Welcome, everyone, to the National Criminal Justice Training Center webinar. Our topic today is SORNA Sustainability for Substantially Implemented and Near-Implemented SORNA Programs.

This project is supported by grants awarded by the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, the Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this presentation are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice.

I'm pleased to introduce our presenters for you today. Paul Fuentes is a senior associate with the National Criminal Justice Training Center. Paul serves as a court administrator and has worked in tribal justice since September of 2009. Paul has continued to contribute to overall growth of justice services offered by tribes by way of successful grant writing and program development.

Paul oversees the judicial branch, which includes tribal court, Healing to Wellness Court, probation office, sex offender registry programs, and a legal aid program. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in education from Southwestern Oklahoma State University. Welcome, Paul.

Margie Weaver is an associate with the National Criminal Justice Training Center. Margie Weaver is an assistant general counsel for the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. Ms. Weaver currently represents DOC and its employees in sex offender litigation, as well as defending the agency and its employees in cases filed by inmates, offenders, employees, and others, assists employees in preparing for litigation, reviews agency policies and procedures, reviews agency contracts, and provides legal advice to the Board of Corrections, the director, and other agency employees.

Ms. Weaver has represented clients in corrections, government, and law enforcement folks throughout her career, including in private practice. As an assistant attorney general for the state of Oklahoma and now at the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, Ms. Weaver received her bachelor of arts in political science and her juris doctorate from Oklahoma State University School of Law. Welcome, Margie.

Kevin Mariano is a former chief of police from the Pueblo of Isleta tribe in New Mexico. Kevin has 23 years of law enforcement experience and has worked with the SORNA program during his law enforcement career. Kevin has been a full-time project coordinator with the National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College for two and a half years and over 10 years as an associate. Welcome, Kevin.

And my name is Lea Geurts. I'm also a project coordinator with the National Criminal Justice Training Center at Fox Valley Technical College, providing training and technical assistance for grantees funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and other Department of Justice programs. I have over 15 years of experience working in tribal justice programs in probation, court administration, SORNA, and tribal justice system planning and hold a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration. We are pleased to be here today with you.

Before we get started, I would like to offer a moment of silence to honor everyone who continues to work and serve during this time, and for all of those of you that have been impacted by our current situation. Thank you again for your service.

For the purposes of today, we hope to share and have some good conversations around sustainability. We're finding that a lot of programs that have been up and operational or have been substantially implemented for a period of time are starting to look down the road and asking good questions.

Such as just where do we go from here? How are we going to maintain our program? And what happens when the unexpected happens? We hope that by the end of our time together today that you will walk away with some topic areas to start thinking about and a method for capturing and putting those thoughts into action that you can apply directly to your ongoing success of your jurisdiction's SORNA program.

With that being said, we would like to launch our first poll question. Which of the following best describes your time in SORNA-- zero to three years, three to five years, five to eight years, eight or more years? Or if you're attending and do not currently working in SORNA, please make that selection.

Paul, it looks like we have a great variety of folks on the phone with multiple different levels of experience. It looks like the majority of folks attending have zero to three years of experience. We've got a few folks with three to five years of experience, a small group of folks that have five to eight experience, and then a few folks that are just interested in hearing the SORNA topic for today.

Thank you for your participation in that poll. That information is very helpful. I'll go ahead and transition over to my colleague, Paul, who is going to kick it off with sustainability.

Awesome. It's good to see that strong range of employee tenure or at least a variation there. So I just wanted to say before we continue, just thank you for joining us today. And of course, it's an honor for me to be able to be sharing with you today.

We have here a quote that I like from *Cambridge Dictionary* on sustainability. And it says, "the quality of being able to continue over a period of time." And so as Lea was leading us off into, how does this relate to your sex offender registry program? Where do you see the program in the next year or two?

Over the next five years, what will the quality of the program be? Will it have fallen? Will it be maintained? Or will it be improved? And so I think what we're covering today will really help us to set up a solid foundation for us to continue to develop and improve our sex offender registry programs.

The aspects to achieving program sustainability-- so I want to introduce you to these five aspects that we're going to be talking about today. But the first one is fiscal or financial. The second one is employee retention. We have partnerships, community involvement. And the last thing we're going to look at is program analysis.

So as for fiscal sustainability, I don't know if you have seen that 1996 movie *Jerry Maguire.* But in the movie, an NFL player-- his name is Rod Tidwell. And he's played by Cuba Gooding Jr. But he says to his sports agent, Jerry Maguire, played by Tom Cruise, show me the money. And so when we think of sustaining any of our programs, we really have to think about his quote here, "show me the money," because it's impossible to keep our programs running without money.

It's important that we explore funding opportunities. That's just part of what we do to sustain the program. One opportunity that closed recently was the SMART Support for Adam Walsh Act. But most of the time, that comes out every year. And that's an opportunity for your program to obtain funding.

Another one that is very popular, I would say, is the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, or CTAS. But that is another way to obtain funding for your program.

But maybe a lot of the tribes rely mostly on tribal funding. So when we're looking at the different types of funds available to the sex offender registry program, we think that it may be through gaming. So maybe there's funds available through gaming. Maybe it's through motor fuel. Maybe it's oil and gas or just general funds.

But that brings us to this slide, which is, what is your tribe's budget process? I think that that part is so important for us to understand. I'm over at the judicial branch of government for the tribe that I work for. I rely heavily upon what the sex offender registry program communicates to me as far as what their needs are.

So they may say, our program needs a new vehicle to conduct address verifications. Or, we need additional registering officials or new computers. But it's important that that program, whoever leads that program-- or if you're the registering official, no one's going to know your needs more than you.

And so I think that that's important to outline what your needs are and to communicate that to whoever does your budget. Or if you do your own program budget, it's important throughout the year, I think, to just keep notes on that and be able to know what your needs are and why you need it.

A lot of times, I will ask-- if I know that our sex offender registry program has a need, I will try to get quotes on whatever those needs are and, of course, insert that into an Excel spreadsheet. For our tribe, our process is, once I complete the budget, I share that with our judicial commission in our Supreme Court for approval. Upon their approval, I then submit that to the executive branch and legislative branch.

Then I attend legislative hearings. Usually those begin in the summer. And if the legislators approve, there's one more process. And that is, each fall, we go before the tribal council. The budget goes before the tribal council. And then they approve of the budget.

And so that is my tribe's process for getting a budget approved. And I think that it's important, especially for those who indicated as being fairly new to SORNA, that you understand and know your tribe's budget process and that you have a voice at that table and be able to describe the needs that your program has.

So questions to ask when preparing a budget-- so what are the deadlines you have to meet for your tribal budget calendar? As for me, as I said, most of our deadlines are getting to the legislators by the summer and by the fall to the tribal council. But it's important that you know those deadlines and that you're aware of them and that you meet them.

I think another important question is, what are your program goals? What are your program needs? And costs for to operate last year-- what financial or budget lessons did you learn from last year?

So one example would be last year, maybe one of our employees was on extended leave. So in our salary line item, it may look like that we overbudgeted. But you can go back and look and make note that that individual was on extended leave. And so you can plan that this following year, hopefully that's not the case.

Another thing that I thought of, especially with the COVID-19, is that this year you may have a lot of expenditures in cleaning supplies or face masks that you have to do. Well, next year, you may or may not have those same expenses. But that's where you look at last year and see what things are going to transfer into the following year or if those were just one-time expenses.

The next slide-- effectively present your budget. I think it starts with dressing professionally. Think of how you dress to go to an interview. Maybe it's a job you really want. How would you dress to do that interview? Or maybe if you're opening a business that you're really passionate about, how would you dress to go to the bank for a loan?

And so we're representing our programs. And so when we go before tribal leadership, it's important, I think, that we dress that way. Some of our sex offender registry programs are asking for hundreds of thousands of dollars. And so it's important that we show leadership that they're entrusting it into someone who is worthy of that trust who's going to do the best that they can with those funds to make their community safer.

Of course, you're going to want to have good talking points. You're going to need to have justified your budget in writing. Of course, you'll probably be questioned. And so it's so important that you know the Adam Walsh Act and the minimal standards that the tribe has to meet.

I think it's important that you know the history and that you'll be able to update your legislators or governor or chairman on the history and why the federal government notified the tribes that they had the ability to either implement SORNA or to have that delegated to the state. I think that that's really important leverage whenever you're asking for funds.

It's important that you have memorized your tribe's sex offender registration code and policies and procedures. And of course, you won't know it word for word, probably. But you should know what sections those cover and be able to refer to those.

And again, it's very likely that these leaders are going to ask you questions about your program that maybe you're not even planned for. But if you know these things, then those can help you while you're being asked those questions.

But the next one is be prepared to discuss issues and concerns such as officer safety and community notification. You never know. You may find that someone on the legislative body or governor or chairman may be-- that may be one of their interests. Maybe that's a platform that they ran for. And maybe they get behind what you're doing and maybe give you more money or just have their support in your future endeavors. So I think all of those things are really important when you're presenting your budget.

So budget successfully. And so I have a dad joke or an accountant joke for you. There are three types of accountants, those who can count and those who can't.

So what am I saying? Well, I'm saying that you have to make sure that you're monitoring your expenditures regularly, that you use a calendar to discover irregular expenses, that you pace your spending, that you set up monthly budget reviews with your accountant or finance department, forecasting operating expenditures, and be prepared to make adjustments to your budget.

And so that happens regularly with us. Quarterly, if not monthly, we're meeting with our finance department. And we're reviewing our expenditures, our cuff account. And we're comparing them to those that are in the finance department records. And we're making sure that those match. And if they don't, we try to resolve the discrepancy.

Being able to budget successfully is so important. And I will hand it off to Lea. Or if we want to do a check-in, we can do that.

That sounds great, Paul. Let's pull in Margie and Kevin and see if they have anything that they would like to contribute to the fiscal management component of our webinar. Margie or Kevin?

Paul, I have a question here, it looks like. In working towards future budgets for these SORNA programs, would it be beneficial or helpful to have others involved, such as your grant writers, accountant, or any other person, so you think that would assist with this, whether it would be presenting to your tribal councils and all?

Well, I know we're going to cover partnerships a little bit in just a few minutes. But it's definitely, I think, important that-- when we do the budget process, I bring in all the programs. And we're consulting with our finance department.

And if it's our grant writers, we consult with them. And we inform them, especially our grant writers, of the needs that we have so that they're out looking for other funding opportunities. I only named a few. But they're out looking for other opportunities to make our community safer. And if those apply to the SORNA program, then it's a great bridge to be able to then go after those funding opportunities.

And so as the sex offender registry program, I think we've got to be resourceful and not just rely on any one source of funding because it may not be there. So the more partners you bring in I think really can help your budget be successful. And if you have those individuals show up to the hearings or to meet with your executive office or legislators or tribal council, I think that that's really important and may be the support you need to get your budget to be approved.

Paul, I was going to mention, too, that if you do have a grant and it's ending soon, and you're going to have to supplement that, possibly through tribal funds, that you make sure that you take to the table to the people you're asking to add those funds in what goals were set when the grant was funded and how you met those goals and how those goals need to be continued despite the loss of the grant funding. And if you can show that you've made progress with that additional support, then it's more likely that somebody will trust you in being able to continue to meet those goals even though the source of funding has changed.

Definitely. That's a great point. And like I said, in our situation where we're preparing-- so right now, we're preparing 2021 budgets. And if I know that my grant, a SORNA grant, is going to end at the end of September, then I need to reflect that in the salaries as to maybe-- maybe the SORNA official was being paid 100% out of a grant. Well, I know starting-- we run on the calendar year. So starting October, November, December, that needs to be reflected in another source of income.

But you're definitely right that if you're meeting your goals and objectives that you described in your grant, then it's a lot easier to get funding than if you're turning in reports that are saying, we weren't able to meet our goals and objectives again. So definitely, both of those are great points and questions and thoughts.

Great conversation. Thank you. We want to shift now to our second pillar of conversation when we're talking about planning for sustainability. And that's looking at employee retention.

I think all of us are probably aware or have struggled with employee turnover, not just possibly within our SORNA program, but within other departments or agencies that we may have established or working relationships on. And we know that that can seriously impact the likelihood of program's success. And so we want to take a moment and just really ask some of these questions.

If we were to step back and evaluate, truly what is the cost of training a new employee? We know that, yes, there's dollars and cents that are attached to that. But even more so, it's that individual's knowledge. It's their contributions that they're making to managing their particular case load.

It's the relationships that they're establishing with the clients that they're providing service to within the community, within the department, within the agency. And we know a lot of that takes a substantial amount of time and effort. And it ultimately turns into a cost when we're looking at bringing in a new employee.

We also want to take a moment to evaluate where we know that our agency may have some potential shortcomings. For us, it was always competitive pay wages. And so when I would want to evaluate-- well, when we're losing staff, what is it that's driving them out the door? And so one of the big things that came up was competitive salaries.

And so I said, OK, I don't always have control over that. But are there other things that are making our employees or our staff stay or things that we might have control over that we can evaluate to try to reduce those levels of turnover? But asking that question, I think, is vital in developing our approach to address employee turnover.

We also want to look at our employee morale and how that's impacted with our retention. I know that all of us are very committed to our jobs, enjoy the work that we're doing. And at times, especially if we're the only person in that particular position, it can seem a little bit overwhelming and definitely can impact morale.

We also know that there's different situations that might arise within our communities that can impact morale. If we have a large amount of layoffs that are going on, that fear of that unknown can definitely impact morale. How are we going to be communicating with our staff on expectations or thoughts or discussions that are taking place to provide those senses of security?

Are we open and upfront also with our staff and employees as we're bringing them in to take on positions if something is 100% grant-funded and there may not be the option of it becoming a general line item for funding? So there's a lot of things that we want to think about when we're looking at employee training and turnover.

But really, the most important thing is really understanding the true impact of the cost of training a new employee. And I think that that helps when we're planning for sustainability because we should be planning around keeping that employee in their current role. How are we being sure that if we have a good employee that we're able to retain them?

And I think it starts-- like I had mentioned, it is looking at those expectations. Sometimes I know that I have staff who are coming into a position. And they ask, well, what am I supposed to do?

And you're like, well, here's a code. Or here's a policy. Go figure it out. But sitting down and assisting them with figuring that out or drawing a roadmap or setting up check-ins and opportunities for feedback to be given, both ways as far as performance, as far as challenges or struggles that the individual might be facing, always helps to increase employee retention and, again, ensures that those doors of communication are maintaining and being open.

A lot of times, especially when we're working in SORNA or any time in a public service field, it's not very often that our clients tell us things. It's not very often that we hear what a great job we're doing. It's not very often people are open and forthcoming and coming to our office and interacting with us at a strengths-based level.

So it's important that we're recognizing those successes, even those small successes, within our agency or our department-- of somebody who's doing a good job, of telling somebody thank you for the work that they're doing, understanding some of the struggles that they face. Maybe if they live within the community and they're going home and there might be some controversy around some of the positions that they're holding or some of the work that they're doing, letting them know that they're appreciated and recognizing those achievements is incredibly important.

Training and growth is also a key element to, I think, keeping and retaining our employees. I think that employees feel the investment from an employer when we're willing to send somebody to get additional training. Or we're wanting to enhance their skill set. Or we're wanting to assist them in striving to be the best employee that they can be in their position in their SORNA position.

It also creates a level of camaraderie between our SORNA officers where they're able to engage with other personnel, other people that are working in other jurisdictions that may have similar struggles or are going through a similar thing. And maybe they can share ideas on how to troubleshoot somebody.

Having that person to call and maybe things got-- there was some excitement. Or something happened in the office-- and the ability to debrief, not just with their employer or their supervisor, but also with peers, especially if they're the only employee in that particular field.

Cross-training of employees, again, key point-- and we'll probably come back to this one a little bit more as we move forward-- is that cross-training of employees. It's not only beneficial for employee retention. But it also assists in ensuring the livelihood of our program.

If something were to happen and we did experience a turnover or an emergency arose-- like Paul had mentioned, somebody was out on a leave of absence. And they were out for six months. How does somebody step in and maintain those operations moving forward to keep the program up and running?

And then the last few things that we have here is equipment. That can include safety equipment, computers, access to technology, our networks, our servers, all of those things that could contribute to that employee feeling valued and, again, wanting to come to work. There's a lot of times that I think our staff-- we know that our job is not a Monday through Friday, 8:00 to 4:30 job. But it gets pinned and really directed to try to maintain those hours.

It's not always conducive to the work that we're doing. We know sometimes overtime pay is not allowable in some of our funding streams. And so we find that our SORNA officers, our public-serving officers are working additional hours or being put in positions of not being able to attend to some or their family or their home life obligations.

And really offering a little bit of a flexible schedule, of course, meeting the needs of the clients that are being served because we know that our clients don't always operate on a 8:00 to 4:30 schedule-- to really allow that little bit of cushion that that individual may be looking to stay on, especially if they're a valued employee.

And then the last thing is we're always looking to have competitive salaries, which we know sometimes is within our control or not. But being in a position to advocate for the work and enhancing what we're able to report to our legislator or our budgetary decision makers is vital. And by increasing and tying some of those things together is showing that there's been an increase in training and increase in expertise and the amount of years of service all can play into looking at creating that competitive salary rate.

Like we had mentioned when we talked about cross-training, we know that there is that reality that we may encounter employee turnover. And so sometimes we put these things as a list. But these are really questions when we start thinking about, how do we plan for sustainability? These are those core questions that we want to start asking.

As we know, sometimes these things avail themselves in hindsight. When we're in a position and we no longer have our SORNA officer or we no longer have our colleague that's working with us anymore, we're like, gosh, I wish that we would have trained somebody else in this position.

These are questions that we want to start asking now before we get into that situation so we have a plan in place. And so that really is saying, how are we cross-training individuals? And maybe it's not somebody that's going to be able to work in our SORNA program on a day-to-day basis.

But maybe it's an officer that becomes familiarized with our reporting system, familiarized with how to log in to different systems, that's familiar with the code, that's familiar with, here's what this check-in looks like, and periodically comes in. So that way if something were to happen or even if an individual had to go on vacation, there's somebody that can come and fill in and really be cross-trained at a level that they can contribute to maintaining the status quo as far as the operations of the department.

Again, looking at those hiring plans, we always recommend and it's always vital to keep in contact with the SMART office any changes, updating that contact information, especially when we're having turnover. There's a lot of vital information that's shared and that may be disseminated through the SMART office.

And as long as they have the right contact information, that will allow us to sustain operations and know what expectations are moving forward or if there's any new updates that we need to be aware of. So when we are able to fill that position, it's not playing catch-up for that individual.

And then, again, always training and technical assistance for new employees-- we find a lot of jurisdictions sometimes require individuals to partake in some types of technical assistance or training opportunities to get acclimated, especially if there's individuals that are fairly new to SORNA or just coming in, but also as refresher courses for some of our individuals that have been working in this field for a while. It's not just about the content of those requirements but, again, that relationship building, that troubleshooting opportunity, that building rapport with one another, and ultimately keeping that employee morale up and thriving.

So before we transition to looking at partnerships, we want to take a moment and launch our next poll. This next poll is wanting to look at partnerships. And so the poll is, do you currently participate in any committees or teams that focus on SORNA-related issues?

The options that you have to select from are-- yes, we have a SORNA-specific team or committee. Yes, SORNA is part of a multidisciplinary team. Yes, our program is part of a SORNA regional state consortium. There's some other type of team that you participate in. Or no, you do not currently participate in any team or committee.

And we'll just take a moment to review some of these poll results. So it looks like we have a large amount of individuals that are participating in some form of committee.

So it looks like there's just about 18% that have a specific SORNA team or committee, about 32% of

SORNA is part of a multidisciplinary team. There's 5% that report having a SORNA regional or state consortium. 14% are participating in some other form of a team that can address SORNA issues. And then we've got 32%, so about a third of folks, that aren't participating in any team or committee.

We'll go ahead. And we're going to transition, like I mentioned, to looking at those benefits of partnerships. And Paul is going to walk us through some of those benefits. Paul?

Exactly. That was a-- the results on the survey, they really, definitely highlight-- it sounds like a lot of people are buying into partnerships. But when I think of partnerships, I'm like, what are eggs without bacon or Tom without Jerry, Batman without Robin? Or if you've been watching basketball on Sunday nights, the Michael Jordan episode-- what was he without Scottie Pippen?

And so our SORNA programs definitely need partners. But some of those benefits-- early on, I remember reaching out to other sex offender registry programs and asking to use or to see their code and policy and procedures. And really, most of the programs that we reached out to were willing to partnership at that early level and just give us information on SORNA stuff.

We were a new program and had nothing. So having those types of partnerships or reaching out to those people to try to make those connections were definitely-- we wouldn't be where we are now without those partnerships.

But the second benefit that I look at besides the codes and the documents and those types of resources is manpower. Now, we had a defendant escape from our courtroom. And so BIA was chasing him for a moment, but he had gone pretty far. So he called for backup.

And right away, because of partnerships that he had with the county, we had all kinds of officers there. We had dogs there. We even had a helicopter flying over us. But that manpower was a direct result of the partnerships that BIA had created. And so definitely, there's more people in partnerships.

As we said, access to the documents-- but there are other resources, such as some of our sex offender registry programs still don't have access to NSOR. And so they need to or have partnerships in place so that they can enter information into NSOR.

Another thing that we found going across the country, I guess, to meet with tribes is that some of them don't have access to finger and palm prints. And so that's where it's necessary to speak up and to say, this is something we really need. How can I get it, and to find a way to create those partnerships, whether it be with BIA, whether it be with the counties, whether it be with the tribal access program.

And of course, that increases safety for responders. And that example that I gave on manpower fits there as well. So definitely, there is power in numbers.

We can go to the next slide that says, how to define a partnership agreement and why. And so we have here-- some people use this interchangeably, and that's fine-- a memorandum of understanding and a memorandum of agreement. Some tribes prefer one over the other.

We really used ours a little differently. And I think for us, the MOU describes our relationship. And the memorandum of agreement speaks to the responsibilities. This is not like those relationships or responsibilities aren't defined in both.

But for us, for the memorandum of understanding, we really use those with outside agencies. So for example, we have a memorandum of understanding with BIA. For us, we are all civilians. So we don't carry the gear. We don't have abilities to arrest. So we do all the registering, all the administrative part of what is registering an offender.

But when it came to law enforcement, we really needed BIA's partnership. And so we were able to enter into an agreement with them. And so we do all the administrative part. And then they help us with all the enforcement part.

We do address verifications. We go together when we serve notices. Usually they're the ones who may serve a notice to a sex offender that they need to register. So for us, that MOU served as a written agreement where we were able to clarify our relationship with BIA as an outside agency.

And our memorandum of agreements we've reserved for the intergovernmental agreements. So that may look like-- for us, one of ours is an agreement that we have with our personnel department or HR. And that is that they are going to notify us if a new hire indicates that they are a sex offender.

And so HR informs us of that. And then the sex offender is also notified that they have three days to get with our office to register. And so at that point, it's HR who's notifying that sex offender that they need to come in within three days. So those are two examples for us on how we differentiate an MOU and an MOA.

But I think more importantly, just having-- whatever you call it, having an agreement in writing, I think, is the point. And I think that that's so important because it allows for that information to flow for you to be able to exchange information because the responsibilities are carried out through administration or personnel changes.

So we've had where our BIA chief has left. And we've gotten new ones. Or someone is just sitting in for a while as acting. But in each of those changes, because of the agreement we have in place, both parties have acknowledged and operated under the terms of those agreements. So the agreement, I think, is so important-- and of course to have it in writing, which we'll talk about next under the benefits of MOUs and MOAs.

But definitely to have that in writing-- I think, why not just do the handshake? Or why not just-- oh, I've known so-and-so for a long time. Anything I ask, they're willing to help us out with. Well, that is great. But in 5 years or 10 years, so- and-so may not be there. Or you may not be there. It's important for our programs to have these written agreements so that they can survive the test of time.

Also, another thing about agreements is just the roles and responsibilities that are outlined. That is so important because when you're thinking about who is accountable and if there is a gap or if there is a mishap or a mistake that occurs, one can go to that agreement and be able to discover either who was at fault but, more importantly, how you can fix that situation. So I think that that is extremely important.

Of course, it provides the duties. And it minimizes the conflicts. But I really like that most agreements have a way to resolve any issues that come up. And so a lot of the agreements say that one of the parties needs to inform the other party if there is an issue and that they're to meet to resolve it. And if they can't, then there can be a way out of the agreement with a 30-day notice.

All that type of language, I think, is so important because what it does is it ensures that both parties will come back to the table and, in good faith, try to resolve the issues. And ultimately, both parties, I think, can leave egos aside or can get away from blaming each other and really focus on, this partnership really does help our community. It makes our community safer. And so we want to solve this. And we want to continue operating in good faith.

We can go now and transition into community involvement. And when I think of community involvement, really what came to mind was in 2004-- if you are a fan of the NBA, you know that the NBA is-- it's a multi probably billion-dollar sports league. And it's one of the most popular ones in the United States and probably the world.

But if you can remember back to 2004, there was a huge fight between the Indiana Pacers and the

Detroit Pistons. It got so bad that it got into the fans. And the fans had even fought.

And so after that, many of the players were suspended. Millions of dollars in fines are lost in salaries. And the NBA was really headed to a place where they had come across-- I remember some media outlets using the word "thuggish" and really is just a really bad image.

But the very next year, in 2005, they launched a program called NBA Cares. And that program is really involved in the community. And sometimes if you watch games, you'll hear them talk about NBA Cares and maybe players reading books to kids or opening libraries, all these things where they really get involved and connect with their community.

And so for any program, any tribal program, let alone our sex offender registry program, we cannot be in the silos. We definitely have to make a connection with our community. And when we go back to thinking about the budget part, how important it is to have your program in the community, it's a lot easier to gain support when they know that you're in it.

We can go to obligation to inform the public. Last week, we did a webinar. And we really did the SORNA 101. But when we think of the Adam Walsh Act or our SORNA programs, we a lot of times grasp the portion of sex offender registry. But we can at times neglect the part that is community notification. And so to what extent is your program in the community-- are you making an impact in the community?

Adam Walsh Act-- the minimum standard requirement was that we have a registry website. We talked about that last week with people being able to put in their email to subscribe and get information when a sex offender moves into the area. But can our program go beyond that? And I really think not only can we, but it's a necessity for us to be able to sustain our program in the long run.

Community notification and education methods-- that's our next slide. There we go. So community meetings-- a lot of times my colleague Chris and I-- we've done so many presentations where we talk about community meetings and how important those meetings are. But that's not the only way of notifying and being involved in our public or with the community. But public forums are important.

Those meetings or finance meetings with our legislators are important for us to be able to push our mission across and let people know what we do and how we're involved in the community. Of course, we often piggyback with the events that maybe a domestic violence program is doing. And we'll set up a booth and inform community members on what the sex offender registry program does to help make our community safer.

We know some tribes put their registry into binders or books and have those at many places where community members gather, maybe the tribal complex or the courthouse. But I think all those things are really making our community safer and also doing a program branding-- and so really branding our program.

Of course, the digital interactions because of COVID-19-- we were recently in a town hall. We were able to share about some of our program, what it does. And really, I was there on behalf of the court in general. But how are you getting involved in the community during this time or sharing registry information? And of course, the traditional media, such as news articles-- we often will put a notice for sex offenders to register in the newspaper.

To the next slide, agencies receiving sex offender notification-- and so when we think about being involved in the community, I think we-- well, in the Adam Walsh, we really have to make sure that these individuals are notified. And that is schools and public housing agencies, social service entities responsible for protecting minors-- so for us, that is our Indian Child Welfare or our child protection services-- volunteer organizations where contact with minors or other vulnerable individuals might occur.

If the pow-wow team-- if they're volunteers but there's a lot of interaction with children, the pow-wow team or committee, then they need to know and have this information about the sex offenders on the registry. And then, of course, any organizations or companies or individuals who just request the information-- we have a duty to inform those individuals. So this, again, I think is branding. But more importantly, it's getting that information out there and being a resource to our community.

There's a few additional outreach to these agencies, which is identify any agencies that may not be receiving notifications right now. So I think that if you look at the different programs-- or even if you pull your tribal directory and say, am I making contact to each of these programs? Do they know that the sex offender registry exists and that they can go to that to get up-to-date and reliable information?

Also working with agencies that are receiving notifications-- and so I talked earlier about our partnership with domestic violence. But I think that that partnership is so valuable to us.

And attend agency meetings to provide information. Or invite representatives to existing community meetings. And so, again, we may piggyback off of an event that is occurring. And we'll use that opportunity to share what our program is doing.

We'll share if it's offender information as far as what is on a public registry-- all that information, again, to make our communities safer, to be involved in our community, and to make sure that we're putting in these efforts to be able to sustain our community, sustain our program, not just this year, but for the next 5, 10, 15 years down the road. So I think we are switching to program analysis. And I will hand it back to Lea.

Great. Thank you, Paul. Tons of great information. I'd like to take a moment and check back in with our panel, Kevin and Margie, and just see. We've covered quite a few topics since we checked in last, looking at employee retention, partnerships, MOUs, MOAs, community involvement, including notification and, again, engaging with those other agencies. We just wanted to hear from you guys if you had any additional comments to make regarding any of those topics or if there were any questions that had come in up to this point.

Lea and Paul, I have a question here that came in. When you plan on cross-training, is it or should it be only with law enforcement or probation services and/or corrections? Or can other departments be cross-trained?

I was just going to mention it. And again, Paul might have some additional perspective on this. So to me, the more people that are aware of SORNA and are familiar with some of those things, the better. So it may be that if we're engaging in cross-training, I think that can be engaged at different tiers or different levels.

So we may have somebody who actually could step in and go through the registration process, how to operate the system. But we also want to be sure that we're cross-training some of our other agencies.

For instance, our tribal court has an idea of who operates SORNA. Maybe they have a backup copy, hard copy, and digital copy of our SORNA code and our policies and procedures and contact information. Maybe social services were doing, again, some of that preliminary training.

So I think that when we approach cross-training, I find it most beneficial when we layer it. So yes, we want to be sure that we're cross-training an individual who could step into that role, which necessarily doesn't have to be a certified law enforcement officer. We know that that can be a late addition.

So somebody who could potentially step in and fill that role-- but that we're also cross-training folks in information and expanding really that knowledge base of-- if all of us were not to be here tomorrow and other folks had to come in and step in that we had different places that could piece information together to continue things to move forward. Paul, did you have some things to add in addition to that?

Well, I think exactly what you said is right on point. For us, our court bailiff was the one of the main persons identified as someone who could come in and help on the registry program and be cross-trained. But I think when we're thinking of cross-training, we can also mesh that with the MOUs and the partnerships to know that when you're working with partners that you are encouraging them to cross-train an employee or to identify someone who can be cross-trained as far as providing you with the resources that you need so that the program can run successfully.

And I'll give you an example. In our partnership with BIA, it was really easy for BIA to identify one officer who would be there for all the needs of the program as far as when we needed presence or when we needed enforcement. And that was great. We worked with that.

But we realized early on that we needed to also at least identify one other officer who was familiar with it. And so we started bringing in a second officer who would come with us for the address verifications and just the same thing-- being a presence, serving notifications. And now if one is sent out up north or wherever, the other one is there and can help us.

So I think the cross-training is definitely important for the sex offender registry program-- that there is someone identified who can be cross-trained. But when you're working with your partners, it's important that you challenge them to also bring someone else to the table who can also receive the information.

If one isn't there, one is sick, or one moves on to a different opportunity, you have the other one there. And again, you would identify another person. Always at least have two people, I think, that can come in and fulfill those obligations or responsibilities.

If I can, I'd like to weigh in, too. Similar to what Paul was saying in cross-training and asking for extra individuals, sometimes resources are tight. And if you could just let your partners know when there have been changes if an employee changes or goes on leave, it makes it easier for the person who's stepping into that role to bridge that gap and continue a relationship that existed.

In Oklahoma, we see a lot of turnover in our municipalities and in our travel SORNA representatives that engage with the Department of Corrections, who handles the statewide registry. And oftentimes someone will call and say, oh, well, I'm from this agency. Or I'm from this municipality.

But we also are very skeptical. And so if we didn't know that there was going to be a change in the agency, then our staff sometimes would request documentation to prove that you're the person that you're saying you are. Because we do, unfortunately, have offenders who lie to get information or access to things and stuff like that.

So if you communicate with your partners when there is an expected turnover or when a turnover happens that you weren't expecting so that they know changes are happening, that will help with the partnerships. But it will also help with employee retention because when the new employee reaches out to that partner, they won't feel like they're being questioned.

That's a fantastic suggestion and reminder. Margie, thank you for that. We're going to go ahead and transition now to really getting into where we talked about some of those key considerations to start thinking about or start exploring. Are we planning? How do we bring all of these different components into sustainability?

And the last part of what we wanted to do is provide a framework for being able to start processing and brainstorming out some of these questions and really taking all of that information that we know is out there and transforming that into something that's actionable. So we're going to shift into program analysis.

And before we get into some of the content, we want to launch our third and final poll that we have as part of this webinar. And that final poll reads as, do you currently have a process for evaluating and addressing your SORNA program needs?

And the responses can be, we have an action plan already in place. We address issues as they emerge. We do not have a process for addressing those issues. I am not sure what we do. I am not currently involved with a SORNA program.

Great. And the results of the poll are as follows. So we have about 17% are looking like they have an action plan in place to address SORNA program needs. Just under half address issues as they emerge. And a little under 10% don't currently have a process. 20% aren't sure what they do. And then, again, there's 8% that are currently not working in a SORNA program.

So that's really great information to know. And hopefully as we process through this next section, you will have some information that you'll be able to take with you back to have some conversation. So for those of you that have teams or have the support systems in place, this can further those conversations. Those of you that already have plans in place, you can go back and see if there's any gaps or any areas that you may want to expand on.

And for those of you that are just starting out or looking for a starting place, maybe you're the lone SORNA worker. And you're maybe a line item in a budget. And there's not a whole lot that I have power to do.

This is something that you can really do within your office and start identifying some of those things, even if it's looking at program growth. Or where is it that you're going to be in the next year? Or like Paul had mentioned, how are you going to sustain your SORNA programs for the next one to three years, for the next five years, for the next 10 to 15 years? And so it's really always looking forward.

But we know that to look forward and to move forward, I think like we've kind of alluded throughout this entire webinar, it is looking at the past. It's looking at where we started. What were some of those hurdles that we faced? What were some of the challenges that we faced?

What were some of the things that we overcome or that we have learned from in the past? Even what did our budget look like last year? What were unexpected costs, perhaps, that we encountered in the last few fiscal cycles?

Really evaluating where is it that we're at today-- how are we celebrating our small successes? How are we celebrating our large successes? How are we continuing to operate where we're at today and continue to look forward?

And then that last component, again, is where we're looking at planning for sustainability. It's that future planning. Where do we want to go? We know that our programs are ever-evolving. We know that with new legislation, if and when that comes, there will be changes that our program needs to make. We know the clientele that we're serving. We know there's tons of stuff that sometimes changes in jurisdictional authority. So there's all of these moving pieces.

And it's really saying, how are we going to stay on top of that to ensure that our program survives the test of time and is able to encounter some of those changes, some of those unknowns, some of those unexpected, like something that we're encountering with our current situation of a lot of folks having to work remotely or move remotely? What do those things look like? What types of things do we need to have in place to help address that?

And so one methodology that I'm sure probably a handful or a large group of folks are familiar with is looking at a SCOT analysis. And this is just starting that evaluation.

So we're going to take everything that we've talked about today that Paul and I and Kevin and Margie have shared and really look at those different areas and say, how do we break this down into something that we can actually say, here's an action step that we're going to do. Here's an issue that is going to create large amounts of concern or may have a negative impact on our program survivability or sustainability. And this is something that we need to address right now.

Or here's an issue that we want to work on. But we know that this might take a little bit of time. But we're really going to break it down to have a step-by-step process so as we need to incorporate other people they can be aware of what it is that we're trying to accomplish.

And so we do this by starting with the SCOT analysis. And I'm going to take just a moment to break down just in a few minutes really what SCOT stands for. And so it's looking at four different realms.

And the first realm is our strengths. And so our strengths are really those internal factors that exist within our department. Those are things that we have control over. Those are things that are tangible.

So for example, when we're thinking of those internal factors that are working well within our programs, that could be a well-trained employee. That could be somebody who is dedicated to their work. That could be equipment that we have within our office that we know is up to date and is operating well. So again, those relationships-- those are things that are internal to us that are solid and that are working well.

So the strengths are really those internal factors that are right now helping our program be where it's at in its current state of success. And we always start with our strengths because I think more times than not, I see folks can make a list of 1,000 things compared to maybe four or five things they might put for their strengths.

But our challenges really should be balanced out with the amount of strengths that our programs have and to be sure that, again, we're acknowledging those small successes. But when we talk about challenges, challenges are really, again, those internal factors that pose a threat to our program.

So are there things that are not being met? Are there obligations? Do we have perhaps a gap in our code that's creating some type of loophole for individuals going through a court process? Are there supplies and things that aren't properly allowing our staff to go out and engage in the community at the level that they need to engage?

Do we have a plan if we have staff turnover or somebody needs to go on maternity leave or on a prolonged vacation? Or if we have to go into shutdown because of a pandemic, how are we going to operate from home? What do those parameters look like? Are those things that are currently and could potentially pose a threat to our program's ongoing success or operation?

Then we move into our opportunities. And again, these are those external factors. So we're shifting gears from saying, here's what's happening inside. Here's outside. And these are things that we don't always have control over. But it's opportunities for us to grow and create strengths.

And a lot of times, opportunities and our strengths are the ways that we look to address those challenges. And I think that more times than not, we find that those things come from those internal strengths. So again, those opportunities are those external factors that contribute to a program's success.

So those could be opportunities that we look to engage to develop relationships. We're applying or researching different types of funding opportunities, engagement with the community, really anywhere that we can go create that opportunity that can contribute to our program's success.

And then lastly, we have those external factors, which are our threats. And those are things that actually pose a risk to our program's success. And again, when we look at those threats, those are those external factors.

I know a lot of us have probably experienced sometimes there's transition in our government or in our leadership, which can sometimes, again, impact employee morale or sometimes shift some of the focus or a change in the direction that we feel that our program was going. Turnover, if we're losing funding-- sometimes natural disasters can shut organizations down or create or limit access. And again, those are threats that are going to impose on our program success but that we don't necessarily have control over.

So I know that I explained this fairly quickly for time's sake. We wanted to have a moment to process through some of these things so you could see the application of the handouts that are available to you if you click the Handout portion of this. But we wanted just to kind of open up this conversation to be a little bit broader. And we're going to pull in both Margie and Kevin.

And then we're going to ask everybody if you could access your question box in the right-hand corner. And we wanted to brainstorm this out a little bit. And again, these handouts are available for you to print or to use or take some, leave some, whatever works best for you. But this really is just a method to start brainstorming out some of these spots.

And so we're hoping if everyone could just take a moment. And in their question box, if you could identify for your own SORNA program-- or for those of you that are in attendance that aren't familiar with SORNA but maybe are familiar with another program's strengths, challenges, opportunities, or threats.

But if you could just type into your question box for our panel to share, what's one or two strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats that your SORNA program-- that you could evaluate from your current SORNA program? So I'm going to give just a few seconds, a little bit of time for people to respond. And we'll start sharing here in just a few seconds.

So it looks like we're getting a few responses in. Margie or Kevin, are you seeing some stuff come in?

I noticed that a lot of the strengths that people are mentioning are how dedicated their employees are to the work. And of course, having employees that are invested in the programs is, of course, a strength.

There's a couple of mentions on challenges, which I guess maybe could even go into threat as changes in leadership is causing a disconnect within their agency or with their programs. It looks like several are talking about how they are working with other agencies as a strength.

Lea, I see as a challenge that maybe a program doesn't have access to NSOR.

That definitely can pose a problem as well. So let's go ahead and just grab one of these topics, Paul. And we'll just kind of brainstorm. Thank you, Margie and Kevin, for keeping an eye on those responses. And thank you, everyone, for responding.

So for purposes of time, I think we'll just grab one of those, Paul, and process through that. So hopefully everybody can see how this hopefully starts broadening how we're approaching challenges or really analyzing our programs and being sure that we're looking in all of these different realms.

And so if we take, Paul, maybe that last example that you had pulled up-- is maybe that there was a shift, it looks like, in access into NSOR. And so if we were to take that issue because we know that that can occur at multiple different levels of staff turnover, jurisdictional relationships, maybe encounter particular issues, an MOU has expired-- so there's a lot of different factors that could come into that, Paul.

And so if we were to look at our next step in really looking at creating this action plan, which-- again, this page is attached in your handout, Paul. Could you walk us through processing if we were to address that loss of access what that might look like as far as creating an action plan to address that issue?

Definitely. So I'm just thinking and going with that last one that if maybe someone doesn't have access to NSOR and if they're-- maybe I'm just guessing here. Maybe an opportunity is that they have a county contact-- so a Sheriff's office. They have a great contact there.

But what I hear often going visiting tribes is that maybe the tribal leadership isn't for having an MOU. And so that may be the threat. But here on this action plan form, then you can see that the problem could be, well, in this case that we're working out, you don't have access to NSOR.

And so the goal could be, I want our program to be able to input information somehow into NSOR immediately. So I think the objective there would be to seek a partnership or maybe to give the tribal access program. So that could be an example of the objective.

The activity description-- so it may be, seek that county contact that you have. Or it might be to talk to a state representative or maybe to the SMART office about bridging a partnership with the state so that you can have access again to NSOR. Or it may be a partnership through BIA. So I think those would be the tasks that one could try to explore.

But here, I like that this one has questions. Because when you're doing this, it's important that you're asking yourself questions like, OK, who is the contact? And then were there MOUs in the past that addressed this? Or can I get an example MOU from somewhere? Or can I call NCJTC for help or mentorship or assistance with this?

So when you look at the task to be completed, again, it may be, I'm going to call NCJTC today or put a help ticket in. Or I'm going to call my contact today. So those are the tasks that could be completed.

And then who's responsible for that? Well, if it's just making those contacts, it may just be you and your supervisor. But when we get to the task of presenting an MOU to leadership, then you may have attorneys involved. Who's responsible-- that row may expand beyond the registering official.

And then you should put a timeline. And really hold yourself to that timeline and saying, in six months from now, we're going to have this lined out. We're going to have identified a person who can get this done-- or three months. And work hard to stay on top of that timeline. And I would recommend reviewing it either weekly or reviewing it monthly to making sure that you're on task.

And then the resources needed-- again, a resource may be, I need an example MOU. Or again, I may need some mentorship or some advice from NCJTC or from the SMART office. Maybe you're seeing more costs and if your program can afford to [INAUDIBLE]. Those are some things you're looking at under resources.

Really, you can write anything. But on the progress notes, I think it's important to say, I contacted so-and-so on this day, even if it's, I left a voice message. But I'm calling back tomorrow. Those are the type of notes, I think, that can keep you motivated and give a good reflection on what it took for you to accomplish your goal.

But definitely, when we looked at the poll just now on analysis, a lot of programs aren't analyzing their program. I think that this is a great, very-- it's a simple tool but a very strong tool.

If you're using SCOT and then if you're taking that information and then putting it into this action plan, then I think in a year's time, a program can get really far as far as not just reacting to the emergency problems that come, but being able to plan and really shoot to sustain their program for the future, again, for the next 5 to 10 years.

Great. Thank you for that, Paul. That was a great example. And so we hope that everybody-- we, again, appreciate all of the feedback that continues to come in. And hopefully you're able to take some of those examples that you shared with us and really start this process on your own and to keep in mind that if you're wanting to get a deeper dive or you have some additional questions or need some follow-up one-on-one assistance that we are here to help you. So just to please feel free to reach out.

I'm going to go ahead and move us forward to our question-and-answer section. So again, thank you to everyone on our panel for an excellent presentation today and for sharing everyone's insights and knowledge. And again, thank you to all of our participants for engaging with us and sharing some of your own experiences with your particular agencies and departments.

So as I mentioned, we're moving into the question-and-answer portion of our webinar. And I'm going to go ahead and move to the next slide, which has all of our contact information.

Lea, we have received questions. One of the questions asks about some COVID standards and whether or not people are requiring registration in person or if their statutes are specific to requiring in-person registration. This one mentions that their state statute only required in-person registration for moving out of state, address changes, or those who legally changed their names.

In Oklahoma, for example, our statute is very specific that at every verification-- so for some of our offenders, that's every three months. Sometimes it's twice a year, sometimes once a year. Those are all in person. And our statute has always had that requirement in addition to the initial registration requirement. It really is going to be what is manageable in your state and what your legislature is willing to pass as a statute.

I think that if your registry unit is seeing that there's a challenge that there's nothing-- I apologize. My cat is playing with a paper bag, as cats do. If your registry unit is having trouble with keeping up with the in person or with not being able to verify where your registrants are residing, that that would be a good time to approach possibly a legislative proposal to make those adjustments in your statute.

But you're really going to have to justify why you want to make that change. And every state is so different the way these statutes are written. So I would say, of course, make sure you're meeting the Adam Walsh Act requirements. But also, really evaluate what works best in your state.

Great. Thank you for sharing that question that was posted to the poster. And also, Margie, thank you for such a thorough answer. We appreciate that.

Lea, I also want to mention here's another question I thought was really important as far as-- here's one with the getting the tribal leaders involved, I guess. And it looks like they're not really involved. But here is another question. I know Paul touched on it briefly. But if you have or work for a tribe that may not support local MOUs, MOAs, is there another way to work them through this?

Yeah. This is Paul. It is difficult, I think, if a tribe just refuses to do the MOU and MOA. What I would think would be beneficial is to, again, call on other resources maybe outside the tribe, such as the SMART office or NCJTC or US Marshals, BIA. There are so many people who are involved in this. Maybe that could help your tribe as far as if they're on the fence on an MOU or MOA.

The other avenue, I think, that is important is the Tribal Access Program. And so I think for a tribe to pursue the Tribal Access Program would give their tribe access to NSOR and many, many other resources just besides NSOR-- fingerprinting, palmprinting. But it's a program that can be used by many agencies within your tribe. And so I would explore those. I would explore those options as well. But thank you for the question.

Sorry, just to go back to the COVID or other emergency situations because we were given some information, if your tribe is experiencing issues or your agency is experiencing issues related to the pandemic or other emergencies that may come up, we would recommend calling the SMART office and talking to your policy advisors. They could help you with questions or with finding appropriate responses.

Yes. Thank you for that. But it's great. We are lucky enough to have some of our representatives from the SMART office on this webinar and that we shared directly from them. So again, any specific questions regarding COVID, please reach out to your SMART policy advisor. Again, thank you for your time and participation.