

# **OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN'S GRANT FUNDS USED TO ADDRESS STALKING: 2022 REPORT TO CONGRESS**

The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA) required that the Attorney General submit to Congress an annual report, beginning one year after the date of enactment of the Act, providing information concerning the incidence of stalking and domestic violence, and evaluating the effectiveness of anti-stalking efforts and legislation (34 U.S.C. § 12409). In the 2005 reauthorization of VAWA, this reporting requirement was changed from an annual report to biennial, to be due on each “even-numbered fiscal year.”

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) supplied funds to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in 2015 to redesign and administer a survey measuring stalking victimization in the United States and generate nationally representative statistics about stalking victims and victimization. BJS's most recent report, released in February 2022, is enclosed. This report fulfills the 2022 report requirement.



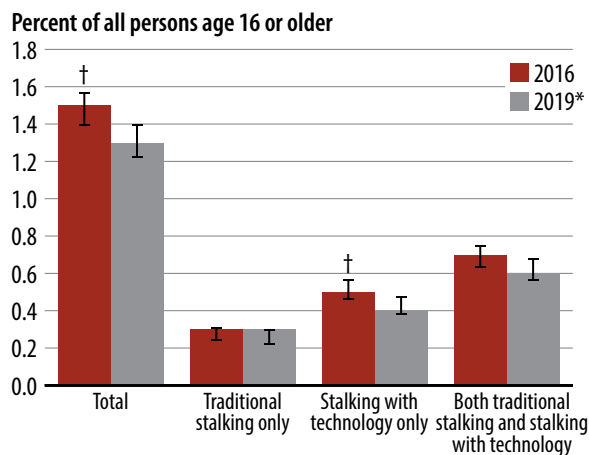
# Stalking Victimization, 2019

Rachel E. Morgan, Ph.D., and Jennifer L. Truman, Ph.D., *BJS Statisticians*

In 2019, an estimated 1.3% (3.4 million) of all U.S. residents age 16 or older were victims of stalking (figure 1). This was a statistically significant decrease from 2016 (1.5%) that was largely driven by a decline in stalking with technology only, from 1.3 million victims in 2016 to 1.1 million in 2019. (See appendix table 1.) In comparison, the number of victims of traditional stalking only or both traditional and technology stalking did not change significantly during this period. Stalking includes repeated unwanted contacts or behaviors that caused the victim to experience fear or substantial emotional distress or would cause a reasonable person to experience fear or substantial emotional distress.

Findings are based on the 2019 Supplemental Victimization Survey (SVS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey. From July 2019 to December 2019, the SVS asked persons age 16 or older about their experiences with stalking during the 12 months preceding the interview. This report details the demographic characteristics of victims who were stalked

**FIGURE 1**  
Prevalence of stalking, by type of stalking, 2016 and 2019



Note: Estimates include 95% confidence intervals. See appendix table 1 for definitions. See appendix table 2 for estimates, standard errors, and stalking definitions.

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- About 1.3% (3.4 million) of all persons age 16 or older were victims of stalking in 2019.
- The percentage of persons who experienced stalking declined from 1.5% in 2016 to 1.3% in 2019.
- Less than a third (29%) of all stalking victims reported the victimization to police in 2019.
- In 2019, females (1.8%) were stalked more than twice as often as males (0.8%).
- In 2019, an estimated 67% of victims of both traditional stalking and stalking with technology were fearful of being killed or physically harmed.
- Most (67%) stalking victims knew their stalker.
- Victims of both types of stalking in 2019 were more likely to be stalked by an intimate partner (35%) than victims of only traditional stalking (11%) or only stalking with technology (18%).
- Victims of both stalking types were more than twice as likely to have applied for a restraining, protection, or no-contact order as victims of traditional or technology stalking only.
- In 2019, about 16% of all stalking victims sought victim services and 74% of the victims who sought services received them.

during a 12-month period. It also describes the characteristics of stalking victimization, including the victim-offender relationship, self-protective actions taken by the victim, patterns of reporting to police, and whether the victim contacted a victim service provider after the victimization.

**Two-thirds of victims of stalking with technology received unwanted phone calls, voice messages, or text messages in 2019**

The most frequently reported traditional stalking behaviors in 2019 included the offender following and watching the victim (58%) or showing up at, riding by, or driving by places where the offender had no business being (49%) (table 1). Nearly 42% of victims of traditional stalking said the offender harassed their friends or family for information on their whereabouts.

Almost a third (31%) of traditional stalking victims said the offender waited for them at home, school, or another place. More than a fifth (22%) said the offender left or sent unwanted items. In 2019, less than a fifth (17%) of

victims said that the offender snuck into their home, car, or another place to let them know the offender had been there.

Stalking with technology victims most commonly received unwanted phone calls, voice messages, or text messages (66%) in 2019, followed by unwanted emails or messages via the Internet (55%). About 32% of victims of this type of stalking said their activities were monitored using social media. Twenty-nine percent experienced the offender posting or threatening to post inappropriate, unwanted, or personal information about them on the Internet.

Twenty-two percent of stalking with technology victims said the offender spied on them or monitored their activities using technologies such as listening devices, cameras, or computer or cellphone monitoring software. About 14% were tracked with an electronic tracking device or application.

**TABLE 1**  
**Persons age 16 or older who were victims of stalking, by type of stalking behavior, 2019**

Type of stalking behavior	Number of stalking victims <sup>a</sup>	Percent of stalking victims	Percent of all persons <sup>b</sup>
<b>Total</b>	3,419,710	100%	1.3%
<b>Any traditional stalking</b>	2,300,830	67.3%	0.9%
Followed or watched	1,344,250	58.4	0.5
Showed up at/rode by/drove by places	1,122,720	48.8	0.4
Harassed/repeatedly asked friends/family for information	955,470	41.5	0.4
Waited at home/work/school/any other place	718,100	31.2	0.3
Left/sent unwanted items	507,800	22.1	0.2
Sneaked into home/car/any other place	391,880	17.0	0.2
<b>Any stalking with technology</b>	2,738,470	80.1%	1.1%
Made unwanted phone calls/left voice messages/sent text messages	1,802,160	65.8	0.7
Sent unwanted emails/messages using the Internet or social media	1,493,980	54.6	0.6
Monitored activities using social media	873,850	31.9	0.3
Posted/threatened to post inappropriate/unwanted/personal information <sup>c</sup>	802,040	29.3	0.3
Spied on or monitored activities using technology	610,180	22.3	0.2
Tracked whereabouts with an electronic device/application	394,000	14.4	0.2

Note: Details may not sum to totals because victims could experience more than one type of stalking behavior. The total population age 16 or older was 260,731,490 in 2019. See appendix table 3 for standard errors. See *Methodology* for question wording for the types of stalking behaviors.

<sup>a</sup>Number of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>c</sup>Includes posting private photographs, videos, or rumors.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## Measuring stalking victimization

To be classified as a **victim of stalking** in the Supplemental Victimization Survey (SVS), the respondent must have experienced a repeated course of conduct (i.e., experienced the same behavior or contact more than once or experienced two or more different behaviors one time) that either—

- caused them substantial emotional distress or to fear for their safety or the safety of someone they know (actual fear)
- would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of someone they know.

**Reasonable fear** includes victimizations where the victim reported that they experienced either—

- damage, attempted damage, or destruction of property
- threatened, attempted, or completed attacks on the victim, someone close to them, or a pet.

The SVS measured 12 types of stalking behaviors, incorporating both traditional stalking and stalking with technology.

**Traditional stalking** includes the following unwanted behaviors:

- following and watching
- sneaking into a place

- waiting at a place
- showing up at a place
- leaving or sending unwanted items
- harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

**Stalking with technology** includes the following unwanted behaviors:

- making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages
- spying using technology
- tracking the victim's whereabouts with an electronic tracking device or application
- posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet
- sending unwanted emails or messages using the Internet
- monitoring activities using social media.

See *Methodology* for the SVS questions used to measure actual fear, substantial emotional distress, reasonable fear, and the types of unwanted behaviors that victims experienced.

## Less than a third of all stalking victims reported the victimization to police in 2019

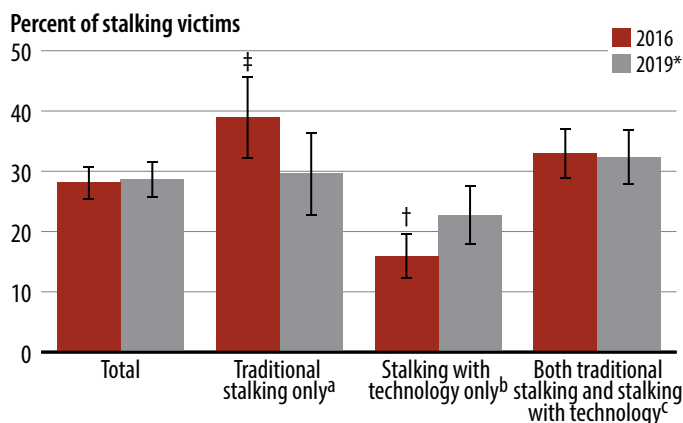
In 2019, 29% of all stalking victims reported the stalking victimization to police (figure 2). Victims who experienced both traditional stalking and stalking with technology reported to police more often (32%) than victims who experienced stalking with technology only (23%) (statistical testing performed and not shown).

From 2016 to 2019, reporting to police declined among traditional stalking victims (from 39% to 30%) but increased among stalking with technology victims (from 16% to 23%). During this period, there was no statistically significant change in police reporting among all stalking victims or victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Crime victims chose not to report their victimization to police for a variety of reasons. One of the most common reasons was feeling that the victimization was not important enough to report to police. In 2019, this reason was cited by about 40% of all stalking victims, traditional stalking victims, stalking with technology victims, and victims who experienced both traditional stalking and stalking with technology (table 2).

From 2016 to 2019, increasing shares of all stalking victims and traditional stalking victims who did not report to police said they did not think the police could do anything to help. The portion of all stalking victims citing this reason grew from 27% to 33% during this period, while the percentage of traditional stalking victims citing this reason rose from 21% to 39%.

**FIGURE 2**  
Percent of stalking victims who reported to police, by type of stalking, 2016 and 2019



Note: Estimates include 95% confidence intervals. See appendix table 4 for estimates and standard errors.

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison year is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

**TABLE 2****Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking, reporting to police, and reason for not reporting, 2016 and 2019**

	Total stalking		Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>		Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>		Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c</sup>	
	2016	2019*	2016	2019*	2016	2019*	2016	2019*
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Reported to police</b>	28.1%	28.7%	38.9% ‡	29.6%	15.9% †	22.7%	32.9%	32.3%
<b>Not reported to police</b>	70.2%	70.9%	59.9% †	70.3%	83.5% †	77.1%	64.4%	66.9%
Reason not reported <sup>d</sup>								
Not important enough to report	40.6	41.6	47.7	43.8	42.0	43.0	36.8	39.5
Dealt with it another way	37.8	40.3	38.4	34.7	36.0	39.1	39.2	43.8
Police couldn't do anything	26.5 †	32.9	20.6 †	39.0	30.9	33.0	24.5	30.3
Police wouldn't help	15.5 ‡	19.4	19.9	24.3	12.9	15.1	16.3	20.8
Other/unknown reason <sup>e</sup>	13.2	15.5	16.3	12.3	7.4	6.7	17.7 ‡	24.0
Feared offender	6.3	7.8	7.2	11.3	3.8	5.0	8.5	8.5
<b>Number of victims</b>	3,788,800	3,419,710	703,250	681,240	1,316,360	1,118,890	1,769,190	1,619,580

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to missing data and because victims could select more than one reason for not reporting to police. Data on reporting to police were missing for 1.7% of all stalking victimizations in 2016 and 0.4% in 2019. See appendix table 5 for standard errors.

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison year is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

<sup>d</sup>Includes victims who did not report the stalking to police. Details do not sum to totals because victims could select more than one reason for not reporting to police.

<sup>e</sup>Includes victims who said they did not trust police, felt ashamed or embarrassed, or did not want to get the offender in trouble with the law; the offender was an ex-spouse or ex-partner; they obtained a protection order instead; the victim or offender moved away; it was for their children's well-being; the unwanted contacts or behaviors stopped; some other reason; or the reason was unknown.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

## Cyberstalking victimization

There is no uniform definition of cyberstalking victimization in the United States. However, the federal definition and many state definitions include similar elements. The federal legal definition of cyberstalking was expanded under the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 to include all communications via software that use the Internet or Internet-based technologies.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, the definition of cyberstalking was expanded to include “any interactive computer service or electronic communication service,” including interstate and foreign electronic communication.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout this report, estimates are reported for victims of stalking with technology. In the 2019 Supplemental Victimization Survey (SVS), **stalking with technology** includes unwanted phone calls or text messages, as well as unwanted behaviors using electronic communication or technology (e.g., social media or GPS). **Cyberstalking** includes stalking through any form of

information technology, like online platforms or location tracking devices, and excludes making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages.

Definitions and laws vary for cyberstalking and may or may not include sending text messages using mobile devices. However, the SVS cannot separate making phone calls or leaving voice messages from sending text messages. (See *Methodology* for details on the wording of SVS items.)

In 2019, an estimated 0.4% (936,310 persons) of all U.S. residents age 16 or older were victims of cyberstalking, and about 0.2% (538,690 persons) received unwanted emails or messages using the Internet or social media (table 3). Approximately 0.1% of all persons age 16 or older were monitored using social media (304,890 persons) or had unwanted information posted about them on the Internet (326,540 persons). About 0.1% of all persons age 16 or older were spied on using technologies (310,350 persons) or had their whereabouts tracked with an electronic device or application (168,150 persons).

<sup>1</sup>Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, 109 U.S.C. § 3402 et seq. (2005). <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-109hr3402enr/pdf/BILLS-109hr3402enr.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, 113 U.S.C. § 2261A et seq. (2013). <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113s47enr/pdf/BILLS-113s47enr.pdf>

**TABLE 3**  
**Prevalence of cyberstalking, by type of cyberstalking behavior, 2019**

Type of cyberstalking behavior	Number of cyberstalking victims <sup>a</sup>	Percent of all persons <sup>b</sup>
Total	936,310	0.4%
Sent victim unwanted emails/messages using the Internet or social media	538,690	0.2
Monitored activities using social media	304,890	0.1
Posted/threatened to post inappropriate/unwanted/personal information <sup>c</sup>	326,540	0.1
Spied on or monitored activities using technology	310,350	0.1
Tracked whereabouts with an electronic device/application	168,150	0.1

Note: Estimates in this table include victims who experienced cyberstalking, which includes stalking through any form of information technology and excludes making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages. Details may not sum to totals because victims could experience more than one type of cyberstalking behavior. The total population age 16 or older in 2019 was 260,731,490. See appendix table 6 for standard errors. See *Methodology* for question wording for the types of cyberstalking behaviors.

<sup>a</sup>Number of persons age 16 or older who experienced cyberstalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage of persons age 16 or older who experienced cyberstalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>c</sup>Includes posting private photographs, videos, or rumors.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## Persons ages 20 to 24 were stalked more often than persons ages 35 or older

In 2019, the prevalence of stalking was higher among females (1.8%) than males (0.8%) (table 4). Compared to white persons, stalking prevalence was higher among persons of two or more races (3.9%) and persons who were American Indian or Alaska Native (3.3%). Rates of stalking were lower for black persons (1.1%) and persons who were Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander (1.1%) compared to white persons (1.3%). There was no statistically significant difference in the prevalence of stalking between white persons and Hispanic persons.

Persons ages 20 to 24 (2.0%) were stalked more often than persons in age groups over 35. Separated persons were stalked more often (3.8%) than persons of all other marital statuses. Persons living in households earning less than \$25,000 annually (2.1%) were stalked more often than persons living in households earning \$25,000 or more annually.

**TABLE 4**  
Prevalence of stalking, by demographic characteristics of victims, 2019

Victim demographic characteristic	Number of victims <sup>a</sup>	Percent of all persons <sup>b</sup>
<b>Total</b>	3,419,710	1.3%
<b>Sex</b>		
Male*	982,080	0.8%
Female	2,437,630 †	1.8 †
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>		
White <sup>c*</sup>	2,188,360	1.3%
Black <sup>c</sup>	342,430 †	1.1 ‡
Hispanic	515,110 †	1.2
Asian/Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander <sup>c,d</sup>	179,840 †	1.1 ‡
American Indian/Alaska Native <sup>c</sup>	48,940 †	3.3 †
Two or more races <sup>c</sup>	145,030 †	3.9 †
<b>Age</b>		
16–19	239,650 †	1.5% ‡
20–24*	426,840	2.0
25–34	796,270 †	1.7
35–49	942,610 †	1.5 †
50–64	690,500 †	1.1 †
65 or older	323,830 ‡	0.6 †
<b>Marital status</b>		
Never married	1,394,440 †	1.7% †
Married	973,100 †	0.8 †
Widowed	126,680 ‡	0.8 †
Divorced	719,900 †	2.5 †
Separated*	197,250	3.8
<b>Household income</b>		
Less than \$25,000*	891,650	2.1%
\$25,000–\$49,999	816,730	1.3 †
\$50,000–\$99,999	1,024,140	1.2 †
\$100,000–\$199,999	536,110 †	1.1 †
\$200,000 or more	151,080 †	0.9 †

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. See appendix table 7 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Number of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “black” refers to non-Hispanic black persons).

<sup>d</sup>Categories are not shown separately due to small numbers of sample cases.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.



## Most stalking victims knew their stalker

In 2019, about 67% of victims of stalking knew their stalker in some capacity (table 5). Victims were more likely to be stalked by a well-known or casual acquaintance (38%) or current or ex-intimate partner (25%) than by a relative (5%) (statistical testing performed and not shown).

Victims of both traditional stalking and stalking with technology were more likely to be stalked by a known offender (81%) than victims of traditional stalking only (56%) or stalking with technology only (54%). Victims of both stalking types were three times as likely to

be stalked by an intimate partner (35%) as victims of traditional stalking only (11%) and two times as likely as victims of stalking with technology only (18%).

In 2019, about 18% of victims were stalked by a stranger and 14% were unable to identify their relationship to the offender. Victims of traditional stalking were more likely to be stalked by a stranger (30%) than victims of stalking with technology (19%) or both types of stalking (12%). Victims of stalking with technology were more likely to not know their relationship to the offender (26%) than victims of traditional stalking (13%) or both stalking types (6%).

**TABLE 5**  
Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and victim-offender relationship, 2019

Type of victim-offender relationship	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c*</sup>
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Known</b>	67.2%	55.8% †	54.3% †	80.9%
Intimate partner <sup>d</sup>	24.8	11.2 †	17.6 †	35.5
Current partner	5.8	2.8 !	5.6	7.2
Ex-partner	19.0	8.4 †	12.0 †	28.3
Other relative	4.8	6.2	4.6	4.3
Well-known/casual acquaintance	37.6	38.4	32.1 †	41.1
Friend/ex-friend	7.2	6.6	9.3	6.0
Acquaintance/in-law or relative of spouse or ex-spouse/friend of one of the offenders/other	12.6	9.6 ‡	11.1	15.0
Roommate/housemate/boarder/neighbor	8.4	14.4 ‡	4.3 †	8.8
Professional acquaintance <sup>e</sup>	9.4	7.9	7.5 ‡	11.4
<b>Stranger</b>	18.1%	30.1% †	19.3% †	12.2%
<b>Unknown<sup>f</sup></b>	13.9%	12.8% †	26.0% †	6.0%
<b>Number of victims</b>	3,419,710	681,240	1,118,890	1,619,580

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to missing data, which occurred in about 1% of all stalking victimizations. See appendix table 8 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group. Percentage of victims by victim-offender relationship compared to each stalking type and not total stalking.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

<sup>d</sup>Includes current or former spouses or partners, boyfriends or girlfriends, or other romantic or sexual partners.

<sup>e</sup>Includes schoolmates, supervisors (current or former), coworkers (current or former), teachers or school staff, customers or clients, patients, students, and employees (current or former).

<sup>f</sup>Includes unknown victim-offender relationships and unknown number of offenders.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## Twenty-four percent of victims said the stalking behaviors lasted 2 years or more

In 2019, nearly 44% of stalking victims experienced stalking behaviors that lasted 1 month to less than 1 year (table 6). Twenty-four percent of victims said the stalking behaviors lasted 2 years or more. A greater share of traditional stalking victims (28%) and stalking with technology victims (20%) experienced stalking behaviors for less than 1 month compared to victims of both types of stalking (12%).

For more than half (58%) of stalking victims, the stalking behaviors occurred 2 to 10 times during the victimization. A smaller share of victims of both types of stalking (49%) said the behaviors happened 2 to 10 times during the victimization compared to victims of traditional stalking only (81%) and stalking with technology only (57%). Victims of both stalking types (25%) were more than three times as likely to say the stalking behaviors happened 11 to 50 times as victims of traditional stalking only (7%). Fourteen percent of victims of both stalking types said the stalking behaviors happened too many times to count.

**TABLE 6**  
Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and duration and frequency of stalking, 2019

Stalking duration and frequency	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c*</sup>
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Duration</b>				
Less than 1 month	17.6%	27.8% †	20.0% †	11.6%
1 month to less than 1 year	43.7	39.1	42.6	46.4
1 year to less than 2 years	12.5	10.2	13.2	12.9
2 years or more	24.0	21.5	21.5	26.8
Unknown	2.1	1.4!	2.7	1.9
<b>Frequency</b>				
2 to 10 times <sup>d</sup>	58.1%	81.1% †	57.1% †	49.1%
11 to 50 times	19.2	6.8 †	18.7 ‡	24.8
More than 50 times	7.2	3.0!	8.3	8.1
Too many times to count	10.8	2.8!	11.4	13.8
Don't know/don't remember	4.3	5.4	4.5	3.7
<b>Number of victims</b>	3,419,710	681,240	1,118,890	1,619,580

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to missing data, which occurred in less than 1% of all stalking victimizations. See appendix table 9 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group. Percentage of victims by duration and frequency of stalking compared to each stalking type and not total stalking.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

<sup>d</sup>Unwanted contacts or behaviors had to happen more than once for the respondent to screen into the Supplemental Victimization Survey.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**Victims of both stalking types were more than twice as likely as other stalking victims to have applied for a restraining, protection, or no-contact order**

Stalking victims took a variety of actions to protect themselves from the offender. In 2019, about 24% of stalking victims changed their day-to-day activities to protect themselves or stop the unwanted contacts or behaviors (table 7). A greater percentage of victims of both traditional stalking and stalking with technology (34%) than victims of traditional stalking only (21%) or stalking with technology only (13%) changed their day-to-day activities.

Victims of both stalking types (28%) and victims of traditional stalking only (28%) were more likely to have engaged in self-defensive actions or other security measures than victims of stalking with technology only (12%). Victims of both types of stalking were more than two times as likely to have applied for a restraining, protection, or no-contact order (13%) as victims of traditional stalking only (6%) or stalking with technology only (5%).

**TABLE 7**  
**Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and victim’s self-protective actions, 2019**

Self-protective action taken	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c*</sup>
<b>Any self-protective action taken</b>	77.7%	51.2%	81.5%	86.2%
Changed day-to-day activities	24.2	20.8 †	12.5 †	33.6
Blocked unwanted calls/messages/other communications	62.6	20.2 †	73.8	72.6
Self-defensive action/security measure <sup>d</sup>	22.9	27.5	12.3 †	28.3
Changed personal information	26.8	7.2 †	28.3	34.1
Applied for a restraining/protection/no-contact order	8.8	5.9 †	5.0 †	12.5
<b>Number of victims</b>	3,419,710	681,240	1,118,890	1,619,580

Note: Details may not sum to 100% because victims could take more than one self-protective action. See appendix table 10 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group. Percentage of victims who took self-protective actions compared to each stalking type and not total stalking.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim’s whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim’s whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

<sup>d</sup>Includes taking self-defense or martial arts classes, getting pepper spray, getting a gun or other weapon, or changing or installing new locks or security system.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**67% of victims of both types of stalking were fearful of being killed or physically harmed**

More than three-fifths (61%) of stalking victims were fearful of not knowing what would happen next as a consequence of the stalking victimization (table 8).

A greater share of victims of both traditional stalking and stalking with technology (67%) than victims

of traditional stalking only (52%) or stalking with technology only (30%) were fearful of being killed or physically harmed as a result of the stalking. Victims of both stalking types were also more fearful of someone close to them being harmed; losing their job, social network, peers, friends, or freedom; the behaviors never stopping; not knowing what would happen next; or losing their mind.

**TABLE 8**  
**Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and victim’s fears, 2019**

Victim’s fear	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c*</sup>
<b>Being killed or physical/bodily harm</b>	51.8%	51.6% †	29.7% †	67.0%
Being killed	15.7	13.7 †	8.0 †	22.0
Physical/bodily harm	36.0	38.0	21.8 †	45.0
<b>Someone close to victim being harmed</b>	32.3%	31.9% ‡	22.1% †	39.5%
<b>Loss of job or job opportunities/freedom/ social network/peers/friends</b>	57.2%	37.2% †	42.3% †	76.0%
Loss of job/job opportunities	16.6	8.7 †	13.9 †	21.8
Loss of freedom	24.5	21.2 †	13.9 †	33.3
Loss of social network/peers/friends	16.1	7.3 †	14.5 †	21.0
<b>Behaviors never stopping</b>	55.1%	44.9% †	47.6% †	64.5%
<b>Not knowing what would happen next</b>	61.2%	58.9% †	50.1% †	69.7%
<b>Losing one’s mind</b>	19.1%	12.5% †	14.5% †	25.2%
<b>Number of victims</b>	3,419,710	681,240	1,118,890	1,619,580

Note: Details may not sum to 100% because victims could experience more than one type of fear. See appendix table 11 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group. Percentage of victims by type of fear compared to each stalking type and not total stalking.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim’s whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim’s whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

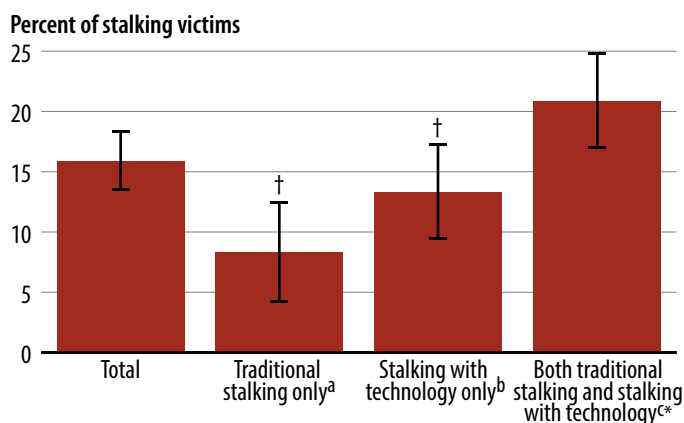
<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## About 1 in 6 stalking victims sought assistance from a victim service provider

Victim service providers (VSPs) are public or private organizations that provide assistance to crime victims. In 2019, about 16% of all stalking victims sought such services (figure 3). A greater share (21%) of victims of both traditional stalking and stalking with technology sought victim services than victims of traditional stalking only (8%) or stalking with technology only (13%).

**FIGURE 3**  
Percent of stalking victims who sought victim services, by type of stalking, 2019



Note: Estimates include 95% confidence intervals. See appendix table 12 for estimates and standard errors.

\*Comparison group. Percentage of victims who sought victim services compared to each stalking type and not total stalking.

<sup>†</sup>Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## More than 60% of stalking victims who sought and received victim services obtained counseling or therapy

VSPs provide a variety of services to victims of crime. In 2019, 74% of stalking victims who sought services received them (table 9). Of the stalking victims who sought and received victim services, about 62% obtained counseling or therapy from a VSP. About 1 in 3 (35%) received legal or court services, and about 1 in 4 (26%) received shelter/safehouse services or safety planning services. Stalking victims also received assistance in getting a restraining, protection, or no-contact order (24%); a risk or threat assessment (18%); crisis hotline counseling (14%); and medical advocacy (8%).

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of stalking victims who sought victim services did not receive them. Victims may not receive services for a variety of reasons, including the services not being available in the victim's area, the VSP not being able to accommodate the victim, language barriers between the victim and VSP, and the victim not being eligible for services for some reason (not shown in table).

**TABLE 9**  
Percent of stalking victims who sought and received victim services, by type of service received, 2019

Type of victim service	Percent of stalking victims
<b>Victim services were received<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>73.7%</b>
Counseling/therapy	61.7
Legal/court services	34.5
Shelter/safehouse service or safety planning	26.4
Assistance getting a restraining/protection/no-contact order	23.7
Other type of service	21.6
Risk/threat assessment	18.5
Crisis hotline counseling	13.7
Medical advocacy	7.8
Short-term/emergency financial assistance	7.0
Federal/state victim compensation	3.1!
<b>Victim services were not received<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>23.3%</b>
<b>Number of victims who sought victim services</b>	<b>544,500</b>

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to missing data and because victims could receive more than one service. For 3% of stalking victims who sought victim services, it was unknown whether they received any services. See appendix table 13 for standard errors.

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Percentage denominator is the total number of victims who sought victim services.

<sup>b</sup>For all victim service types listed, percentage denominator is the total number of victims who received victim services.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

# Methodology

## Data collection

The U.S. Census Bureau carries out the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and its Supplemental Victimization Survey (SVS) on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The NCVS collects data on crimes reported or not reported to police against persons age 12 or older from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. The sample includes persons living in group quarters (such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious group dwellings) and excludes persons living in military barracks and institutional settings (such as correctional or hospital facilities) and persons who are homeless.

From July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019, persons age 16 or older in sampled NCVS households received the SVS at the end of the NCVS interview. Proxy responders to the NCVS interview did not receive the SVS. All NCVS and SVS interviews were conducted using computer-assisted personal interviewing, either by telephone or an in-person visit. Of the 141,300 original NCVS-eligible respondents age 16 or older, approximately 105,000 completed the SVS questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 74.3%.

The combined SVS unit response rate for NCVS households, NCVS persons, and SVS persons was 51.9%. Because of the level of nonresponse, a bias analysis was conducted. The results indicated that there was little to no substantive bias due to nonresponse in the final SVS weighted estimates.

The SVS collected individual-level data on the prevalence of stalking victimization among persons, the characteristics of stalking victims, and the patterns of reporting to the police and other authorities. Respondents were asked whether they were stalked during the 12 months prior to the interview. For example, persons interviewed in July 2019 were asked about stalking victimization that occurred between July 2018 and June 2019. Stalking victimizations were classified by the year of the survey and not by the year of the victimization.

Persons who reported a stalking victimization were asked more detailed questions about their victimization and their responses to it, such as the victim-offender relationship, physical and emotional consequences to the victim, self-protective measures taken, and the response of the criminal justice system. For most sections of the survey, the SVS asked stalking victims to think about

the person or persons who committed these unwanted contacts or behaviors in the last 12 months when answering questions.

## Changes to the measurement of stalking victimization in the SVS

BJS first collected data from the SVS in 2006. The supplement was designed in 2005, shortly before federal stalking laws changed under the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA). VAWA expanded the legal definition of cyberstalking to include all communications via software that use the Internet or Internet-based technologies. The law also expanded the victim-harm requirement to include substantial emotional harm to the victim in addition to actual or reasonable fear.<sup>3</sup>

In 2013, VAWA was amended to address presence, intimidation, substantial emotional distress, and cyberstalking.<sup>4</sup> First, the law was expanded to apply to any person stalking another person within U.S. waters, territorial jurisdictions, or states. Second, the stalker's intent previously had to be to kill, injure, harass, or place a person under surveillance, and this was expanded to include intimidation. Third, the law was expanded to include acts that caused, were intended to cause, or would be reasonably expected to cause substantial emotional distress. Finally, the definition of cyberstalking was expanded to include any electronic communication, including interstate and foreign electronic communication.

In 2015, BJS redesigned the 2006 SVS instrument to incorporate the 2005 and 2013 updates to VAWA. The redesigned instrument began with a series of screener questions about each element of VAWA's stalking definition. The screener included expanded questions about unwanted contacts and behaviors associated with traditional stalking and stalking with technology. Separate screener questions were also developed to measure victim responses of fear and substantial emotional distress.

If the respondent's answers identified them as a stalking victim, the survey instrument included additional questions focused on details of the stalking victimization. In addition to the changes to the instrument, BJS lowered the minimum age of survey respondents from 18 to 16.

<sup>3</sup>Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, 109 U.S.C. § 3402 et seq. (2005). <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-109hr3402enr/pdf/BILLS-109hr3402enr.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, 113 U.S.C. § 2261A et seq. (2013). <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-113s47enr/pdf/BILLS-113s47enr.pdf>

Due to these changes, estimates from the 2016 and 2019 SVS cannot be compared to estimates from the 2006 SVS. Minor instrument revisions were made for the 2019 SVS, so estimates from the 2019 SVS can be compared to estimates from the 2016 SVS.

The 2019 SVS can be used to estimate stalking prevalence for persons age 16 or older in the United States. The stalking screener questions allow for better measurement of the types of stalking behaviors experienced by respondents, especially stalking with technology. Improvements to the questions about the stalking incident enhanced the ability to describe the characteristics of stalking victimizations.

### Defining stalking victimization

There is no nationwide definition of stalking victimization. However, the federal definition and many state definitions include similar components. In developing the SVS, BJS used the expertise of a range of federal (including the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women and Office for Victims of Crime) and private sources in the fields of criminal justice and victim services. See *Stalking Victimization, 2016* (NCJ 253526, BJS, April 2021) for more information on state stalking laws.

### Measuring stalking with the SVS

Because the SVS definition of stalking is aligned with the federal definition, to be classified as a victim of stalking in the SVS, the respondent must have experienced a repeated course of conduct that caused them to experience fear or substantial emotional distress or that would cause a reasonable person to experience fear or substantial emotional distress.

The SVS screener questions collected the following elements of that definition: (1) unwanted contacts or behaviors, (2) a repeated course of conduct (i.e., experiencing the same behavior or contact more than once or experiencing two or more different behaviors one time), (3) actual fear, (4) substantial emotional distress, and (5) reasonable fear.

### Questions used to measure stalking behaviors

SQ1. In the past 12 months, have you experienced any unwanted contacts or behaviors? By that I mean has anyone—

- a. Followed you around and watched you?
- b. [Has anyone] Snuck into your home, car, or any place else and did unwanted things to let you know they had been there?
- c. [Has anyone] Waited for you at your home, work, school, or any place else when you didn't want them to?
- d. [Still thinking about unwanted contacts and behaviors, in the past 12 months, has anyone] Shown up, ridden or driven by places where you were when they had no business being there?
- e. [Has anyone] Left or sent unwanted items, cards, letters, presents, flowers, or any other unwanted items?
- f. [Has anyone] Harassed or repeatedly asked your friends or family for information about you or your whereabouts?

Now I want to ask about unwanted contacts or behaviors using various technologies, such as your phone, the Internet, or social media apps. Again, please DO NOT include bill collectors, solicitors, or other sales people. In the past 12 months, has anyone—

- g. Made unwanted phone calls to you, left voice messages, sent text messages, or used the phone excessively to contact you?
- h. [Has anyone] Spied on you or monitored your activities using technologies such as a listening device, camera, or computer or cell phone monitoring software?
- i. [Still thinking about unwanted contacts or behaviors, in the past 12 months, has anyone] Tracked your whereabouts with an electronic tracking device or application, such as GPS or an application on your cell phone?
- j. [Has anyone] Posted or threatened to post inappropriate, unwanted, or personal information about you on the Internet, including private photographs, videos, or spreading rumors?
- k. [Has anyone] Sent unwanted e-mails or messages using the Internet, for example, using social media apps or websites like Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook?
- l. [Has anyone] Monitored your activities using social media apps like Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook?

### Question used to measure repetition

SQ2. Has anyone done (this/any of these things) to you more than once in the past 12 months?

*If the respondent answered 'no' to this question, but had experienced more than one of the stalking behaviors, the interview continued and they were asked about fear and emotional distress.*

### Questions used to measure actual fear and substantial emotional distress

SQ3a. Did any of these unwanted contacts or behaviors make you fear for your safety or the safety of someone close to you?

SQ3b. Did any of these unwanted contacts or behaviors cause you substantial emotional distress?

### Questions used to measure reasonable fear

Now I have some additional questions about the time someone {behavior<sub>1</sub>}, {behavior<sub>2</sub>}, and {behavior<sub>x</sub>...}. Thinking about the person or persons who committed these unwanted contacts or behaviors in the past 12 months, did any of the following occur—

SQ4. Did this person or these people damage or attempt to damage or destroy property belonging to you or someone else in your household?

SQ5. [Thinking about the person or persons who committed these unwanted contacts or behaviors in the past 12 months] Did this person or these people—

- Physically attack you?
- Attempt to physically attack you?
- Threaten to physically attack you?

SQ6. [Thinking about the person or persons who committed these unwanted contacts or behaviors in the past 12 months] Did this person or these people—

- Physically attack someone close to you or a pet?
- Attempt to physically attack someone close to you or a pet?
- Threaten to physically attack someone close to you or a pet?

Of the 3.4 million stalking victims in 2019, more than 2.1 million (62%) experienced fear and 2.4 million (69%) experienced substantial emotional distress (**table 10**). About 1.6 million (45%) victims had an experience that would, by definition, cause a reasonable person to experience fear, including property damage or an attack.

**TABLE 10**  
Number and percent of stalking victims, by component of stalking definition, 2019

Component of stalking definition	Number of stalking victims <sup>a</sup>	Percent of stalking victims
Total	3,419,710	100%
Actual fear <sup>b*</sup>	2,131,180	62.3%
Emotional distress <sup>c</sup>	2,373,600 ‡	69.4% †
Reasonable fear <sup>d</sup>	1,553,560 †	45.4% †
Damage/attempted damage or destruction of property*	610,940	17.9
Threatened/attempted/completed attack on victim	309,470 †	9.0 †
Threatened/attempted/completed attack on pet or someone close to victim	103,280 †	3.0 †
Two or more reasonable fear components <sup>e</sup>	529,870	15.5

Note: Details do not sum to totals because victims could experience more than one component of the stalking definition (i.e., fear, emotional distress, or reasonable fear). See appendix table 14 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Number of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>b</sup>Includes stalking where the victim reported that the unwanted behaviors made them fear for their safety or the safety of someone close to them.

<sup>c</sup>Includes stalking where the victim reported that the unwanted behaviors caused them substantial emotional distress.

<sup>d</sup>Includes stalking that involved damage or attempted damage or destruction of property; or threatened, attempted, or completed attacks on the victim, someone close to them, or a pet.

<sup>e</sup>Includes stalking that involved multiple types of reasonable fear components (i.e., damage or attempted damage or destruction of property; or threatened, attempted, or completed attacks on the victim, someone close to them, or a pet).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.



## Standard error computations

When national estimates are derived from a sample, caution must be taken when comparing one estimate to another. Although one estimate may be larger than another, estimates based on a sample have some degree of sampling error. The sampling error of an estimate depends on several factors, including the amount of variation in the responses and the size of the sample. When the sampling error around an estimate is accounted for, differences in estimates may not be statistically significant.

One measure of the sampling error associated with an estimate is the standard error. The standard error may vary from one estimate to the next. Generally, an estimate with a small standard error provides a more reliable approximation of the true value than an estimate with a larger standard error. Estimates with relatively large standard errors are associated with less precision and reliability and should be interpreted with caution.

Generalized variance functions (GVF) parameters were used to generate standard errors for each point estimate (e.g., numbers, percentages, and rates) in this report. To generate standard errors around prevalence estimates from the SVS, the U.S. Census Bureau produces GVF parameters for BJS. The GVFs account for aspects of the NCVS's complex sample design and represent the curve fitted to a selection of individual standard errors based on the Balanced Repeated Replication technique.

BJS conducted statistical tests to determine whether differences in estimated numbers, percentages, and rates in this report were statistically significant once sampling error was accounted for. Using statistical analysis programs developed specifically for the NCVS, all comparisons in the text were tested for significance. The primary test procedure used was the Student's t-statistic, which tests the difference between two sample estimates.

Findings described in this report as higher, lower, or different passed a test at either the 0.05 level (95% confidence level) or 0.10 level (90% confidence level) of statistical significance. Figures and tables in this report should be referenced for testing on specific findings. Caution is required when comparing estimates not explicitly discussed in this report.

Estimates and standard errors of the estimates in this report may be used to generate a confidence interval around the estimate as a measure of the margin of error. The following example illustrates how standard errors may be used to generate confidence intervals:

Based on the SVS, in 2019 an estimated 1.3% of all persons age 16 or older experienced stalking victimization. (See appendix table 1.) Using GVFs, BJS determined that the estimated prevalence rate has a standard error of 0.05%. (See appendix table 15.) A confidence interval around the estimate is generated by multiplying the standard error by  $\pm 1.96$  (the t-score of a normal, two-tailed distribution that excludes 2.5% at either end of the distribution). Therefore, the 95% confidence interval around the 1.3% estimate is  $1.3 \pm (0.05 \times 1.96)$  or (1.22% to 1.40%). In other words, if BJS used the same sampling method to select different samples and computed an interval estimate for each sample, it would expect the true population parameter (percentage of stalking victims) to fall within the interval estimates 95% of the time.

For this report, BJS also calculated a coefficient of variation (CV) for all estimates, representing the ratio of the standard error to the estimate. CVs (not shown in tables) provide another measure of reliability and a means for comparing the precision of estimates across measures with differing levels or metrics.

## APPENDIX TABLE 1

### Number and percent of persons who were victims of stalking, by type of stalking, 2016 and 2019

Type of stalking	Number of stalking victims <sup>a</sup>		Percent of all persons <sup>b</sup>	
	2016	2019*	2016	2019*
Total	3,788,800 †	3,419,710	1.5% †	1.3%
Any traditional stalking <sup>c</sup>	2,472,440	2,300,830	1.0%	0.9%
Traditional stalking only	703,250	681,240	0.3	0.3
Any stalking with technology <sup>d</sup>	3,085,550 †	2,738,470	1.2% †	1.1%
Stalking with technology only	1,316,360 †	1,118,890	0.5 †	0.4
Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>e</sup>	1,769,190	1,619,580	0.7%	0.6%

Note: Details may not sum to totals because victims could experience more than one type of stalking. The total population age 16 or older was 256,432,020 in 2016 and 260,731,490 in 2019. See appendix table 15 for standard errors.

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Number of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>b</sup>Percentage of persons age 16 or older who experienced stalking victimization in the past year.

<sup>c</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>d</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>e</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

## APPENDIX TABLE 2

### Estimates and standard errors for figure 1: Prevalence of stalking, by type of stalking, 2016 and 2019

Type of stalking	Estimate		Standard error		95% confidence interval			
					2016		2019	
	2016	2019*	2016	2019	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Total	1.5% †	1.3%	0.05%	0.05%	1.39%	1.57%	1.22%	1.40%
Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	0.3	0.3	0.02	0.02	0.24	0.31	0.22	0.30
Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	0.5 †	0.4	0.03	0.03	0.46	0.57	0.38	0.48
Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c</sup>	0.7	0.6	0.03	0.03	0.63	0.75	0.56	0.68

Note: The total population age 16 or older was 256,432,020 in 2016 and 260,731,490 in 2019.

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

### APPENDIX TABLE 3

#### Standard errors for table 1: Persons age 16 or older who were victims of stalking, by type of stalking behavior, 2019

Type of stalking behavior	Number of stalking victims	Percent of stalking victims	Percent of all persons
<b>Total</b>	120,536	~	0.05%
<b>Any traditional stalking</b>	98,651	1.64%	0.04%
Followed or watched	75,170	2.10	0.03
Showed up at/rode by/drove by places	68,629	2.13	0.03
Harassed/repeatedly asked friends/family for information	63,256	2.09	0.02
Waited at home/work/school/any other place	54,759	1.97	0.02
Left/sent unwanted items	45,973	1.76	0.02
Sneaked into home/car/any other place	40,342	1.59	0.02
<b>Any stalking with technology</b>	107,732	1.40%	0.04%
Made unwanted phone calls left voice messages/sent text messages	87,184	1.85	0.03
Sent unwanted emails/messages using the Internet or social media	79,294	1.94	0.03
Monitored activities using social media	60,466	1.82	0.02
Posted/threatened to post inappropriate/unwanted/personal information	57,902	1.77	0.02
Spied on or monitored activities using technology	50,437	1.62	0.02
Tracked whereabouts with an electronic device/application	40,452	1.36	0.02

~Not applicable.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

### APPENDIX TABLE 4

#### Estimates and standard errors for figure 2: Percent of stalking victims who reported to police, by type of stalking, 2016 and 2019

Type of stalking	Estimate		Standard error		95% confidence interval			
					2016		2019	
	2016	2019*	2016	2019	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Total	28.1%	28.7%	1.40%	1.58%	25.34%	30.84%	25.56%	31.75%
Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	38.9 ‡	29.6	3.52	3.55	32.00	45.81	22.64	36.55
Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	15.9 †	22.7	1.93	2.54	12.08	19.65	17.75	27.72
Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c</sup>	32.9	32.3	2.14	2.36	28.69	37.08	27.71	36.98

\*Comparison year.

†Difference with comparison year is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison year is significant at the 90% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 5****Standard errors for table 2: Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking, reporting to police, and reason for not reporting, 2016 and 2019**

	Total stalking		Traditional stalking only		Stalking with technology only		Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology	
	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019	2016	2019
<b>Reported to police</b>	1.40%	1.58%	3.52%	3.55%	1.93%	2.54%	2.14%	2.36%
<b>Not reported to police</b>	1.43%	1.59%	3.54%	3.56%	1.96%	2.56%	2.18%	2.38%
Reason not reported								
Not important enough to report	1.83	2.04	4.66	4.60	2.85	3.42	2.74	3.02
Dealt with it another way	1.80	2.03	4.54	4.41	2.77	3.37	2.77	3.06
Police couldn't do anything	1.64	1.95	3.77	4.52	2.67	3.25	2.44	2.84
Police wouldn't help	1.35	1.63	3.73	3.97	1.94	2.47	2.10	2.50
Other/unknown reason	1.26	1.50	3.45	3.04	1.52	1.72	2.17	2.63
Feared offender	0.91	1.11	2.41	2.93	1.11	1.50	1.58	1.71
<b>Number of victims</b>	117,999	120,536	50,883	53,321	69,637	68,510	80,729	82,598

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 6****Standard errors for table 3: Prevalence of cyberstalking, by type of cyberstalking behavior, 2019**

Type of cyberstalking behavior	Number of cyberstalking victims	Percent of all persons
Total	62,612	0.02%
Sent unwanted emails/messages using the Internet or social media	47,363	0.02
Monitored activities using social media	35,549	0.01
Posted/threatened to post inappropriate/unwanted/personal information	36,799	0.01
Spied on or monitored activities using technology	35,868	0.01
Tracked whereabouts with an electronic device/application	26,348	0.01

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 7****Standard errors for table 4: Prevalence of stalking, by demographic characteristics of victims, 2019**

Victim demographic characteristic	Population age 16 or older	Standard error	
		Number of victims	Percent of all persons
<b>Total</b>	260,731,490	120,536	0.05%
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	126,441,250	64,140	0.05%
Female	134,290,240	101,575	0.08
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>			
White	163,305,520	96,181	0.06%
Black	31,285,740	37,690	0.12
Hispanic	43,863,500	46,305	0.10
Asian/Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	17,106,850	27,254	0.16
American Indian/ Alaska Native	1,484,090	14,175	0.94
Two or more races	3,685,800	24,459	0.65
<b>Age</b>			
16–19	16,149,660	31,490	0.19%
20–24	21,412,920	42,118	0.19
25–34	45,537,710	57,692	0.13
35–49	61,677,140	62,824	0.10
50–64	62,651,280	53,686	0.09
65 or older	53,302,790	36,645	0.07
<b>Marital status</b>			
Never married	81,158,800	76,577	0.09%
Married	129,503,560	63,843	0.05
Widowed	15,278,790	22,851	0.15
Divorced	28,302,350	54,828	0.19
Separated	5,204,210	28,550	0.54
<b>Household income</b>			
Less than \$25,000	43,138,530	61,085	0.14%
\$25,000–\$49,999	64,621,860	58,436	0.09
\$50,000–\$99,999	85,180,950	65,514	0.08
\$100,000–\$199,999	50,826,710	47,248	0.09
\$200,000 or more	16,963,450	24,967	0.15

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 8****Standard errors for table 5: Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and victim-offender relationship, 2019**

Type of victim-offender relationship	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only	Stalking with technology only	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology
<b>Known</b>	1.64%	3.86%	3.03%	1.99%
Intimate partner	1.51	2.45	2.31	2.42
Current partner	0.81	1.28	1.39	1.30
Ex-partner	1.37	2.15	1.97	2.28
Other relative	0.74	1.87	1.27	1.03
Well-known/casual acquaintance	1.69	3.78	2.84	2.49
Friend/ex-friend	0.90	1.93	1.76	1.20
Acquaintance/in-law or relative of spouse or ex-spouse/friend of one of the offenders/other	1.16	2.29	1.90	1.80
Roommate/housemate/boarder/neighbor	0.97	2.72	1.22	1.43
Professional acquaintance	1.01	2.09	1.60	1.60
<b>Stranger</b>	1.34%	3.56%	2.40%	1.65%
<b>Unknown</b>	1.20%	2.60%	2.66%	1.19%
<b>Number of victims</b>	120,536	53,321	68,510	82,598

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 9****Standard errors for table 6: Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and duration and frequency of stalking, 2019**

Stalking duration and frequency	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only	Stalking with technology only	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology
<b>Duration</b>				
Less than 1 month	1.33%	3.48%	2.43%	1.62%
1 month to less than 1 year	1.73	3.79	3.01	2.52
1 year to less than 2 years	1.15	2.34	2.05	1.69
2 years or more	1.49	3.19	2.49	2.24
Unknown	0.50	0.93	0.98	0.70
<b>Frequency</b>				
2 to 10 times	1.73%	3.05%	3.01%	2.53%
11 to 50 times	1.37	1.95	2.37	2.18
More than 50 times	0.90	1.32	1.67	1.38
Too many times to count	1.08	1.27	1.93	1.74
Don't know/don't remember	0.70	1.75	1.25	0.96
<b>Number of victims</b>	120,536	53,321	68,510	82,598

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 10****Standard errors for table 7: Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and victim's self-protective actions, 2019**

Self-protective action taken	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only	Stalking with technology only	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology
<b>Any self-protective action taken</b>	1.46%	3.89%	2.36%	1.75%
Changed day-to-day activities	1.49	3.15	2.01	2.39
Blocked unwanted calls/messages/other communications	1.69	3.12	2.68	2.26
Self-defensive action/security measure	1.47	3.47	1.99	2.28
Changed personal information	1.55	2.01	2.74	2.40
Applied for a restraining/protection/no-contact order	0.98	1.83	1.32	1.67
<b>Number of victims</b>	120,536	53,321	68,510	82,598

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## APPENDIX TABLE 11

### Standard errors for table 8: Percent of stalking victims, by type of stalking and victim's fears, 2019

Victim's fear	Total stalking	Traditional stalking only	Stalking with technology only	Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology
Being killed or physical/bodily harm	1.75%	3.89%	2.78%	2.38%
Being killed	1.27	2.67	1.64	2.09
Physical/bodily harm	1.68	3.77	2.50	2.52
Someone close to victim being harmed	1.63%	3.62%	2.52%	2.47%
Loss of job or job opportunities/freedom/ social network/peers/friends	1.73%	3.76%	3.00%	2.16%
Loss of job/job opportunities	1.30	2.19	2.10	2.08
Loss of freedom	1.50	3.17	2.10	2.38
Loss of social network/peers/friends	1.28	2.02	2.13	2.06
Behaviors never stopping	1.74%	3.87%	3.04%	2.42%
Not knowing what would happen next	1.71%	3.83%	3.04%	2.33%
Losing one's mind	1.37%	2.56%	2.14%	2.19%
Number of victims	120,536	53,321	68,510	82,598

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

## APPENDIX TABLE 12

### Estimates and standard errors for figure 3: Percent of stalking victims who sought victim services, by type of stalking, 2019

Type of stalking	Percent	Standard error	95% confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Total	15.9%	1.27%	13.42%	18.42%
Traditional stalking only <sup>a</sup>	8.3 †	2.15	4.14	12.56
Stalking with technology only <sup>b</sup>	13.3 †	2.06	9.29	17.37
Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology <sup>c*</sup>	20.9	2.05	16.88	24.93

\*Comparison group. Percentage of victims who sought victim services compared to each stalking type and not total stalking.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

<sup>a</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with a tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the Internet; sending emails or messages using the Internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

<sup>c</sup>Includes victims who experienced both types of stalking.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 13**

**Standard errors for table 9: Percent of stalking victims who sought and received victim services, by type of service received, 2019**

Type of victim service	Percent of stalking victims
<b>Victim services were received</b>	3.83%
Counseling/therapy	4.92
Legal/court services	4.81
Shelter/safehouse service or safety planning	4.46
Assistance getting a restraining/protection/no-contact order	4.30
Other type of service	4.16
Risk/threat assessment	3.92
Crisis hotline counseling	3.47
Medical advocacy	2.71
Short-term/emergency financial assistance	2.57
Federal/state victim compensation	1.75
<b>Victim services were not received</b>	3.67%
<b>Number of victims who sought victim services</b>	47,620

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 14**

**Standard errors for table 10: Number and percent of stalking victims, by component of stalking definition, 2019**

Component of stalking definition	Number of stalking victims	Percent of stalking victims
<b>Total</b>	120,536	~
<b>Actual fear</b>	94,902	1.70%
<b>Emotional distress</b>	100,217	1.61%
<b>Reasonable fear</b>	80,878	1.74%
Damage/attempted damage or destruction of property	50,469	1.33
Threatened/attempted/completed attack on victim	35,817	1.00
Threatened/attempted/completed attack on pet or someone close to victim	20,622	0.59
Two or more reasonable fear components	46,970	1.26

~Not applicable.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2019.

**APPENDIX TABLE 15**

**Standard errors for appendix table 1: Number and percent of persons who were victims of stalking, by type of stalking, 2016 and 2019**

Type of stalking	Number of stalking victims		Percent of all persons	
	2016	2019	2016	2019
<b>Total</b>	117,999	120,536	0.05%	0.05%
<b>Any traditional stalking</b>	95,410	98,651	0.04%	0.04%
Traditional stalking only	50,883	53,321	0.02	0.02
<b>Any stalking with technology</b>	106,545	107,732	0.04%	0.04%
Stalking with technology only	69,637	68,510	0.03	0.03
<b>Both traditional stalking and stalking with technology</b>	80,729	82,598	0.03%	0.03%

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016 and 2019.





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

This report was written by Rachel E. Morgan and Jennifer L. Truman. Alexandra Thompson and Stephanie Mueller verified the report.

David Fialkoff and Edrienne Su edited the report. Carrie Epps-Carey produced the report.

February 2022, NCJ 301735



NCJ 301735

Office of Justice Programs  
Building Solutions • Supporting Communities • Advancing Justice  
[www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov)