

Attachment 6
IVR Initial Invitation Letter

Dear (CITY) Resident:

Your household has been selected for a study being conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice. BJS is the primary source of information on crime and victimization. For example, in 2009 BJS found there were approximately 20 million victimizations and less than half of these were reported to the police.¹

Your participation in this study will help BJS find the best ways to collect data like this and help the government monitor and control crime in communities like yours

Please ask the person who lives at this address who is at least 18 years old and who has the next birthday to complete the automated survey by calling the number below. Once calling, please enter the unique survey ID:

1-800-251-3456

ID: 246810

Even if the person selected to participate has not experienced a crime, it is important that your household is represented on the survey. As a token of our appreciation, we will send \$10 to your household once the survey is completed.

Completing this survey is voluntary. In order to include people with a wide variety of experiences in (CITY), we obtained your address from one of two sources: a) a sample of all addresses in (CITY) or b) a sample of addresses in (CITY) where someone had reported a crime. All the information provided is confidential by federal law (42 USC 3789g). If you do not want to participate on the study, please call XXX-XXXX and provide the ID number listed above. We will not contact you again.

Westat, a private research firm, is conducting this study for us. If you have any questions, please call XXX-XXX-XXXX.

We thank you in advance for helping with this study.

Sincerely,

James P. Lynch
Director
Bureau of Justice Statistics
<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/>

¹ Truman, J.I. and M. Rand (2009) "Criminal Victimization, 2009" Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, NCJ 231327

Some Frequently Asked Questions about the Crime Victimization Study

Q: What is the study about? What kind of questions will you be asking?

A: The study concerns victimizations you may have experienced. This include those incidents that may not have been reported to law enforcement. For example, we will ask you about any crimes you may have experienced or witnessed and some general details about the incident. These may include what happened, if anything was stolen, if anyone was injured, or if police were notified.

Q: How will the study results be used? What will be done with my information?

A: This is a pilot study that will help the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics improve the way they collect information about characteristics of criminal victimization including those not reported to law enforcement.

Q: How did you get my address?

A: Your address came from one of two different sources. One was a random selection of addresses among all addresses in your community. The second source was a random selection of addresses that had reported a crime to the local police within the last 12 months.

Q: Why should I take part in this study?

A: Crime and the victims of crime are important issues for our Nation. A greater understanding of crime can be used in crime prevention measures. Groups that represent victims also need hard data on how crimes are perpetrated.

You represent thousands of other households like yours, and you cannot be replaced. Your answers and opinions are very important to the success of this study, as you represent others who share your knowledge and experiences.

Q: Do I have to do this?

A: Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to answer any questions. You can stop participating at any point. However, your participation is very important to the success of this study and will help the government improve the way they monitor crime in communities like yours.

Q: Will my answers to the survey be kept confidential?

A: Yes. Your individual answers will not be revealed to anyone but the researchers in a way that identifies you or your household. Your individual answers are protected by federal law and cannot be shared with anyone outside the individuals working on this project.

Q: How long will it take to answer the questions?

A: About 15 to 20 minutes.

Q: Who is sponsoring the study? Is this study approved by the Federal Government?

A: The study is sponsored by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, which an agency within the U.S. Justice Department. The study has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the office that reviews all federally-sponsored surveys. The OMB approval number assigned to this study is XXXX-XXXX.

Q: I called the number, but it only goes to an automated system.

A: We are testing the use of a new method for collecting information for this survey that offers you additional privacy when answering the survey questions. If you are having difficulty accessing the survey or it is not recognizing your responses, please call 1-800-XXX-XXXX for additional assistance.