Shifting the Crime Reporting Paradigm – Lessons Learned from the FBI's Transition to NIBRS

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar "Shifting the Crime Reporting Paradigm – Lessons Learned from the FBI's Transition to NIBRS," hosted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce Erica Smith, chief of the Law Enforcement Incident-Based Statistics Unit within the Bureau of Justice Statistics with some welcoming remarks and introductions. Erica?

ERICA SMITH: Thanks, Daryl. Welcome, everyone. We appreciate you being here today to join us for this presentation. I wanted to give just a little bit of a background about, you know, why we wanted to host these webinars. We have been active—the Bureau of Justice Statistics, I should say—has been actively working with the FBI to transition crime reporting among law enforcement agencies to the National Incident-Based Reporting System. It has been quite an effort over the last 7 years I believe we've been at this, maybe longer at this point. And we are at a point now where we're going to be producing the first set of national estimates based on NIBRS data for the 2021 data year. And we wanted to provide out information to the public about what we've been doing for the past number of years.

So this particular webinar focuses quite a bit on the transition of agencies to NIBRS, what the data can—what the data can tell us, and how we're looking to use the data as we move into the future. We do also plan to hold a webinar this Thursday at the same time. We will be talking specifically at that time about the work that we've been doing to develop the methodology and the code that will help us to estimate—or to create these national estimates on crime based on the NIBRS data. We've had to make a number of shifts in how that work is done, now that it's based on incident-based data as opposed to summary reports, and we're going to provide much more information about that process at the Thursday session.

So for this particular panel, I'd like to introduce our speakers. Firstly, we'll have Drema Fouch. She is an FBI management and program analyst at the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division, which houses the Uniform Crime Reporting Program that NIBRS is a part of. She serves as the NIBRS Coordinator, and she is one of the primary points of contact for the state UCR programs that collect data from local law enforcement agencies in their state and then report it to the FBI's NIBRS program. She has extensive experience supporting state and local law enforcement crime reporting, and is also the person responsible for certifying states to report NIBRS to the FBI.

And after Drema speaks and provides a bit of an overview of where we've been and where we are now with NIBRS and some of the other resources that the FBI has available, we will then hear from Kimberly Martin, who is a statistician at the Bureau of Justice Statistics. She works with me in the Law Enforcement Incident-Based Statistics Unit. She manages the BJS NIBRS analytics portfolio, and she's also been doing a lot of work over the last several years on modernizing our data—our data platform to support this large-scale set of information. She has about 20 years of experience conducting research and data collection in the field of criminal justice, and she is our resident expert on NIBRS data analysis at BJS.

So with that, I believe that I will turn it over to Drema to provide us an update on the NIBRS transition and some additional information about resources from the FBI. Drema?

DREMA FOUCH: Hello, everyone. As Erica stated, I'm Drema Fouch, and I'm going to give you just a quick "where we've been" and "where we are now" about the FBI's NIBRS transition. So let's compare where we were at from 2016 to where we are today.

We started the NIBRS transition within the UCR Program in January of 2016. That's when it kicked off. And at that time, we had just over 6,600 agencies that were reporting NIBRS data, and those agencies represented 37.2% of the total agencies reporting and 29.5% of the population covered. Today, I'm pleased to announce that we are at over 11,500 agencies reporting NIBRS. That's an increase of over 4,900 agencies from where we were at in 2016. And those agencies represent 61.2% of the total agencies reporting or 24% of an increase. And then we are at 64.5% of the population covered by NIBRS today, and that's a 35% increase from where we were at in 2016.

So state participation, when we started our transition in 2016, we had 16 states that were NIBRS-only reporters. We had 17 states that we referred to as hybrids. That meant that there were agencies that were reporting NIBRS data, but there was also agencies still reporting the summary-based data to the FBI. Then we had two states that did not have UCR programs, and there were 15 states that were summary-only submitters. In 2022, we still have the 18 NIBRS-only states. We have 30 that are partial NIBRS reporting states, which means that the data that we're getting from those states, it's NIBRS data and the other agencies are not participating because they haven't successfully transitioned yet. And then I have two states that I'm working with toward NIBRS certification.

So here is just a visual of the information I just provided. The darker blue on the map are those states that are the fully NIBRS-submitting states. The lighter shades of blue

represent those partial NIBRS states, and then the two states in gray are those that are working toward certification.

Some of the resources that we have available in these resources are always available to help states and agencies, and that's our NIBRS technical documentation. We do have data integration support. This support is particular to the XML submission process. Then, of course, we have the NIBRS subject matter expertise. That will include myself, our training staff, and others within the UCR Program. And we always offer no-cost NIBRS training.

And then I wanted to provide you some contact information if you would need to reach out to the FBI UCR Program about NIBRS. We do have a website, and that site is listed. We also have an email address. If you have questions or anything that you want to provide back to us as far as feedback or any concerns that you want to express, you can use that email address. You can call us at the phone number listed. And then I also provided contact information for our training staff as—it's a phone number and an email. So feel free to use any of those methods of communication if you would need to reach out to the FBI. Thank you. I'm going to turn it over to my colleague at BJS, Kimberly Martin.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: Thank you, Drema. Good afternoon, everyone. My name's Kimberly Martin, I'm a statistician at BJS. As Erica mentioned earlier, I work with her in the law—in Law Enforcement Incident-Based Statistics Unit. I'm going to be talking today about a couple of things Drema mentioned, but I want to elaborate on a few of those issues.

Just wanted to give an overview of the National Crime Statistics Exchange Program that BJS spearheaded in partnership with CJIS, just briefly kind of talk about the ways that our focus on reporting and transitioning are a little bit different, considering the context within which we use the data for statistical reports. So I want to talk about that for a few minutes and then discuss the efforts that we have ongoing at BJS that speak to these issues that we said we would cover today.

You know, how are we assisting agencies in transitioning to NIBRS? How are we using the data? And then what kind of playbook can we come up with to help agencies and states answer some of the questions that they have been putting to us for the last 2 years, which is, how do we report out crime rates using the NIBRS data, because now there's so many data elements and now there's over 50 different offenses that they could report out on. How should we calculate crime rates? You know, can we—you know, what can we treat as a reliable unit of analysis when we're using NIBRS data?

Should it be at the agency level, the state level, or should we only look at the national level? Those are the types of questions that we've been getting. And because NIBRS, in terms of being the basis for statistical data collection at the federal level, it is still relatively new, believe it or not, even though we've been talking about it since the '80s.

So I'm going to talk a little bit about what BJS has been doing on that front for the last couple of years. So as you all know, January 2021 was the deadline to transition to NIBRS. And BJS's role in this effort started back really in earnest in 2015, when we started fielding solicitations to support states and agencies as they transition to NIBRS. So that was our first goal, was to provide that technical assistance and that support, financial—both—and technical.

But then we're really sort of starting to get into the other piece, the phase two of our goals for NCS-X, which is that we've got to take the data and, you know, we got an increasing amount of data coming in. Drema just showed you the highlights on the transition status as of 2022. You know, now that we've got this transition and it's moving along well and we've got almost two-thirds of the country, you know, reporting NIBRS data, the pressing question is, how do we develop methodologies and procedures to both produce these estimates, you know, for states, regions, at the national level when we don't have everyone reporting? And then what are some of the considerations that we have had to wrestle with for how to use these data and can those considerations and what we've been trying to do with it provide some lessons or some guidance for, you know, our other stakeholders, especially state SACs, state UCR programs, researchers at the federal level? We want to be able to kind of share those experiences to inform how others might want to use the data.

So I'm going to touch just briefly on a few NIBRS coverage and transition status points, kind of to piggyback off of Drema. And then the bulk of what I want to talk about this afternoon is what we can learn from NIBRS in terms of the types of data elements, coverage that it provides, how we're using the NIBRS data at the state level or so-called full reporter states, issues that we are working through right now in terms of how to standardize a structure or a template for ways that you can display the NIBRS data. And I've got examples from topical base reports that I'm going to discuss today on topics of sexual assault, robbery. If we have time, we have some firearm victimization examples that we can provide. But essentially, it's a guide to understanding what are the key points, data elements from the NIBRS data that you could pull out to leverage for your own state, your own law enforcement agency.

And then I want to review some of the tools that I've been trying—that we've been trying to develop at BJS to support the NIBRS data analysis. And when I say support, I mean

support in terms of showing people, demonstrating visually what they can do with the data. But a key centerpiece of what we're trying to do is to make the data much more accessible to the public. And we want to do it in a way that's very fast and [INDISTINCT] you can go into a data visualization and analysis tool online, you can generate visual graphs of your [INDISTINCT] you can generate crosstabulations [INDISTINCT] all of these things in development [INDISTINCT] abstracts, so you're going to see some examples, some early, I guess, mockups of what that looks like as we are wrapping up the development phase and getting ready to roll this product out. So that's the one caveat I would put on today's talk is that a lot of this is still in development.

So the first thing I want to touch on is what can the data tell us, and one of the common issues that we have had to wrestle with is that the way that these data are submitted and structured does kind of lend itself to some data quality issues that we have had to wrestle with. How the data get reported from the local law enforcement agency to the state and then to the federal level will impact, you know, for example, data quality and completeness in terms of the data elements that they complete. You know, the reported crime incident is reported by, you know, the community, let's say, a victim or someone in the community, a third party reports it or an officer. And then it gets filtered down to questions of was an incident founded? Was a report even taken? All of those are things that we can't see, right, at our level, at the federal level. We currently have no flag for incidents that are unfounded in NIBRS.

And so this is how the data gets ingested. We take essentially everything you see in that second box, the data recorded in the law enforcement's records management system. That all gets recorded at the local level and all these follow-up investigation findings, arrest clearance information, any additional outcomes, let's say for example, an injury becomes a homicide, all of those then get updated on that record after the fact. And so there's really a process that, you know, you have to appreciate that's happening behind the scenes that generates these data.

And so essentially, it's a stream from the local law enforcement agencies, including tribal, up to the state unit—state Uniform Crime Reporting program and then that pipeline, that local data pipeline, then goes to its final destination, which is the FBI's UCR Program. And this is part of the reason why it does take a little bit of lag time between when crime incidents are reported and when we do see them at the federal level. Some of the considerations that we have in using the data for statistical purposes has to do, obviously, with this coverage. And Drema touched on this already, you know, that we went—she went all the way back to 2016. But I mean, just looking from 2018, when we had 43% of agencies reporting. By 2020, it was up to 57%.

The key, though, is that not all of those agencies are created equally, right? What we're focusing on at BJS and also FBI's CJIS is that we've got to get those agencies in the U.S. that make up a disproportionate share of the crime in the country. So in NCS-X, one of our centerpieces, our focus, is on getting the 72 largest agencies in the U.S. to transition. In some states, we are so close to calling that state a full reporter state, for example. And this really touches back on that piece, you know, a couple of slides ago, where I said, "What happens at the local does greatly impact the data quality at the federal level."

You know, one example I can give, and the best way to talk about this—I'm sorry. I hope everyone is comfortable with this. It's just conversationally, you know, I've got one NCS-X grantee, it's one of the largest agencies in the Midwest. The state is a NIBRS-only state. And it's a state that is so close, but they still have three data elements that are required in NIBRS and they—four data elements that they do not collect. And as a result, that one agency has kept its entire state out of our ability to include them in reports as a full reporter state. It limits our ability to calculate crime rates for that state.

So, and this was also the case for one of my grantees I wrapped up last year, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, you know. These agencies, these large agencies, you know—Las Vegas is a pretty extreme example. They make up over 80% of all crime reported in Nevada, but it kind of illustrates the point. It's the local that really drives what we're seeing at the federal level. And so we've got a few large agencies that have collected, you know, almost all the required data elements for NIBRS but not quite enough to get certified. And so we have a heavy push, you know, to help provide support, financial, technical assistance, others to these agencies.

So far, where we are with these 72 largest agencies is, we've got 40 that will have a full year of data in 2021, which is fantastic. And then another 13 are going to provide 6 to 11 months of data in 2021. Add those two together, we've got about 53 of the largest law enforcement agencies in the country, for which we have data to estimate crime, victimization, arrest rates, on some level, right? We have some data to work with. But, you know, the example that I mentioned earlier about the large Midwestern agency, it's really is the crux of the challenge facing us that we can transition, you know, four hundred agencies within the state, but without that one, a large urban agency that generates a large proportion of crime for that state, it really does challenge our ability to generate crime rates. And then you start getting into issues like breaks in series and things like that.

So I just don't want to lose sight of the fact that we are still in the transition push, you know, despite all of our success. We've got 53 large—of the largest agencies in the

U.S. who we'll have data for. But that still leaves another 19, so 8 and 11 down here, for which we will not have sufficient data to provide estimates on. And this also varies by region. This is a little bit of a busy chart, but the main point is that the purple—the purple parts of the bar that you see right here are agencies that are non-reporters. And that percentage is higher in the Northeast. You know, so what—the point, and this will be a theme that kind of runs throughout today's discussion, is that what we see at the national level is essential. It's a centerpiece of the NCS-X goals, you know, our initiative to come up with national estimates of crime. But I can't stress it enough that the coverage, even though nationally it is improving, it is not equal across states, across regions. You know, the regions with the highest rates of NIBRS reporting right now are the Midwest and the South, and it's lowest in the Northeast. So we still have some work to do in that area.

One big challenge we have, is that we've got some very large agencies in the Northeast that have still not yet transitioned to NIBRS, and that is driving that overall rate. Those agencies include ones like, you know, New York City Police. We are also working extensively with the New York State—the New York State Police. Some of those large agencies are still in the process of onboarding.

So in 2018, we went from about 22 states that had 80% or more of their agencies reporting NIBRS. And then in 2021, these are some additional states, you see in the right-hand column in blue, that will be part of what we would be or what we would consider to be a state with reliable data to help us estimate crime. Texas is a big addition, you can see over here on this right-hand column. Some of these other states have actually been NIBRS reporters for some time, such as Utah and Wisconsin.

So why are we doing all of this? It is a lot of work. It's been years of technical assistance, solicitations, grant management, working with agencies to get over the—get—you know, get through that 2021 deadline, and we're still doing that work. But we are pivoting now to phase two, a heavier focus on estimating crime and a heavier focus on demonstrating what we can do with these data, what can it—how can it benefit both the public, researchers, the federal government, but also how can it benefit local law enforcement? And especially how can it benefit the states that, you know, submit all this data to us? And we really have narrowed it down into three, you know, thematic areas.

You know, NIBRS adds value to our understanding of crime and victimization in several ways that we haven't had the luxury of having before. So community and geography is a big one. We're able to use these data down to the ORI level, which can sometimes correspond with a large city's jurisdiction. How can we get down to the city level or the

county level and look at the nature of victimization, victim characteristics, how these things vary across communities and states?

We can finally now look at data at the ORI level—and when I say ORI, I mean, the police department level. So let's say, you know, Atlanta, Georgia, is one of our new NIBRS reporters, I can now go down to the city of Atlanta level and examine how crime and victimization trends and patterns may vary quite substantially compared to what it looks like in say, Charlotte, North Carolina, or Jacksonville, Florida, some other large cities in the Southeast region. We had that ability to—before with the Summary Crime Reporting program, but not the ability to understand how risks and victimization may vary, let's say, as a function of where you live exactly or your characteristics. And that is something that we've come to appreciate the more that we've delved into the data, and I'm going to provide some examples of how we're doing those comparisons across communities.

And then we also want to use the NIBRS data in a way that we didn't have the luxury of having before, which is we can now examine more clearly equity and patterns in justice system outputs. So when I say justice system outputs, I'm talking about police clearance of crime, arrests. How do those patterns, you know, the frequency or the likelihood of a case being cleared, otherwise solved, and resulting in an arrest? How does it vary by the type of crime? You know, how does it vary by location? With NIBRS, we now have the ability to take those justice system outputs and actually connect it to the specific incident that occurred so that we can understand how the police response to crime or the probability that an arrest is made, varies by, let's say, your age or your race as a victim, or where your case was recorded by law enforcement.

And then we can use the NIBRS data to get some leverage and get some understanding on the variety of offense and victims type—victim types. It's a good problem to have. I argue we are overwhelmed, I think sometimes, with the amount of data elements and possibilities for ways you can use the data in NIBRS. So there is a lot there, which kind of is part of the reason why we're here today. We are kind of working through the different ways we can use the data. And so we do have a much wider array of victimization types, and even victim types, which is another issue I'm going to touch on briefly today.

We now have things like federal offenses in there, human trafficking, where we can get really specific victim characteristics. We now have a much wider array of our ability to define crimes, not by necessarily the name of the offense, but by combining the offense characteristics with, let's say, the victim characteristics, and that's where maybe your hate crime data comes in. We now have our richest array of law enforcement-generated

firearm victimization data. These are the types of things that we can now do with NIBRS. We now have much more clear data on kidnapping, again, thanks to NIBRS. But it does beg questions of, well what—how should we define serious violent crime, right? That definition is now changed because we have an additional array of offenses we can examine.

And then we've got now with NIBRS a lot of non-person victims of crime. And I'm going to talk about that briefly when I talk about robbery. We've now got crimes against financial institutions, governments, places of worship, commercial establishments. And we had those before, but here with NIBRS, we have a wider array of victim types, it's not just persons. And we have the ability to see how patterns and levels in crime may vary as a function of who those victims are. So if it's a financial institution or a commercial establishment versus an individual victim of crime.

All of these considerations we had to take into account when working with the data and deciding what the most useful ways for displaying it and making it available to the public are. One of the ways now that we—since we don't have national-level data, we still had to start delving into these questions, you know, what are the most useful ways that we can make an impact with these data to tell a story about, let's say, hate crime or sexual violence or, you know, child victims of assault, something like that. We weren't able to calculate rates because we didn't have national coverage for NIBRS, so we started working with the data first at the state level. And we started pinpointing those states that I mentioned earlier, the ones that have over 80% of their—of their agencies reporting. And we selected states that in 2019 and 2020, it's our most recent work, we selected states that had a coverage—a population covered, okay, by NIBRS reporting agencies of about 90%. So in states for which 90% of the resident population was served by a law enforcement agency that submits NIBRS data, we consider that to be, quote, "a self-representative state, a full reporter." And we treated the NIBRS data as if it was essentially an enumeration of crimes that occurred in that area for that year in that state.

And so we started to look—you know, we've been putting the data out there. We've been working with some stakeholders to do projects with the data. We obviously do webinars. We do trainings on how to use the data. And there are certain questions that we've been asked repeatedly. And so this is something that we have kind of taken on at BJS as a mission of ours, and it's to speak to our stakeholders about these considerations on using the data and maybe developing some best practices.

We have a partnership right now that I've recently started with the Justice Research Statistics Association where we're really trying to get that message out to our state stakeholders as well, the folks who actually provide this data. And some of the common

questions we've been getting are, you know, how do we define violent crime? You know, with the summary program, we knew that we had a certain number of offenses and they were always grouped together as violent crimes. You know, that changes with NIBRS. How do we calculate rates? What do we use for a population? We've gotten that from a lot of state programs, and also their SACs, their Statistical Analysis Centers.

And one example I'm going to provide today is just a brief discussion about how we've wrestled with that issue with robbery, a crime for which you can have multiple types of victims. And that complicates how you might calculate a rate and what you might choose to say your population is.

And then the other question we get most often is, is there some sort of standardized display we should adopt when presenting this array of IBR statistics? Should we—you know, a lot of states have asked themselves, "Well, should we just roll our NIBRS up to summary?" And the BJS answer is, "You know, we hope not." We understand, obviously, you don't want a break in the series. That kind of goes without saying, but we really want to start motivating and, you know, agencies, states, to display the data in a more creative way, to really flex what the dataset can do. You know, just—don't just show, for example, aggravated assault. Show aggravated assaults with a firearm perhaps, you know. You could start there. These are the types of questions we've been getting repeatedly for the last couple of years.

And so we started back in 2016 and '17, trying to really dive into the data and figure out what it is that we could really pull out of there. You know, how many—well, we did a study on multiple-offense incidents, basically. We went into NIBRS and we tried to understand how much are we capturing in an incident. And what we discovered was that there—most agencies have single-offense incidents. You know, they're fairly, fairly straightforward about 90—I would say 89% of all incidents have a single offense and a single victim. That made things easier. That's this red line up here. And we discovered that, right here, the number of percentage of incidents with single and multiple offenses, even if there are more than one offense, that's only about—the vast majority of those. I'm looking on this second row where it says "two offenses." About 10% of all incidents have more than one crime, and it's really just one additional offense.

So that was the first question we kind of had to ask ourselves is, how often are we capturing incident-based data with multiple victims, multiple crime types? Obviously, that increases the complexity of the data analysis with NIBRS. And we've been getting a lot of questions from folks, you know, should we even present rates of crime using NIBRS at the incident level? Or should we do it at the victimization level? That was why we embarked on this sort of initial exploratory analysis. And these tables are from a

report that we published in 2017 or ’16 or, I’m sorry, 2018. And it’s about multiple-offense incidents. And this report is available on the IACP, the International Association of Chiefs of Police website. They have an NCS-X resource page where you can find this and download this analysis.

And then the other question that we asked ourselves too is, you know, when we do have multiple-offense incidents in NIBRS, what are we dealing with? Are we dealing with incidents where there’s multiple Part I crimes, Part I, borrowing some language back from the summary days. And what we found was that the vast majority of multiple-offense incidents it’s just—it’s a Part I offense with a non-Part I offense in NIBRS. So the vast majority of incidents are not, you know, an incident where there’s two, three, you know, Part I crimes happening. We pick up a lot of these multiple incidents—multiple-offense incidents because it’s a serious crime co-occurring with a less serious crime.

And so once we kind of got a handle on the data in that way, we started exploring ways for displaying the NIBRS data. And the best way for us to figure this, you know, we’ve got our technical data quality work that you’re going to hear more about on Thursday with Marcus Berzofsky from RTI. He’s going to talk about coverage and how we’re generating estimates, you know, the processes for exploring the quality of the data and developing processes for estimating and doing imputation and those sorts of things.

What we’ve been doing on our end is much more thematic and sort of more about subject matter issues that you can examine with the NIBRS data. And so we decided to dive in and start publishing using two—well, two things. One, we wanted to demonstrate that you could put out a report with the data on a substantive topical issue, in this case it’s sexual assault victimization across U.S. states. We wanted to demonstrate that you could use the data to calculate rates in a much more very diverse way than you could with the Summary Reporting program, and you’ll see that. And then the third goal was to demonstrate that not only do we take NIBRS and understand what’s going on, you know, we can—we can use these data elements to develop a more rich, complete picture of crime and victimization, but the key that we wanted to provide people was the ability to compare those things across states and the ability to do all this relatively quickly and in an interactive way. And that speaks to what Erica mentioned earlier, which is that we are trying to modernize the platform by which we get this information out there.

And so what we developed in our unit, and this started, honestly, years ago, it’s—I’m sitting here and I can’t believe how long it’s been. We didn’t—we started this around four years ago, trying to develop this platform for online interactive, statistical reports.

And we launched it with this, the Sexual Assaults Recorded by Law Enforcement report. It is available on the BJS website. And I don't link to it here, but here's the link right here, and these slides will be made available afterwards. But the—what I wanted to demonstrate here, and I can—I can do a separate demo of this report. There's not enough time to do it today, but the whole point of the report was to provide a way for users to go in, click on specific NIBRS states, and drill down, one at a time, into statistics on, you know, really rich statistics on victimization and offending and clearance.

And although I don't have time to go through the whole report today, a couple of things I want to highlight that show the value of NIBRS. We were able to produce this report and look at sexual assault victimizations for children of all ages, which was very important to us. We—one of the greatest, most valuable resources we have at BJS is the National Crime Victimization Survey. It has informed so much of what we know about sexual assault, including data quality work at the federal level on sexual assault and how to measure it. But we weren't able to get sexual assault statistics for children under 12, and we knew that that was a particularly vulnerable group. And so we specifically chose this topic for our first report, our first real special topics report on the NIBRS data.

And we were able to measure sexual assault in a slightly more broad way—well, not necessarily broad but in a more granular way. The FBI does have a revised definition of rape and sexual assault. And it is—it consists of rape, sodomy, and sexual assault with an object. We also have the crime of fondling, which is considered a violent person crime in the—in NIBRS. And so we were—we were able to look at sexual assault more broadly but also to look at patterns of victimization and how they vary by those specific sex—sexual assault offense types, and then to make jurisdictional comparisons. And it was interesting.

I'm going to show you what this looks like in terms of the interface. You can just go onto the BJS website and find this report. It provides two years of data, you can look at 2015, or we have a little button up here that you don't see where you can toggle and go to 2019. And you can click on a state and just sort of drive yourself through this report. And it's all interactive. So you can click on each of these dots and get definitions, you can click here and go to methodology, you can change your years up here, which then all also regenerates a new set of states, since our states are growing each year with NIBRS.

And what's really valuable here is, this is a side-by-side display of what these reports look like for—and I just picked these states randomly, for Tennessee and for Michigan. And you can see the value of comparing across states here. Both Michigan and

Tennessee have about the same response rate. It's very, very high. I believe it's around 99%—98% of agencies reporting in both of these states, and they have a long history of submitting NIBRS data, so neither one of these are considered new NIBRS states. But what's striking is that while there are some things that do vary considerably across places, you know, when it comes to crime, and you'll see that here, there are other statistics that are, honestly, surprisingly enduring. And they do not vary across places, and I'm going to kind of highlight what those are. We were able to learn a lot more about this data by being able to analyze the data on the fly like this. It was actually quite—it was really effective.

And so here's an example of why it's important to really look at these statistics. Remember, it's a standardized federal database, but these things, these phenomena do vary. So for example, about 12% of all violent victimizations involved a sexual assault in the State of Tennessee in 2019. But it was 25% in Michigan, a quarter of all violent crime. And when I say violent victimizations, it's another important consideration that we get asked about a lot. That percentage does not include simple assaults. We removed simple assaults from our definition of violent victimization for this report, and we narrowed it down to what we consider serious violent crime. All violent crime is serious, but we're talking about ones that are aggravated assaults, rape, sexual assault, kidnapping, homicide, robbery, manslaughter, you know, those types of things.

When you include simple assault, and we have had agencies do this, we've had them calculate a crime rate where they took every crime in NIBRS and they added it into their numerator and put it over their population and that was their crime rate. That is not something we would necessarily advocate for. We would—we would advocate for doing something a little more granular, where you would compare, let's say, a definition of violent crime that maybe excludes simple assaults. Or we would agree on something that, you know, serious violent crime. That would be an example of that or making comparisons across certain crime types like robbery, sexual assault, and homicide.

But this is why we started doing these types of reports is to kind of speak to this issue of how do we define violent victimization? What should we be presenting statistics on? So yeah, it makes up a, you know, sexual assault makes up a significant chunk of all serious violent crime in Michigan, a quarter of it. That's quite—it's about double what it is in Tennessee. Similarly, you see a rate that—for something in Michigan that is higher in Tennessee. So there were 78.9 sexual assault victimizations per 100,000 persons in the State of Tennessee. And the rate was four times higher for children under age 18 than for adults. That rate was seven times higher for children, the rate of sexual assault in Michigan, seven times higher than it was for adults. So, you see that the patterns are similar. The risk is much higher for young children. Well, you'll see just how young in

just a second, but it's higher, considerably higher for children. But that risk is much higher, the magnitude is much higher in Michigan than it is in Tennessee.

And here, we were able to create a platform. And here the platform is a—it's mostly JavaScript, but you could do this type of report in lots of platforms. You could use Tableau to autogenerate these, you could use a platform like the SAS Viya platform. They're both very similar, and they are beautiful, and they are very easy and user-friendly to work with. And that is something that we are—we are now gradually rolling out at BJS. We have access to Tableau now. All the mapping software we want, it's really nice, and we're able to take these large, more complex datasets like NIBRS and quickly distill them into something you can compare side-by-side with a click of a button really.

And so here's one example of your ability to do that now as a data user. These are—these two graphs are from the 2019 sexual assault victimization report. And like I mentioned earlier, certain statistics we found with NIBRS are just enduring, and they are stat—I mean, it just doesn't vary depending, you know, across these states. And this is one of those examples. We find that children under the age of 14 are at the highest risk, no matter what state we examine. And that was true for every state in the report, all 20 states that we looked at for 2019, the graph looks just like this. The magnitude may vary, the magnitude of the difference, but in every state, the risk was highest for children 13 and under.

And we provided user accessibility to change this graph on the fly. You can now examine how this age break out, the percentage of victimizations by victim-offender relationship; the type of sex offense, if it's fondling versus rape versus sodomy; and the sex of the victim. Used to, this type of analysis would have taken us quite a while and that's if my computer didn't crash, quite honestly. The NIBRS data are a lot of data. I mean, just in 2016, you know, when we analyze the frequency and presence of multiple-offense incidents in NIBRS, that analysis was done even in 2016, we had over, gosh, almost six million cases. You can only imagine how that's exponentially grown in 2019 and 2020. What we are hoping is that this provides users a quick way, you know, without worrying about load issues, you know, lags, anything like that, you can go in, you can look at these data, click on all of these, and then we even have a functionality where you can download the CSVs. You can click to get a table instead of a chart if you like, and you can create your own charts.

The next step that we're working on, and actually I'll talk about it right after this, is to take, you know, go to the next level and provide people access like this to raw data. By raw data, I mean data that hasn't been already put into a table or a chart. And I can talk

a little bit about that and what our extract file process looks like because these reports right here, I should mention, were all created using what we call the BJS NIBRS extract files. Up until 2016, those were housed at the University of Michigan, at their archives. We have since updated those extract files. We now have 2017, ’18, ’19, and ’20 completed. And we are going to be discussing the process for rolling those out and releasing them. And we are offering a webinar in the month of March to talk about how those extract files are created and to talk about potential ways that BJS can release those to the public. Our goal is to get these data out there and get them in a—in a format that is just right for public consumption. We want people using these data but doing it in a way where they have guidance and doing it in a way where it’s clear that there are certain considerations that should be taken before you just roll out of bed and start analyzing the NIBRS data.

Here is one other example that I wanted to touch on from the sex assault report. I mentioned earlier that one of the key advantages of the NIBRS data is that, for the first time, we’re able to take police arrest and clearance information, which we had under the summary program, and connect it to a specific incident and a specific victim and, you know, a specific offender. We can, for example, quickly ascertain, and again, this is—we’ve got multiple ways of looking at the data but if you look at this slide right here, us—this was one of the first times we realized, pretty much for almost every state that we included in this report, that no violent crime is cleared less frequency than sexual assault. Now, that’s not true in every state, but overall that is—that is the case.

We find this mainly for sexual assault and robbery. The robbery piece is probably not that surprising for many folks. But for sexual assault, where the vast majority, vast majority, we found that, you know, 89% of victims, I think it was. They know the offender in a sexual assault incident. And yet the ability to clear these by arrest is stunningly—it’s just infrequent, it really is. In the vast majority of states, sexual assaults were the least likely to be cleared, compared to all other violent crimes, including less than robbery. We really didn’t have a good grasp on that, either at the state level, and—or really the federal level, until we started really taking these deep dives into the data. And so this has helped guide us towards some additional questions, you know, that we’re going to start looking at with the data, especially the clearance issues.

So this is just one example of this platform. We have since updated it, I should mention before I go much further. We’re now looking at robbery. And we’re also doing some work on firearm victimization. And you know, I’m looking at the time. Obviously, I need to stop talking soon, so I’m going to keep going. But we—these issues I can—I can—you know, if anybody has questions, I can talk about what these look like when it comes to robbery and how we calculated rates for robbery. We ended up calculating rates only

for individual victims. We took commercial establishment victims out of our robbery report. And I can talk about that, hopefully, after the report is released.

Here are some resources for law enforcement and community leaders. And again, these resources will be posted on the BJS website with these links. One of the key things that we put out early on, before we even really got into the nuts and bolts of how to put out an annual crime report with a lot of our agencies and states, was just how do we talk about NIBRS. States were really worried that their crime rate would increase. Most—the worry was, I think, mostly centered on large local—large local law enforcement agencies. And so we have some talking points, ways of communicating to stakeholders that we have developed for agencies.

And so I'm just, in the—in the interest of time, I'm just going to skip to this right here. And this is just a brief overview of a new resource that we are developing. It's under the review process right now at BJS. It's our NIBRS Data Dashboard. And it's an online data analytics platform. We built ours with Tableau, and then we customized it with the use of some JavaScript. But the whole goal here is for people to be able to see the data, to visualize it. We want to, basically, get this out there for the public in ways that they can grasp it and use the data. We want to make it much more user-friendly. And we want to start taking this crime data and not just visually displaying it at the local or state or national level.

We have a special room in—we call it a room, we call the dashboard almost like our house, and there's different rooms in the house. And one of those is a piece, a separate room where we're going to have contextual data that we link to the NIBRS crime data. And one example that I'm working with now, and the reason why we want to add these contextual data, when we back up and say contextual data are things like Census data, that describe these cities or the states from which these crime data are generated. So for example, if I was to analyze crime for Las Vegas, or for the State of Nevada, I would have in this dashboard, key—first of all, shake files to map the data, map crime data for Nevada, and I would have the ability to link up Census data to different jurisdictions in Nevada and for Nevada as a whole in this dashboard.

And right here is just one example of one of the contextual indicators that we are working towards incorporating in our dashboard. It's fairly new. It's called the Community Resilience Estimates. It's from Census. I encourage anybody to who is interested to go down there and check it out. But it looks at a whole host of indicators of community resilience. The focus here is that we want to help provide some socio—no, some structural data in terms of population dynamics, housing, employment, poverty, all those types of indicators, urbanization, you know, the percentage of communities that

are rural for a state. We want to combine all of that with the crime data so that people can start to understand crime statistics in context. And that was a call that we got from law enforcement executives as part of an initiative BJS was—BJS spearheaded called the Crime Indicators Working Group.

This is just a brief snapshot of what the homepage for the dashboard looks like right now. We have a data visualization and analysis room. These are placeholders, by the way, I should—I should mention that. These NIBRS reporters, this is a coverage library, kind of a methodological library, where you can go in and look up ORIs to see if they're reporting. You can generate graphs showing trends in coverage of NIBRS in here. And this is the contextual data room. This is where all the Census data that you can append to these agencies, cities, counties, states, that's where it's going to sit right here.

Now, within this data visualization room, you've got all of this across here. Again, this has actually changed since this was pasted, it looks different now. But what I want to highlight over here is all the way to the right of the screen, under the header of "methodology," you'll see a little column that says "analytics on demand." And that is where you can go in, and you can do crosstabs, you've got a crime rate generator. These are our largest agencies that you see with the stars right here, you can just click on that, pull up an agency—that's probably going to be Denver, right around here in Colorado—and you can pull up crime statistics for Denver, and just click on that, and you can compare it to another agency if you want.

Here's an example of an area in the dashboard with which we can calculate actual crime rates because we've got the coverage to do it. This is the State of Virginia, a long-time NIBRS reporter. We're able to go into the dashboard and create rates for all of the communities in Virginia and for Virginia overall. So, and it's done on the fly. It's really quite nice. This is just a generic crosstab that you can see. Again, this is still in development. We're going to make it pretty. But these are incidents, you know, by age, by relationship, it's just the counts of sex offenses for this particular state. And it's Virginia, actually. And you can see all your filters down here at the bottom of that table.

And here, you can see where you can use the crosstab "analytics on demand" function to generate counts of assault and sex crimes for Montana, North Dakota, Virginia, you know, for 2018. And you could do this for multiple years. And then you can download it. Up here on the right, you can see that you can set your crosstab. You can turn it into a rate. You could turn it into a map. All of these options are going to be available for users.

And I know that we are short on time. So I'm sorry. I went through that very quickly. Erica, I will go ahead and wrap it up. I see we're at 1:54. So there is a lot BJS has that they want to show everyone. Maybe too much for one webinar. But with that—I know we only have a few more minutes left. Erica, I can turn it over to questions and answers if you want to go ahead and go to that.

ERICA SMITH: Yes. I have been doing my best to monitor the Q&A and also go back to the chat where applicable. And I've answered a number of the questions in the Q&A box, and I—it looks like most folks have kept up with me. But there are a few things that I thought might be better to respond to verbally rather than trying to type something out.

So let me go over my notes here of some of the questions that were asked. So Kim or Drema, I'm not sure who is best to field this. Maybe, Drema, I'll turn this over to you. One of the questions came from the Nevada Department of Corrections. "Do non-person victims include cybercrimes?" Could you speak to that a little bit, specifically regarding how cybercrimes are measured in NIBRS?

DREMA FOUCH: So right now for cybercrimes, we have two particular offenses that folks can use to report those types of crimes, and that's identity theft and computer hacking and computer invasion, and those can be non-person crimes. You can report "victim other than individual" because it is considered property crimes. So, right now, that's really the only two offenses that we have that would even be considered cyber and you can have a non-individual as your victim type.

ERICA SMITH: Thank you, Drema. I appreciate that. And is—can I ask also, just following up on this cybercrime piece, that's with the location—is there still a location code for cyberspace? Is that how folks might also be able to indicate that something—that one of the offenses was cyber-related?

DREMA FOUCH: That's correct. We do have that location type of cyberspace. And those two offenses are the only two offenses you can use that location type with.

ERICA SMITH: Understood. Great. Thank you for that clarification. I appreciate it.

DREMA FOUCH: You're welcome.

ERICA SMITH: Another one of the questions has to do with the accuracy of the NIBRS data. So there was a comment and then a follow-up question made about how—there might not have been great awareness that agencies and states were not reporting to NIBRS over all these years. And the question was whether that called into question the

accuracy of the NIBRS data. I may actually try to field that one verbally and see maybe—Marcus Berzofsky is also on the line. He is heading up the estimation efforts that the FBI and BJS are engaged in. He is with RTI International. So, Marcus, if you have anything to add here too, please feel free to jump in after I give an initial response.

I think really what we have had—we had a lag, I guess I would call it, in NIBRS reporting until we began—the FBI and BJS began this push to get more agencies on board back in 2015. So BJS started working directly—started making grants, I should say, directly to state UCR programs in fiscal year 2015. And then it was starting in fiscal year '16, that the FBI partnered with us in that particular grant-making effort both to state agencies and to local law enforcement agencies. So it is true that if you went back and used sort of the, quote unquote, "old data", it would be much more difficult to generate, and maybe not even possible to generate, national estimates of crime based on NIBRS data then. But the landscape that we're seeing now and the total number of agencies that have transitioned as of that 2021 data year and have enough data, I guess it should say, that over 6 months or more of data reported to NIBRS for 2021, that will—that will facilitate us being able to generate those national estimates and state estimates as well for the majority of states.

So, Marcus, is there anything that you would add to that in terms of concerns about the accuracy of the data, any of the data quality work that you all have done that you might want to mention?

MARCUS BERZOFSKY: Yeah. I mean, I would just say, prior to, say, 2020, I mean, I think there might be some concerns that the states and agencies that reported NIBRS versus those that didn't were just very different. And so creating national estimates from those earlier years is a little tricky because of those differences and being able to account for those differences. So that's one big difference. And then, secondly, just the—while there's—you know, because NIBRS produces, you know, has information on so many—so much detailed characteristics, you know, whether or not there's enough information to generate national estimates for some of those very detailed characteristics is also in question.

But I think, as Erica was saying, you know, with the push to get people to transition, you really started seeing in 2019 and then certainly 2020 and now 2021 data year, which we'll—which we will—which we will produce national estimates, you are seeing a large shift both across—you know, all states and, you know, all agency types, large and small, that is now affording us the ability to create those national estimates. So I think—anyway, so meaning, I think it is possible now how far back that you can do that though, I think, you know—you know, I think is in question and something, you know, we haven't

totally delved into. But prior to 2020, I'd probably say it's a little shaky to create national, what I would call representative national estimates using NIBRS alone.

ERICA SMITH: Thanks, Marcus. Another question came in about the ability to report more than one offense in an incident, so I think this was teed up as Kim was presenting, on the findings from the BJS work on multiple-offense incidents. There was a mention that in Georgia, the Georgia—I'm not sure if it's the Georgia state specification or if it's something different, but I've—ultimately, I think that that distinction may not necessarily matter. That agencies are only allowed to report the most serious felony offense in an incident. Only one, even when there are multiple and equally serious offenses. So the question was, "Does that skew the data for Georgia compared to data from other states that allow reporting of the multiple-offense incidents in a—or multiple offenses in an incident in a different way?" Kim, did you want to speak to that, you know, especially specifically related to the findings from the MOI report regarding the number—the percentage of cases, incidents that involve multiple Part I offenses?

KIMBERLY MARTIN: Uh-hmm. Yes. If I—if I—some of it broke up a little bit during the—because of my internet, but if I understand the question correctly, Georgia is not—Erica, this is the part where I—I kind of—you broke up a little bit for me. So Georgia is—

ERICA SMITH: Sure.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: —recording the number of offenses in an incident differently?

ERICA SMITH: Yes. So the information in the Q&A indicated that Georgia only allows agencies to report the most serious felony even when there are multiple and equally serious felony offenses in an incident.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: Wow. Okay. So I will let Drema speak to one part of that. I'll let Drema speak to you what that means in terms of the FBI's technical specifications for how that should be handled. From a statistical standpoint on the BJS side, the most I could say is, you know, from the MOI—I shouldn't keep saying MOI. MOI simply stands for multiple-offense incidents. Our analysis of multiple-offense incidents from—and we've continued to look at this issue. I have, since 2016—has shown no real growth in the number of incidents we have where there's more than one, you know, violent crime that occurred. It's about 1% of all incidents have an additional co-occurring serious—what we would call serious crime is defined by the Part I offense. It's using the old summary role.

Only about 1% of, I think, around six million incidents had more than one Part I crime, so it's pretty rare. But that is only as reliable a statistic as—I mean, I don't know of any other states that are recording their incidents that way. But I can tell you simply what the data says, and the data that I have looked at does not indicate that there are a significant portion of incidents that have multiple serious violent crimes. Most MOI incidents are against one victim, not more than one victim, and it's a serious crime coupled with something else. So it could be like a robbery and possession of maybe drugs or drug paraphernalia, something like that. That is what I see in the data. I mean, in terms of how Georgia is doing that—I would like to put that piece of it to Drema, if that's okay. Drema, can you speak to that a little bit in terms of how Georgia is coding their incidents?

DREMA FOUCH: I can. And it appears from this question that Georgia is still applying the hierarchy where they only want the most serious offense reported, and that's not how NIBRS is structured. We allow up to 10 offenses per incident. We would not want a state to use that hierarchy any longer. The beauty of NIBRS is that you get all of that detail within that incident, and if there's multiple offenses, whether they be the more serious or the lesser serious crimes, we want to know about those. So it sounds as though Georgia may not have built their NIBRS to comply with the federal technical specification.

ERICA SMITH: Then, just to be clear, I believe that I asked the requestor, and that was Stacy. I asked her to follow up directly with me. So I will loop you guys in too when we have that conversation. So that was a good piece of information to have included in the Q&A, for sure, so we can understand a little bit more about what's going on and what the impact might be. There were some questions that came in right there at the end that I did not get an opportunity to respond to in the Q&A box, so we'll go ahead and do those verbally too.

So there is a request, I think it actually looks like, relative to the dashboard work that is being done. And I think this would also apply too—we didn't—we didn't speak about it, but the FBI also has their Crime Data Explorer, which offers a number different ways to not only visualize the data and interact with it, but then also to download data directly in, I think, several different formats as well. But the statement in the Q&A is—the request I think, "In addition to the dashboards and data visuals, the hope is that we will prioritize making the data available and flexible in usable ways, such as via APIs." And then there's, you know, an example of that. "The Census Bureau APIs have demonstrated the value in making those data available to third-party developers to build even more than a single agency can build." That's absolutely a hundred percent the case.

I just like to really—how—what Kim has been working on over the last couple of years. It is a big effort at BJS to put out a dashboard that is conceptualized to be quite as robust as the one that Kim has been working on for the last couple of years because we have historically not had a data infrastructure that supported it, and so she's had to systematically build that structure out with the support of others at BJS and within the Office of Justice Programs. So that's been a little bit of a delay, I would say, in actually bringing it out to the public. But we think that we're just about on the cusp of that, which is really great. And there definitely will be places in the dashboard where you would be able to customize data files and download them. There'll be API access to the data. And there might—I would guess there would actually be multiple cuts of the data that we would make available that way.

We're also looking at hosting, in some form or fashion, different data challenges for developers to actually be able to take the data and work with it. That's a little bit separate from the dashboard, but there's a lot that is forthcoming within this platform. And especially for researchers. We were—Kim was really keen on ensuring that there was a custom crosstabulation component to the dashboard where you could do some of your own on-the-fly data analyses and then also ensuring that there was a way to get access to the research files that we had developed for years and years and years, which are the NIBRS extract files. So a lot of that is a—it is—I do realize I say it's forthcoming still, but it really is forthcoming, imminently forthcoming, within the next several months. So hopefully that is helpful.

There's a question also from Bailey. "You mentioned the ability to link arrest and clearances to specific incidents and victims. Do the clearance data indicate what the ultimate charge ended up being, for example, a human trafficking charge and arrest might end up being cleared as pimping or pandering?" Kim, would you like to take that? You've done a lot of work looking at the clearance data in the files.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: I mean, it's tied to the arrest charge. Whatever that final—I'm sorry. Whatever the—so the question is about what they were arrested for and whether or not that marries up with the original offense? Is that correct?

ERICA SMITH: Yeah. Yep.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: I mean, we use the offense that is reported by the agency, whatever that final offense is. This is the part that's so difficult, right? Everything that happens at that local level makes its way up to the federal level. And if I'm being very honest, there's so much at the federal level that we just don't see. So, I mean, I will

readily admit that I have to reach out to my state—my state stakeholder sometimes to figure out those types of questions.

At the federal level, we take the data as it's reported by the agency for that incident, which they can update. The question is, do they, right? And we link that to the ultimate arrest outcome and that there is a—I won't say charge. There's an offense associated with that arrest outcome. And so if those two differ, I guess is that the question, which one do we go with or how do we account for if they change at all? I don't know how to account if they change at all, unless that record gets updated, which does happen.

ERICA SMITH: Yeah. And if I could add on to that too, I think that—there's two things I would add that. If the clearance is something other than an arrest, we would not—there would be no additional information. We would be forced to make an assumption that the clearance, an exceptional clearance, applies to the original offense in the incident filed.

And then the second thing I would say to that too is that if we—if we end up in a situation where we have a different arrest offense than what was—than the offense that was on the incident originally, I don't think that we have done an analysis like that. That would be a great idea. I don't—I think the confounding factor would be that—like a lot of times we know that if an arrest is made, then the characteristics of an arrestee are often—there's often an algorithm in the system that will automatically—in a local system that will automatically overwrite any other offender information. So if you had originally that the person had—was—the offender was male. I'm just going to try to come up with something noncontroversial. But that if the offender was male and it turns out ultimately that the person who was arrested was female, that female designation is going to be written back to the other parts of file.

So you're not often—depending on the location, you know, and what the practices are in that jurisdiction or that state, you may not be able to see those differences. So that might have been a little bit more information than you were looking for, but we have not actually done an analysis to see if there's a difference between initial offense and arrest offense. And that might be—that's something that would be worthwhile to undertake.

DREMA FOUCH: So, Erica, can I jump in?

ERICA SMITH: Absolutely.

DREMA FOUCH: So for the NIBRS at the national level, we do not collect information on what the person is ultimately charged with. There is an arrest offense code within the incident when an arrest is made. That offense code can be different from the offense

reported within the incident, but ultimately what that person may be charged with in the courts, we do not collect that information, so we would not have that.

ERICA SMITH: Yeah. And it's one of those things that would be great to facilitate through different means moving forward in the future, like how do we actually connect these NIBRS data then to what happens further down the line in the justice system? Definitely something that's of interest to both the FBI and BJS moving forward as well.

There's another question here about how do we manage the so-called dark figure of crime, when a victim doesn't report a violation? And then, additionally to that, whether there is any program that encourages victims to report and what—how do we account for any changes in the likelihood that people will report a victimization based on their belief of whether the police have the ability to solve the crime or not?

So let me start with the first piece about the dark figure of crime. BJS maintains the National Crime Victimization Survey, which does measure both reported and unreported victimizations in the community. So we do—that survey was actually developed specifically to try to understand the dark figure of crime. How much goes unreported? How does that vary by the type of victimization? How does that vary by characteristics of the incident, such as the relationship between the victim and the offender or where the incident took place, the severity of it, whether there were injuries? Those types of other indicators within an offense.

So we do maintain that information. We report all of that annually. The Department of Justice indicates that the data from the NCVS and the data from the UCR Program are the nation's two official measures of crime and that while they cannot be directly compared, they do provide, together, a much more holistic picture of crime and victimization in the country. So we do maintain that—report out on it annually. We also have special reports that we put out on certain subpopulations or different offense types. I mean, all that information is available on the BJS website.

I would say, regarding the third piece about whether people—whether the desire to report a victimization to the police is impacted by a victim's concern that the police won't be able to do anything about it, the NCVS data do also attempt to capture that with good details. So if a victim—if we are interviewing—if we are interviewing someone for the NCVS and they say they were a victim of a crime, we do ask them if they reported that crime to the police or another authority. They provide that information. And then if they did not report it to police, we ask follow-up questions about why they didn't report and some other detailed information. That's also available through the reports that we—that

we put out annually as well. So if that's a resource that folks are interested in, that's very easy to find on the BJS website.

And when it comes to programs that will encourage victims to report, I would say, we have—the federal government within the Office of Justice Programs has a pretty robust infrastructure set up to try to facilitate that reporting and the providing of services out to victims of crime across multiple different types and within multiple different fields, both through typical, sort of, more traditional criminal justice venues as well as social service venues and public health agencies as well.

Most of those programs are run through the Office for Victims of Crime, but the Office on Violence Against Women also does have a large program set up for all kinds of victims of crime. They have some targeted directly for domestic violence victims and elder abuse victims, but then they have other programs as well. So I would encourage folks, if you're interested in that, to check out the resources from those agencies because they do have a lot to offer.

Marcus, this one might be for you. There's a question about how will NIBRS estimates address any uncertainty due to missing and imputed data? Could I turn that over to you?

MARCUS BERZOFSKY: Sure. Sure. Yeah. That's a great question and definitely something we'll be talking about on Thursday's presentation, if you're able to make that one. But the short answer is, we're going to be including confidence intervals in the estimates. So, today, when you see UCR estimates, they're the counts and percentages and rates and they're just—those numbers are just put out there by themselves. And that's okay in today's world because between both NIBRS reporters and summary reporters, there was such a high coverage rate of reporting that there really was no uncertainty in those estimates and those counts. But when—now—you know, now that we're NIBRS only, at least until we reach that higher level, there is uncertainty, as the question, you know, indicates.

So I agree with that. So what we're going to do is, we are developing an approach to include confidence intervals around each estimate that a person can then have to understand the range in which we think the estimate might actually be because we're—because we cannot give an exact answer because of the lack of—the lack of—you know, the lower coverage rate and the uncertainty that that causes. So we'll talk about more of this on Thursday though, but that's—the short answer is still, well, every estimate will have a confidence interval to go along with it.

ERICA SMITH: Thank you, Marcus. We have a question from Jim Lynch. “What is going on with rate denominators?” So, Marcus, I might throw that one back to you too and also give a plug for the Thursday session, where you’re going to be talking much more about the population data that we’re going to be using. But if you want to give a little teaser for that, if you wouldn’t mind, that would be great.

MARCUS BERZOFSKY: Well, I mean, I’m not sure I understand. So for rate denominators. So that’s the question, “What is going on with rate denominators?”

ERICA SMITH: Yeah. I think it’s basically about what population data are we going to use? Hopefully, I’m getting that right.

MARCUS BERZOFSKY: Yeah.

ERICA SMITH: And then maybe just a little bit about some of those subpopulations of agencies like the tribal and the university agencies and things like that.

MARCUS BERZOFSKY: Okay. Sure. So the FBI has always provided population-level data at the law—for each law enforcement agency. And going forward, we’re going to continue—we’re going to build on what was done by the FBI and enhance it so that rates can be calculated. So a rate, for anyone that doesn’t know, is when you see something like there are a hundred robberies per a hundred thousand persons in the population. So that is a rate. And to get that rate, though, you have to know how many—you know, what the population served is for each law enforcement agency that you’re including in your estimate and then build that up.

So we are doing that with the new estimations—estimates that we’ll be producing for 2021. And we’re starting with Census data—so it’s all coming from official statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau—that we have allocated to each of the agencies, you know, based on the geographic information provided by the Census Bureau. We’re then—because we’re switching to NIBRS, we’re then going to enhance what the FBI has done in the past. So that’s similar to what the FBI has done in the past. But we’re now going to enhance it because NIBRS has all these characteristics about victims and offenders, you know, in terms of their race, their sex, and their ethnic—their age. And so we’re now appending on—we’re now breaking those population characteristics down by age, sex, and race as well so that we can create rates by those different characteristics as well.

So all that information is coming from the U.S. Census Bureau, and we’re—it takes a lot of work because law enforcement agency geographies are not simple things to map out. But we’re allocating those to the agencies and breaking them down, and then as we

build up to either a state level or national level or region, we're building up to get those aggregate population counts that are then used when calculating a rate itself.

In addition to that, we're also starting to look at, as Erica said, special-purpose agencies. So these are things like universities and tribal agencies. These are agencies that, in the past, were called zero-population agencies because they overlapped with the general-purpose agency and we didn't—and there's a desire not to double-count a person in the population. We're also coming up with population totals. We're able—certainly for universities. We can do this for universities. We're able to—we're able to—and then we can not double-count people, but then the system will create—can still create rates for some of those special-purpose agencies as well. So we're working on that for something that'll be part of the 2021 estimates as well, now that we're switching to NIBRS.

ERICA SMITH: Thank you, Marcus. I appreciate that.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: Hey, Marcus, just a—okay, Erica, just to piggyback on—

ERICA SMITH: Yeah. Go ahead.

KIMBRLY MARTIN: —what Marcus said—and I don't know—

ERICA SMITH: Sure.

KIMBERLY MARTIN: Marcus, you may have—I don't think he mentioned this, but if you're wondering how we're calculating rates for the online reports, like the sexual assault one and the robbery one that we're working on right now, those all come—those subpopulations, they come from the Census' annual population estimates program. And we can get that data down all the way to the—you know, the city, the county, the state, if that answers questions about the reports. The denominators for rates will change if we're, you know, changing our victim type sometimes.

So for robbery, we—you know, 10% of our victims for robbery were not persons. They were—they were coded as businesses or financial institutions. And we are trying to see, you know, what we could do in terms of creating a more granular denominator for those types of robberies. And what that would do is that would remove about 10% of all robberies from any kind of rate that we would calculate for persons. So you have that flexibility, and then the question is just deciding, you know, how to approach it and just being as transparent as possible in the reports about how we do calculate those rates and if we do change the denominator. And so that'll be, you know, something that we

make very clear on our robbery report, how we calculate our rates throughout that report. I just wanted to—

ERICA SMITH: Thanks and—no, I appreciate that. That's a good addition too. So I think we might have time for a couple more questions. One is about how is polyvictimization documented? So I don't know if I'm going to answer the question that's actually being asked or not. So, hopefully, I get close. But if anyone needs to follow up on any of these things afterwards, feel free to get in touch. I'm happy to field any questions via email or phone or whatever.

But in terms of polyvictimization, so one of the things that—one of the features of NIBRS is that it is incident-based. So we do—we should—other than maybe in Georgia we've discovered today, we should be able to—we should be able to know whether there was more than one offense that occurred against an individual victim within a crime incident. One thing that we cannot do with the NIBRS data the way that it's set up right now is determine if one particular victim was a victim of a crime incident at different times.

So, for instance, we cannot say there was a victimization on the second of the month and the same victim was also—experienced another victimization on the twentieth of the month. We would not know that that victim was the same person. So that is one of the—so we can't calculate prevalence estimates, for instance—for instance, based on the NIBRS data. So that is one place where we really do then rely on data from the National Crime Victimization Survey to provide us additional insight into those prevalence—estimates of prevalence of different types of offenses. So hopefully that helps. And, again, if I didn't quite meet the mark on the question that was being asked, feel free to follow up with me.

The next question here is about whether the offense—if there is an offense classification error at the initial level, that reporting stage where local agencies are making the classification, then does that error remain in the file? Drema, I might—I might want you to hop in here too to talk a bit about the business rules and some of the other outlier and error checks that go on within the system, the automated system on the FBI side. But the one thing I would say initially about that too is that—I guess the short answer would be yes with a lot of caveats around that.

So there are a number of points in the process where the data are reported—you know, you—the data are put into a record management system at the local level, that should have a number of different checks that are specified by the FBI as technical specifications for NIBRS or the state's technical specifications for their incident-based

reporting program. That should be programmed into the system, and there are a number of bells that will go off if—you know, warnings and errors that will be triggered if the classification doesn't match certain other criteria in the record. So there are a number of things that—you know, are sort of checkpoints along the way at the local level. And then when it goes—when those data are pulled together and the incidents are aggregated and sent up to the state agency, to the state Uniform Crime Reporting program, there's a similar set of checks that go on there to look for these outliers and problems in the individual records and send those things back to the local agency to fix.

And then the third layer is that more of that happens within the FBI program too. So, Drema, do you want to mention a little bit about that, if you would?

DREMA FOUCH: Yes. So they're asking if, initially, they reported one offense and then realized in the course of their investigation that they had misclassified. If they submit a delete for that original incident, if it's already made it to the state and on to the FBI, that—they can delete that incident out and resubmit it with the correct offense or offenses reported, and that should take care of eliminating that misclassification that was initially reported.

ERICA SMITH: Thanks, Drema.

DREMA FOUCH: Uh-hmm.

ERICA SMITH: Great. And I think with that, we might have to sign off. I know I didn't get to all the questions. And I know—well, maybe. Goodness. There's two more in here. So maybe I can quickly do those.

So one question comes from Susan. The question is, "What is being done to encourage state and local agencies to report hate crime incidents that would also be an incident of domestic terrorism or domestic violent extremism?" I might have to follow up with you on that. I believe—you know, so a lot of the times, we're not—the BJS and the FBI UCR Program are not really in the business of encouraging reporting in that way, but there are a lot of resources available to support agencies as they work to better report crimes, be much more specific, and, you know, make those uniform as well across jurisdictions.

So I did provide another response about hate crime reporting to a different question in the set, but it's the nexus with violent extremism I'm not a hundred percent certain about. So maybe we can follow up on that separately with some resources from the FBI is what I'm guessing would be best for this.

And then the last question is whether BJS is going to be asking states to report citizen calls for service versus officer-initiated and the same for founded reports. So, really quickly on that front, I'm going to take the founded piece first. So there was a decision made by the FBI's Advisory Policy Board to collect data within NIBRS on instances where an incident was unfounded an offense was unfounded. So we will, moving forward, I'm not—Drema, you might have to say when that is supposed to be fully implemented, but we will have those data moving forward.

And then, regarding citizen-initiated or officer-initiated police events, BJS is moving forward with work to investigate how we might collect those data. So I can't make any promises about when that might exactly get off the ground, but we've done some preliminary work, and we're interested in moving forward with that as well. So we should have—the idea is to put some context around the incident data to understand, sort, of what's the lay of the land in terms of calls for service in a particular jurisdiction and then how many of those police events, so to speak, result in a crime incident in the same jurisdiction. So with that, I think we've come to the end of the—end of our time. Daryl, can I turn it back over to you to close this out?

DARYL FOX: Yes. Certainly. I'll be brief. We want to thank everybody for joining today's webinar. Just as a reminder, I know it's been entered in the chat several times, the recording, PowerPoint, and transcript for today's webinar will be posted to the BJS website. So keep an eye out for that. So with that, on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics and our panelists, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.