complete all key items on the survey instrument were considered non-respondents.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Census of Victim Service Providers, 2017.

14,181 organizations (table 3). The NCVSP yielded a comprehensive, up-to-date, and descriptive roster of VSPs that could serve as a sampling frame for future VSP surveys.

Response rate and inclusion criteria

Of the 14,181 organizations on the final roster, 11,567 confirmed their status as a VSP and participated in the census (82%). Confirmed VSPs were included if they completed at least up to section H of the NCVSP instrument, which included all of the key items. For the 2,614 non-respondents, online searches were conducted to identify a few characteristics about

them, including their location and organizational type. All organizations had an address from the original roster or online searches, which enabled non-responding organizations in state counts to be included. Organizational type was identified for 92% of non-respondents (not shown in tables).

Of the 14,181 organizations on the final roster, 1,985 were excluded from table 1, figures 1 and 2, and appendix table 1 (14%; 1,927 responding and 58 non-responding VSPs), leaving a total of 12,196 eligible organizations. Organizations that were excluded typically provided some resources to victims of crime or abuse but either did not have dedicated staff or programs to serve victims (1,978 organizations) or else were located outside the U.S. (7 organizations; not shown in tables).

Of the 12,196 eligible organizations, 9,640 completed the NCVSP (79%; not shown in tables). These organizations confirmed their status as a VSP and provided up-to-date geographical data.

Eligibility for many of the 2,614 non-responding organizations could not be confirmed, but these organizations were kept on the VSP frame. Of these 2,614 organizations, 58 were found to be ineligible for this report based on public evidence. The remaining 2,556 were considered to be eligible for this report, because public evidence of ineligibility could not be found.

Terms and definitions

The survey instrument used in the National Census of Victim Service Providers (NCVSP) identified organizations providing services to victims of crime or abuse and filtered out inactive agencies. The instrument provided definitions for victims and services:

- A **victim** was a person who received assistance from a victim service provider (VSP) due to concerns about past, ongoing, or potential crimes or abuse. Victims included persons directly harmed or threatened by crimes or abuse and family or household members of the harmed or threatened persons.
- **Services** included any efforts to assist victims; to promote their safety, security, or recovery; to help them participate in the criminal justice system; or to meet other victim needs.

Any organization that had provided services to victims of crime or abuse within the past 6 months was screened into the NCVSP. The NCVSP instrument then categorized VSPs into three groups of organizations:

1. those that primarily provided victim services
2. those that served victims and non-victims but had dedicated programs or staff for victim services
3. those that served victims and non-victims but did not have dedicated programs or staff for victim services.

This report excludes organizations without dedicated staff or programs to serve victims. (See *Response rate and inclusion criteria*.)

APPENDIX TABLE 1**Number, percent, and rate of victim service providers, by state population, 2017**

State	Population	Percent of population	Number of VSPs	Percent of VSPs	Rate of VSPs per 100,000 U.S. residents*
U.S. total	325,719,178	100%	12,196	100%	3.7
California	39,536,653	12.1	977	8.0	2.5
Texas	28,304,596	8.7	929	7.6	3.3
Florida	20,984,400	6.4	454	3.7	2.2
New York	19,849,399	6.1	489	4.0	2.5
Pennsylvania	12,805,537	3.9	345	2.8	2.7
Illinois	12,802,023	3.9	444	3.6	3.5
Ohio	11,658,609	3.6	459	3.8	3.9
Georgia	10,429,379	3.2	342	2.8	3.3
North Carolina	10,273,419	3.2	426	3.5	4.1
Michigan	9,962,311	3.1	271	2.2	2.7
New Jersey	9,005,644	2.8	188	1.5	2.1
Virginia	8,470,020	2.6	445	3.6	5.3
Washington	7,405,743	2.3	258	2.1	3.5
Arizona	7,016,270	2.2	252	2.1	3.6
Massachusetts	6,859,819	2.1	277	2.3	4.0
Tennessee	6,715,984	2.1	238	2.0	3.5
Indiana	6,666,818	2.0	272	2.2	4.1
Missouri	6,113,532	1.9	272	2.2	4.4
Maryland	6,052,177	1.9	236	1.9	3.9
Wisconsin	5,795,483	1.8	247	2.0	4.3
Colorado	5,607,154	1.7	264	2.2	4.7
Minnesota	5,576,606	1.7	248	2.0	4.4
South Carolina	5,024,369	1.5	285	2.3	5.7
Alabama	4,874,747	1.5	209	1.7	4.3
Louisiana	4,684,333	1.4	252	2.1	5.4
Kentucky	4,454,189	1.4	194	1.6	4.4
Oregon	4,142,776	1.3	181	1.5	4.4
Oklahoma	3,930,864	1.2	227	1.9	5.8
Connecticut	3,588,184	1.1	102	0.8	2.8
Iowa	3,145,711	1.0	174	1.4	5.5
Utah	3,101,833	1.0	122	1.0	3.9
Arkansas	3,004,279	0.9	161	1.3	5.4
Nevada	2,998,039	0.9	136	1.1	4.5
Mississippi	2,984,100	0.9	150	1.2	5.0
Kansas	2,913,123	0.9	176	1.4	6.0
New Mexico	2,088,070	0.6	143	1.2	6.8
Nebraska	1,920,076	0.6	104	0.9	5.4
West Virginia	1,815,857	0.6	120	1.0	6.6
Idaho	1,716,943	0.5	125	1.0	7.3
Hawaii	1,427,538	0.4	61	0.5	4.3
New Hampshire	1,342,795	0.4	78	0.6	5.8
Maine	1,335,907	0.4	82	0.7	6.1
Rhode Island	1,059,639	0.3	71	0.6	6.7
Montana	1,050,493	0.3	130	1.1	12.4
Delaware	961,939	0.3	49	0.4	5.1
South Dakota	869,666	0.3	93	0.8	10.7
North Dakota	755,393	0.2	98	0.8	13.0
Alaska	739,795	0.2	92	0.8	12.4
District of Columbia	693,972	0.2	102	0.8	14.7
Vermont	623,657	0.2	60	0.5	9.6
Wyoming	579,315	0.2	86	0.7	14.8

Note: Excludes victim service providers (VSPs) within the U.S. military.

*The rate per 100,000 residents is calculated as the number of VSPs divided by the state or national population and multiplied by 100,000.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Census of Victim Service Providers; and U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2017.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring crime, criminal victimization, criminal offenders, victims of crime, correlates of crime, and the operation of criminal and civil justice systems at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels. BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates reliable statistics on crime and justice systems in the United States, supports improvements to state and local criminal justice information systems, and participates with national and international organizations to develop and recommend national standards for justice statistics. Jeffrey H. Anderson is the director.

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