



SORNA Tribal Regional

**SORNA - How to Use Victim Centeredness and Offender
Accountability to Enhance Community and Victim Safety**

Live transcript/captions available at <https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=SMART>

Indian Country SORNA Training and Technical Assistance Program

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SMART

Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring,
Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking

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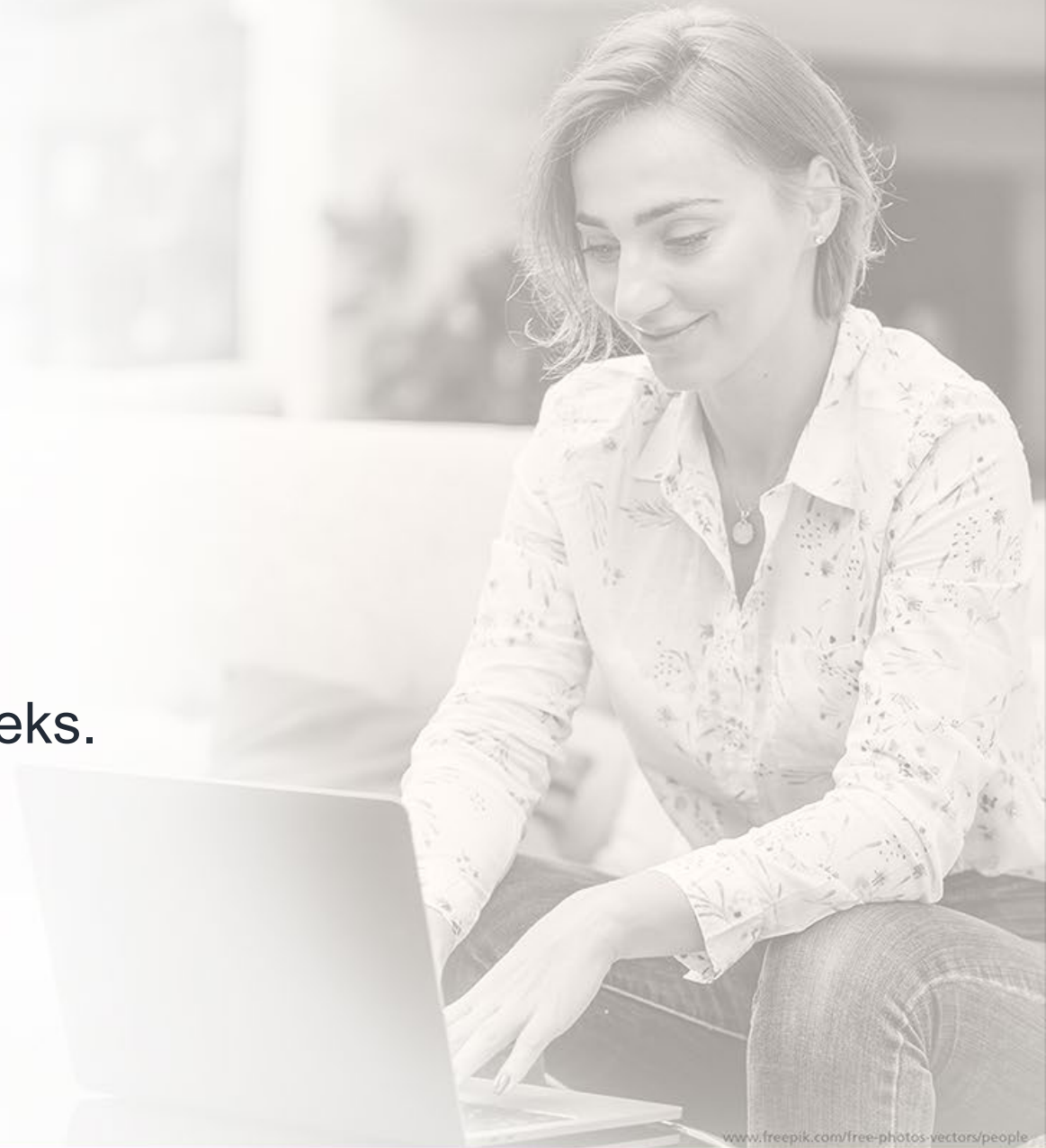
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NCJTC

National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College

Agenda

1. Community Notification

- Overview
- Website notification
- Community meetings

2. Sex Offender Management With a Victim-Centered Perspective

3. Resources

Community Notification

What Is Community Notification?

- Process of sharing sex offender information with the community.
- Each community notification is an opportunity to educate the public about a specific offender and your registration system and sex offenders in general.
- Notifications include—
 - Electronic alerts
 - Business notifications
 - Child-serving agency notifications
 - Written materials
 - Community meetings

Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act

- **Section 118. Public Access to Sex Offender Information Through the Internet:**
“... each jurisdiction shall make available on the internet, in a manner that is readily accessible to all jurisdictions and to the public, all information about each sex offender in the registry.” *Exception for tier I sex offenders whose offense was not against a minor, if the jurisdiction chose not to publish it.*
- **Section 121. Megan Nicole Kanka and Alexandra Nicole Zapp Community Notification Program:** Immediately after a sex offender registers in a jurisdiction, an official will provide information to law enforcement agencies, agencies that conduct background checks, social service entities, volunteer organizations and any organization, company or individual who requests such notification.

Sex Offender Registry Public Websites

- Each state, SORNA tribe, territory and the District of Columbia has a sex offender registry website.
- The National Sex Offender Public Website
NSOPW.gov is the only U.S. government website that links public state, territorial and tribal sex offender registries in one national search site.
 - Provides the information each jurisdiction posts publicly on its website.

National Sex Offender Public Website

The screenshot shows the top section of the website. At the top left is the Department of Justice logo and the text "THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE". To the right is the "SMART" logo with the subtitle "Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking". Below this is the name "DRU SJODIN" and the main title "NATIONAL SEX OFFENDER PUBLIC WEBSITE". A teal navigation bar contains links for "HOME", "SEARCH", "SAFETY AND EDUCATION", "ABOUT NSOPW", "FAQS", and "ABOUT DRU". On the right side of the navigation bar are links for "ESPAÑOL", Twitter, and Facebook. The main content area is divided into three sections: "SEARCH NSOPW" with a description and an "Advanced Search" button; "SEARCH BY NAME" with input fields for "First Name" and "Last Name" and a "Name Search" button; and "SEARCH BY LOCATION" with input fields for "Address", "City/Town", a state dropdown menu (currently showing "Alabama"), and a distance dropdown menu (currently showing "1 Mile"), with a "Location Search" button.

Sex Offender Public Websites

- The information posted on each jurisdiction's site is governed by its sex offender registration laws.
- SORNA also has requirements regarding what information can and should be posted.
- Some jurisdictions post more or less information than others.
- Common variations (all acceptable under SORNA):
 - Not posting tier I or "low risk" offenders
 - Not posting juvenile offenders
 - Posting additional types of offenders on the site

Community Notification Via Website

- SORNA requires that each public registry website provides the ability for the public to sign up for email notification.
 - Notice is based on radius or ZIP code to offender location.

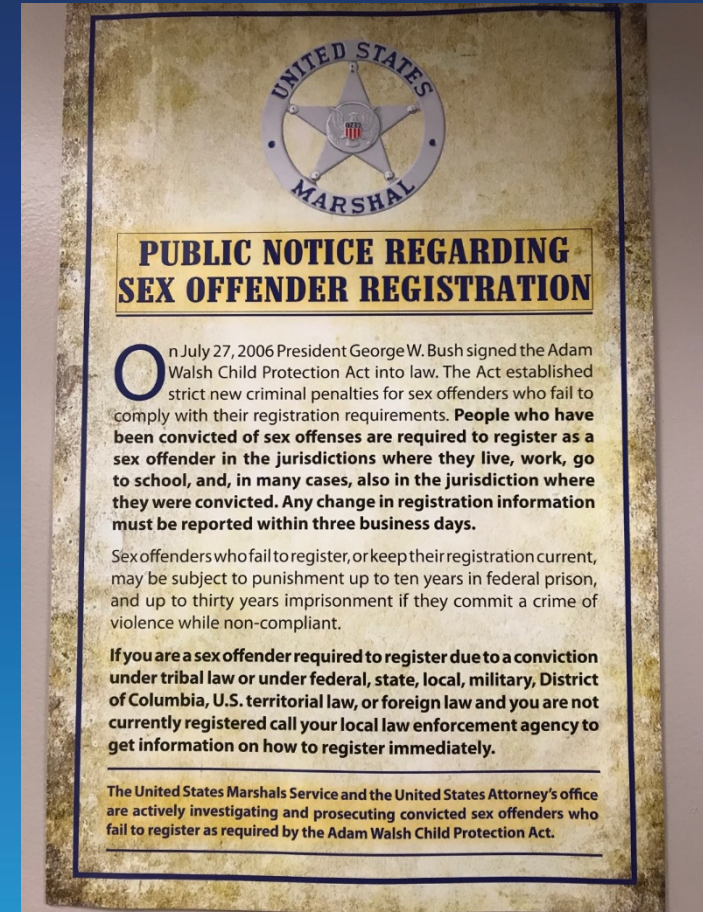
How Community Notification Works

- Convicted sex offenders are required to immediately notify registration officials about where they live, work or go to school.
- Information is received and posted on the jurisdiction's public registry website.
- Next, an email notification is sent to subscribers in the location where the offender will live, work or go to school, which includes identifying information about the offender.
- Communities in some jurisdictions can request in-person meetings to deliver notifications.

Other Community Notification Recipients

- School and public housing agencies
- Social service entities for protection of minors in the child welfare system
- Volunteer organizations where contact might occur
- Supervision agencies including probation and parole
 - Federal, state, local and tribal depending on the jurisdiction
- Any organization, company or individual who requests such notification
- And more ...

Community Notification Meetings



Community Notification Meetings: Purpose

- Provide information to the community about specific registered sex offenders and sex offending generally.
- Build awareness of who have been convicted of serious sex offenses and who may pose a threat to community safety
- Inform community members about ways to address concerns or how to report suspicious behavior
- Jurisdictions can opt to hold community notification meetings, or not.

Community Notification Meetings: Benefits

- Provide a forum to educate community members about sex offenders and sexual offending.
- Provide resources for concerned community members and information on how to safeguard family members.
- Notify businesses and child-serving organizations of the offenders in the community.
- Assist law enforcement, probation, parole and registry staff through better tips and calls.
- Create a sense of community accountability in the offender's success.
- Help to dispel common sex offender myths.

Meeting Topic: Dispelling Common Myths

- Sex offenders will never come back to the community.
- All people who have committed sexual harm are on the registry.
- People on the registry are there for lesser offenses.
- Every sex offender is a threat.
- Registration will completely prevent a sex offender from reoffending.
- Nothing can prevent a sex offender from reoffending.

Community Notification Meeting Group Discussion: What Works in Your Jurisdiction?

1. Meeting Planning Logistics

- **Pick a Location, Date, Time**
 - Secure an adequate facility for your audience size: school auditorium, community hall, church, etc.
 - Set meeting time: 7 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday is best
 - Verify facility will be set up in advance: chairs, head table, audio-visual equipment, handout table(s)
 - Verify presenters will be able to attend and ready to present
- **Promote the Meeting**
 - Advertise the meeting: community newspaper, meeting notice sent home from school, PTA/parent newsletters, local radio, social media
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Prepare sufficient handouts: too many is better than not enough
 - Have child care available

2. Meeting Implementation

- **Coordinate the team effort**
- **Make sure all participants know what each participant is going to talk about**
 - Should be discussed and practiced beforehand
 - When possible, have the same participants for each meeting
- **Avoid contradicting each other in front of the community**
- **Divide responsibilities**
 - Law enforcement does introductions, safety issues and facilitates questions at end
 - Prosecutor covers “general” legal issues
 - Therapist covers recidivism and general sex offender behavioral issues
 - Department of Corrections covers supervision
 - Social worker/victim advocate covers victimization issues

Meeting To-Do List

- Arrive one hour early.
- Verify room arrangement and audio-visual equipment.
- Display photo montage (poster or PowerPoint).
- Start the meeting on time.

The Meeting Blueprint

- Introductions, including presenters' qualifications
- History of law – tribal, state, federal
- Discuss who is a sex offender and what offenses require registration
- Extent of sex offender population
- Need for stability
- Discuss offender's conditions of supervision
- Discuss offender's circumstances (criminal history, treatment received, rehabilitation experiences, living situation, etc.)
- Discuss residency restrictions, if relevant
- Discuss what citizens can do to protect themselves
- Resources
- Questions

Benefits of Proactive Community Education

- Focuses attention on the problem of sexual abuse
- Can be part of sexual violence prevention and victim advocacy
- Helps protect the community by providing resources, contacts and education about sexual offending
- Can assist offenders by opening the community to re-entry and reintegration initiatives

Collaboration With Law Enforcement

- Law enforcement partners are a strong component of sex offender registration.
- Many law enforcement agencies are the main registration personnel in a jurisdiction and some work collaboratively with a separate registration system.
- Community notification meetings should include a law enforcement presence for safety and to provide information regarding their role(s) in sex offender registration.

Sex Offender Management With a Victim-Centered Perspective



Sex Offender Management

- Goal: Prevent future sexual victimization
- Multidisciplinary team approach
- Specialized training
- Outcome evaluation drives program modification

Center for Sex Offender Management, 2002

Sex Offender Management

- Promotes effective offender re-entry
- Informs and educates the community
- Brings together interdisciplinary teams to address community safety and offender accountability



Effective Sex Offender Management Strategies

- Include victims' needs in the planning process.
- Maintain the offender's role in taking accountability for their actions.
- Don't jeopardize the safety of victims, offenders or community members by promoting a false sense of security or an overreaction to possible risks.

How Does Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Help Victims?

- Victim notification through alerts, searches or contacts with registry personnel.
- Community education and advocacy.
- Safety planning for victims about locations, events or other community activities where offenders may be present.

Victim Centered Approach to Community Notification and Education

- Prioritize victim safety.
- Include victim advocates on the sex offender management team to help provide guidance.
- Keep victims informed of upcoming meetings and provide opportunities for victims to be informed about a particular offender.

Resources

Resources

- NIJ Research Brief: “Sex Offender Community Notification: Assessing the Impact in Wisconsin” (<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/179992.pdf>)
- Center for Sex Offender Management: Community Notification and Education, April 2001 (<https://www.csom.org/pubs/notedu.html>)
- NCJTC: Trainings on sex offenders, sex offender registration, reentry in tribal communities, community notification and education, and relationship building with state and local partners
- WASPC Model Guide to Community Notification Meetings (<https://www.waspc.org/assets/SexOffenders/modelguidetocommunitynotification.pdf>)

Sex Offender Management Assessment and Planning Initiative (SOMAPI)

- SMART developed SOMAPI to assess the state of research and practice in sex offender management: www.smart.gov/SOMAPI
- SOMAPI has separate adult and juvenile sections, to account for the fundamental differences between these populations.
- In-depth chapters, briefs and fact sheets by experts in the field
 - Topics include prevalence, etiology, typologies, recidivism, risk assessment, treatment effectiveness and management strategies
- Webinar series



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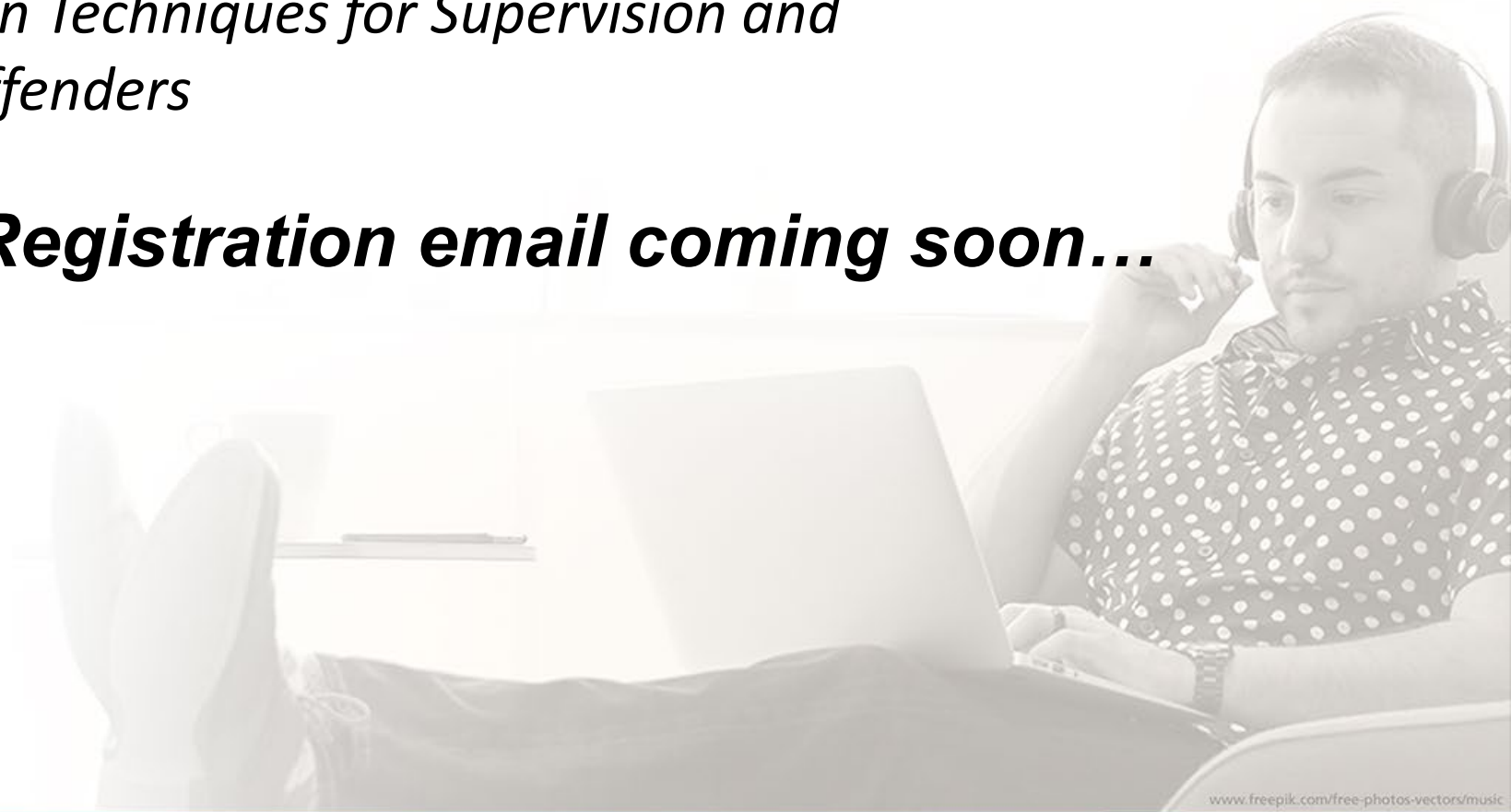
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Upcoming Webinar

- **May 20, 2020** | 12:00 p.m. CDT
 - ✓ *Advanced Supervision Techniques for Supervision and Monitoring of Sex Offenders*

Registration email coming soon...



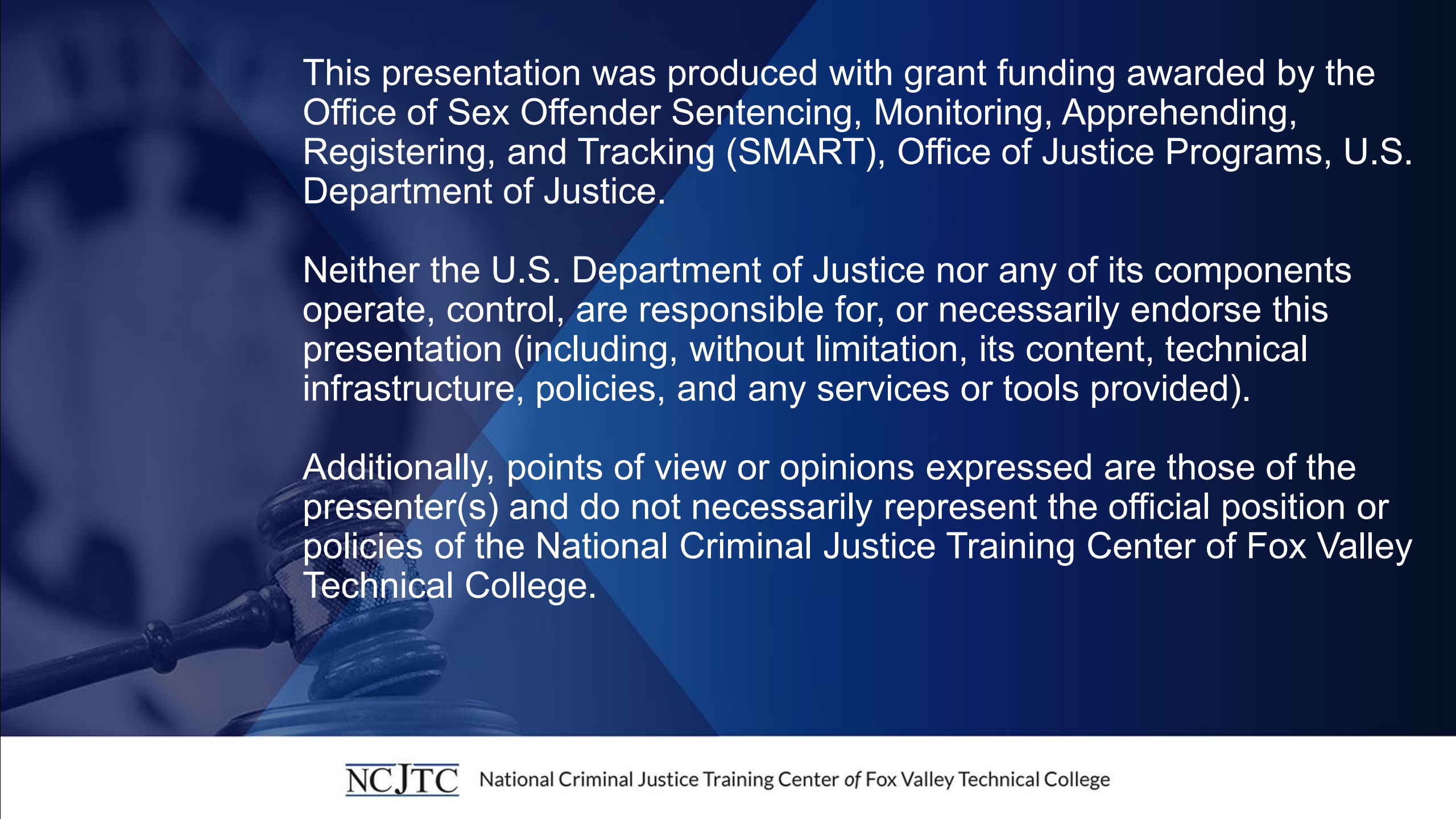
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