

Welcome to the National Crime Victimization Survey Knowledge Corner. This short video will provide an overview of the Supplemental Fraud Survey, or SFS, a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, or NCVS.

In 2008, the National Research Council stated that self-report surveys like the NCVS were key in capturing crimes like fraud which have a low likelihood of being reported to police or other agencies. In 2015, BJS collaborated with Stanford University's Financial Fraud Research Center (FFRC) & the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA, to create a fraud taxonomy. The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine released a report in 2016 called Modernizing Crime Statistics. In this report, they recommended BJS to focus on measuring new and emerging crime types, like financial fraud.

Studies may measure and define fraud differently. In the SFS, fraud is defined as "Intentionally and knowingly deceiving the victim by misrepresenting, concealing, or omitting facts about promised goods, services, or other benefits and consequences that are nonexistent, unnecessary, never intended to be provided, or deliberately distorted for the purpose of monetary gain."

Fraud is different from other forms of consumer deception because the victim must be deceived or persuaded into participating in the fraudulent transaction. Fraud is different from identity theft in that identity theft is similar to other types of personal theft—the theft of information typically occurs beyond the victim's consent, knowledge, and control.

In order for something to be classified as fraud, the victim must lose money in the transaction and be intentionally and knowingly deceived.

There are many advantages to using the NCVS to measure personal financial fraud. First, it is nationally representative with good coverage and high response rates for key and at-risk populations.

The SFS asks respondent about personal experiences with fraud and captures information about the victim's response and impact on the victim. The SFS measures fraud reported and not reported to police and consumer complaints. Not all fraud is reported to police, and official police statistics will not reflect the true magnitude of the fraud problem.

The large sample sizes allow for disaggregation of estimates by key characteristics, such as respondent sex, race or Hispanic origin, and age.

The SFS was administered for 3 months in 2017. It used the taxonomy that BJS created with the Stanford Financial Fraud Research Center & the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.

The SFS was administered to persons aged 18 or older who completed an NCVS interview. The instrument asked about experiences of fraud in the past 12 months. Of the 66,200 NCVS-eligible respondents 51,200 completed the SFS questionnaire with a 77% response rate.

The SFS questionnaire contains a screener and incident form sections. The screener section asks about each type of fraud measured. The seven types of fraud include:

- Prize and grant. For example, someone paying fees to receive a prize or grant that they do not receive.
- Phantom debt. For example, someone paying money to settle a debt that wasn't theirs
- Charity. For example, someone donating money to a fake charity.
- Employment. For example, someone paying money to get a job or get into a business opportunity but not getting what was promised in return.
- Consumer investment. For example, someone investing money with a person or company that tricked or lied to them about what they would receive, such as promising a guaranteed return on an investment or that they would not lose any money.
- Consumer products and services. For example, someone paying money for technology support, a product from an online marketplace, or automotive repair that is not received.
- Relationship and trust. For example, someone paying money to someone falsely claiming to be a romantic partner or grandchild.

If the respondent endorses experiencing a type of fraud in one of the screener questions, the incident form section asks for details about that fraud reported in the screener section.

The SFS can be used to produce a variety of estimates, including national estimates and potentially state-level estimates for the 22 most populous states; estimates of the prevalence of financial fraud and specific types of financial fraud victimization for persons age 18 or older; the amount of money lost in the fraudulent transaction; if the fraud victimization was reported to police or a consumer protection agency (and, if not, reasons why not); fraud victimization by victim demographic characteristics; and financial and direct and indirect work and/or school losses attributed to the fraud victimization.

Estimates generated using the SFS data are used by a wide range of government agencies, consumer protection bureaus, and victim advocacy groups. These estimates provide the general public with reliable data on the prevalence and characteristics of personal financial fraud.

The webpage to access information about the SFS is here [<https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/supplemental-fraud-survey-sfs>]. Here, the user can find information about the methodology of the SFS, download SFS questionnaires, and access BJS publications and products that use SFS data. Users can also access a link to the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) where they can download the SFS datasets and codebooks.

To view other Knowledge Corner videos, please go to YouTube to view the playlist. For more information about the NCVS, see the NCVS data collection page on the BJS website. Please

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

Thank you.