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SORNA Webinar

Precautions and Safety Measures for Sex Offender Registry Personnel

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

Today's Presenters

Kevin Mariano

Project Coordinator - NCJTC
mariano@fvtc.edu

Paul Fuentes

Associate – NCJTC
fuentes@fvtc.edu

Lea Geurts

Project Coordinator – NCJTC
geurtsl@fvtc.edu

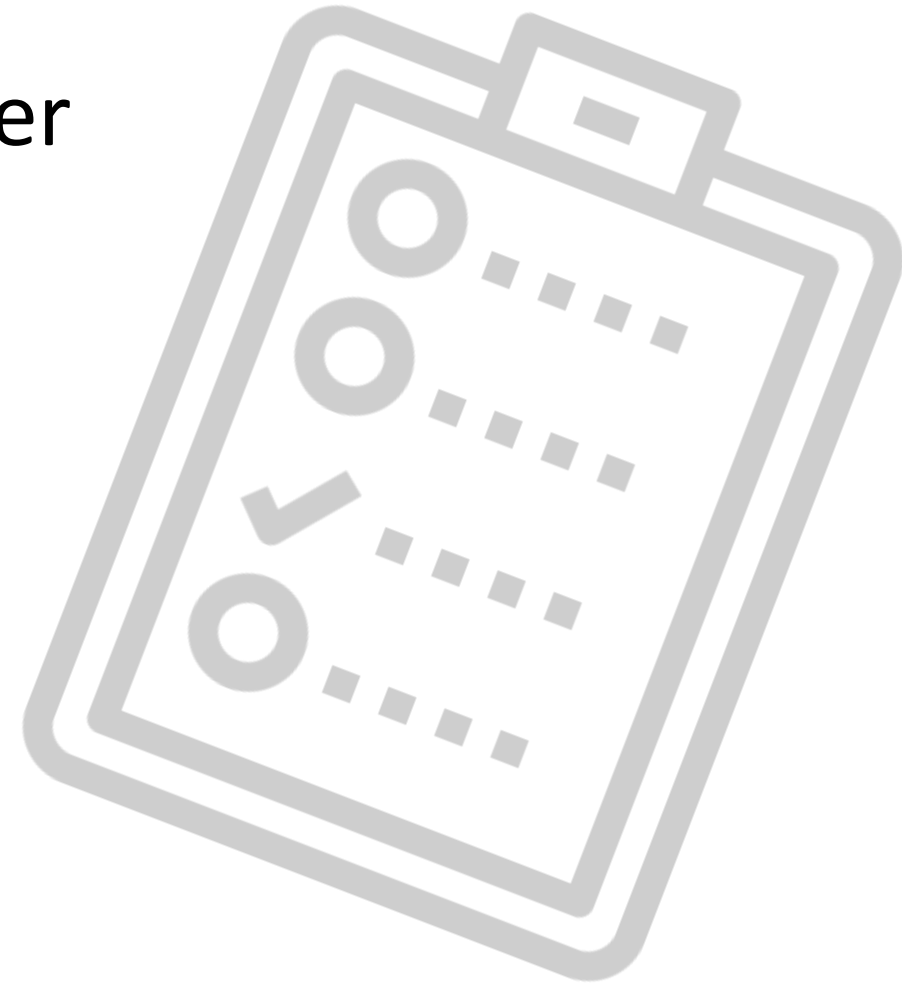
Christopher Lobanov-Rostovsky

Associate – NCJTC
lobanovr@fvtc.edu



Objectives

- Identify risks and concerns in offender behavior
- Demonstrate registrar safety
- Apply field verification safety
- Operate safely during COVID-19



Risks & Concerns In Offender Behavior

What Information Should I Obtain On Offender History?

- Registration Official is responsible for obtaining:
 - Date of all arrests and convictions
 - Status of parole, probation, or supervised release
 - Registration status
 - Outstanding arrest warrants
- Sex offender provides version of information/ perspective



Where Can I Obtain Information On Offender History?

- Interstate Identification Index (Triple I)
- Police reports, criminal history information, victim statements, judgment, and sentence
- National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW)

The screenshot shows the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) search interface. At the top, it features the Department of Justice logo and the SMART logo (Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking). The main heading is "DRU SJODIN NATIONAL SEX OFFENDER PUBLIC WEBSITE". Below this is a navigation bar with links for HOME, SEARCH, SAFETY AND EDUCATION, ABOUT NSOPW, FAQs, and ABOUT DRU. There is also an "ESPAÑOL" link and social media icons for Twitter and Facebook. The main content area is divided into two sections: "SEARCH NSOPW" and "SEARCH BY NAME" / "SEARCH BY LOCATION". The "SEARCH NSOPW" section includes a map background and a text box that says "Search sex offender registries for all 50 states, The District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and Indian Country." Below this is a red "Advanced Search" button. The "SEARCH BY NAME" section has input fields for "First Name" and "Last Name", and a red "Name Search" button. The "SEARCH BY LOCATION" section has input fields for "Address", "City/Town", a state dropdown menu (currently showing "Alabama"), and a distance dropdown menu (currently showing "1 Mile"), along with a red "Location Search" button.

Where Can I Obtain Information On Offender History? (Continue)

- National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR)
 - May contain information that is prohibited to be shared publicly
 - Registered sex offenders who do not appear on NSOPW may still be listed in NSOR



Where Can I Obtain Information On Offender History? (Continue-2)



- Consult with probation/parole officer, prosecutor, and previous or dual registry jurisdiction
- If you need assistance accessing records, consult with the court clerk's office, prosecutor's office, law enforcement, U.S. Marshals, or the SMART Office

Important Elements To Consider

- Nature of the crime, age of the offender, presence of family and social support, education, live-in relationships, and mental health concerns, which may be indicative risk and protective factors
- Risk assessments can determine if offender is low, medium, or high risk of reoffending
- Psychological evaluation can help determine causes of psychological symptoms and disorders



Important Elements To Consider (Continue)

- Sex offender evaluation and treatment may indicate sexual offense history, as verified by polygraph
- Victim statements can speak to the severity of the crime

Resource: Advanced Techniques for Supervision and Monitoring of Registered Sex Offenders Webinar



Offender Sexual Characteristics

- Tendencies
- Target of choice
- Victim access
- Related/unrelated victims
- Undetected deviant sexual behaviors



Offender Aggression And Violence



- History of violence
- Domestic violence
- Controlling nature
- Security threat group
- Access to weapons

Offender Mental Health And Substance Abuse Conditions

- Mental health disorders
- Personality disorders
- Suicidal ideation
- Substance abuse or dependency issues
- Rooted in drug culture

It is important to be able to recognize individuals in a state of crisis and how to access help for them.



Why Is This Information Important?

- Registration official safety
- Public safety
- Victim safety
- Know what to watch for during registration visits, field verifications, and visits with collateral contacts



Why Is This Information Important? (Continue)

- Identify possible triggers
- Increase monitoring and accountability
- Make appropriate referrals



Registrar Safety

Risk Analysis And Mitigation

- **Facility and property that expose people to risk**
 - Uneven floors, exposed electrical wiring, poor lighting, etc.
- **Facility risks from users' perspectives?**
 - To public, sex offenders, and staff



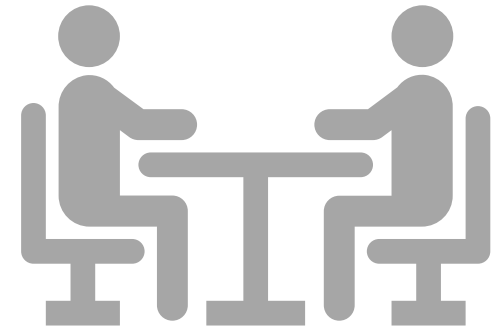
Risk Analysis And Mitigation (Continue)



- Discuss worst-case scenarios
- Prioritize risks
- Document observations and recommendations

Risk Analysis And Mitigation (Continue-2)

- Identify protocols and practices for clients when entering building and office
 - Client screening
 - Client attire/bags
 - Client access/entrance to office space
- Share/establish expectations with client



Office Safety

- Partner to observe or assist
- Keep safe distance
- Never have your back towards the person
- Have an escape plan



Office Safety (Continue)

- No personal identifiers
- Social media awareness
- Keep personal life private



Security Controls And Risk Management

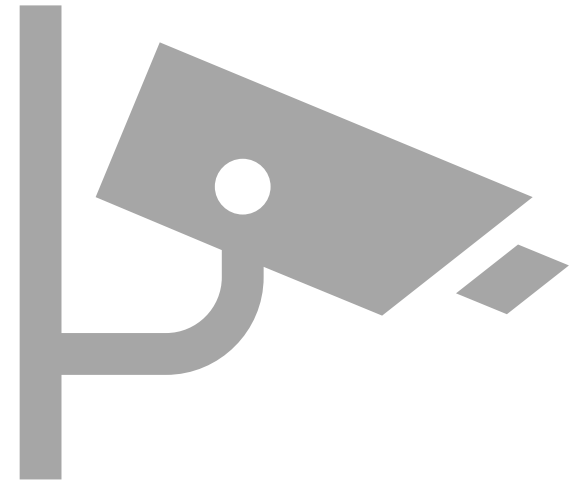
- Officer should secure all weapons before entering
- Search room prior to and after an interview
- Simple desk and chairs
- No heavy, large, or sharp objects
- Away from general public and noise



Utilizing Technology

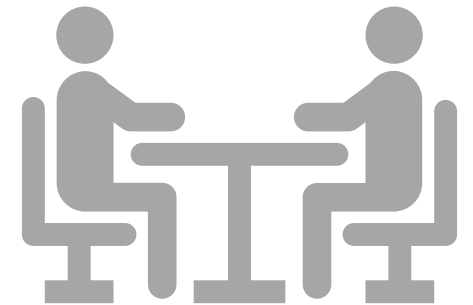
- Walk-through metal detector
- Hand-held wand metal detector
- Security cameras

Implementation of screening devices should always be approved by administration/governing body.



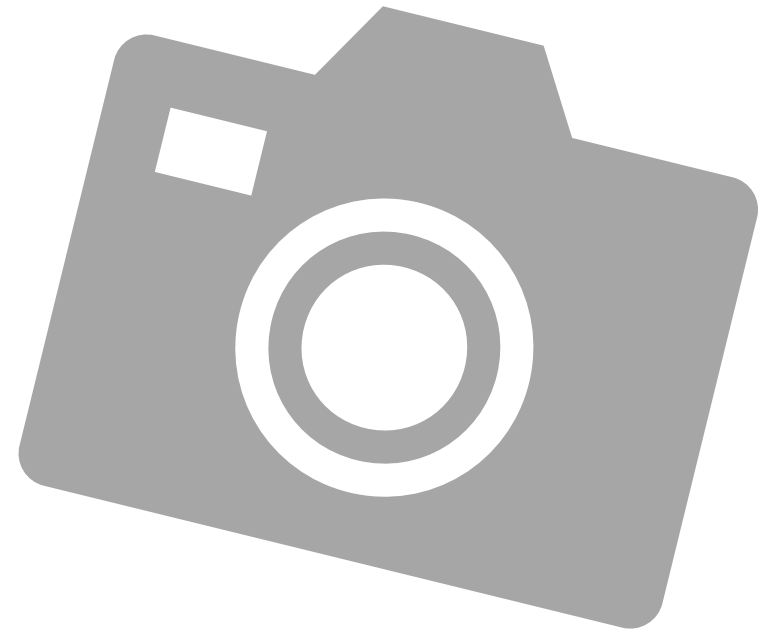
Maintaining Safety During Registration

- Assemble forms for offender to complete beforehand
- Assess offender body language, attitude, and safety risks
- Assess your own non-verbal actions and attitude
- Stay calm and confident
- Remain non-confrontational while completing forms and processing

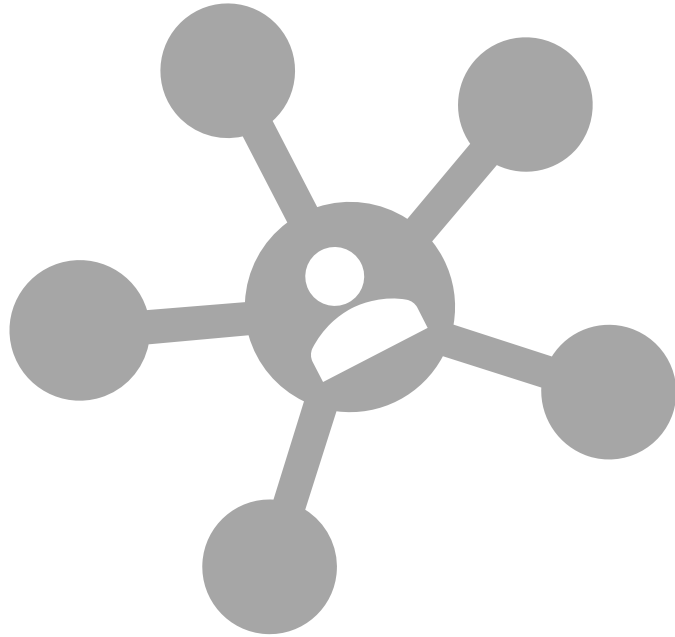


Privacy Concerns

- SORNA requires taking photographs of scars, marks, and tattoos
 - Some may be on more private areas of the registrant's body
- Ensure registrant privacy while photographing
 - Registrar of the same gender
 - Limits on picture-taking



Building Rapport



- Practice active listening
- Help identify registrant's network of support
- Encourage consistency and self-control
- Recognize registrant's successes
- Demonstrate empathy and concern
- Offer resources such as mental health services

Parolee: “I walked in and I shot him”

WARNING: Video includes graphic language and images



https://youtu.be/xQam_3RujYI

Field Verification Safety

Personal Safety In The Field: Attire

- Dress in a manner that:
 - Assists you in performing your duties
 - Helps identify your official capacity
 - Allows you ease of movement
 - Does not create additional risks or allow someone to control you (e.g., lanyard, scarf, neck tie, etc.)
 - Wear ballistic vest if available



Personal Safety In The Field

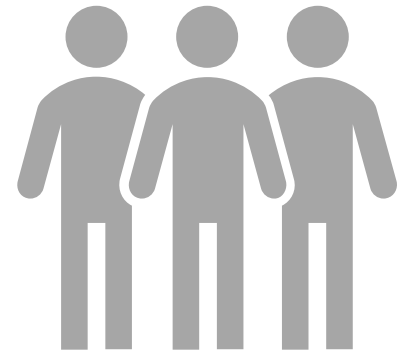
Attire: Example



Photo provided courtesy of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections Probation and Parole

Personal Safety In The Field - Safety Plan

- Advise dispatch, supervisor, or another person where you are going
 - Written itinerary, in order, of who and where you are attempting verifications
- Take a partner
 - Safety in numbers



Personal Safety In The Field - Review

- Trust your instincts for threat assessment
 - It's okay to come back later!
- Warrant check before going to the home
 - Active warrants could cause offender to become an increased safety risk
- Know offender's work/treatment schedule



Safety
first

Personal Safety In The Field – Timing

- Ideally conducted in daylight hours
- If possible, do not schedule visit ahead of time
 - Sporadic and unscheduled home visits are best



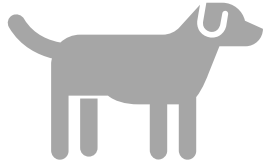
Safety
first

Safely Approach The Home: Preparation

- Know offender's case
- Know location of residence prior to arriving (consult aerial google map)
- Know who else lives in the home
- Park a house or two away, and leave clear escape path
 - If on a dead-end road or in a rural setting, park tactically



Safely Approach The Home: Survey



- Check communication device for channel and battery level



- Call in any vehicle make, model, plate, and description



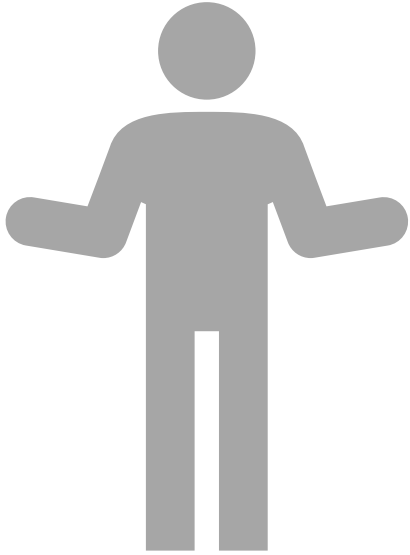
- Assess environment before you get out of the car
 - Come back later if environment seems high risk (e.g., lots of cars/people, etc.)
- Be alert for animals, snakes, and insects

Safely Approach The Home: Advance

- Keep keys in your hand (non-dominant hand if carrying a weapon)
- Move to side of door before you knock
 - Make sure you and your partner are not in front of windows



Safety Inside The Home



- Body mechanics, balanced stance, supportive stance, and weapon bladed away
- Never close off your escape route or box yourself in
 - “Fatal Funnel” (Doorways, stairwells, and hallways)
- Always ask who else is in the residence

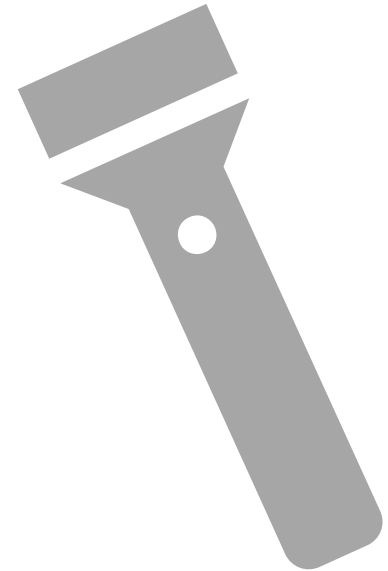
Safety Inside The Home (Continue)

- Quickly scan kitchens or areas where dangerous items are located
- Watch registrant's hands
- While you focus on offender, have partner observe home environment

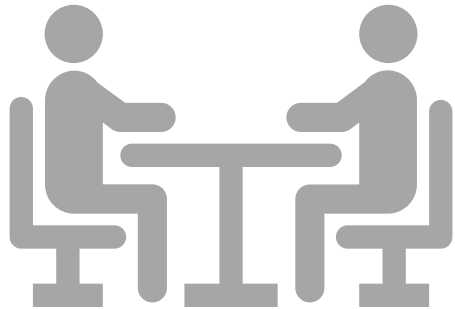


Safety Inside The Home (Continue-2)

- While walking through home, have offender in front of you
 - Never turn your back on an offender or others, even when exiting the home
- Make sure home is well lit before proceeding with visit
 - Always carry a flashlight in case of low lighting or no power



Safety Inside The Home (Continue-3)



- Have the offender sit if you will be in the home for an extended timeframe after walk-through
- Sit on hard surfaces, instead of sofas or couches
 - If soft-seating area is only seating available, search area before offender sits

Oklahoma Deputy Fatally Shoots Suspect Who Stabbed Him

WARNING: Video includes graphic language and images



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOMNaJXparE>

Operate Safely During COVID-19

Program Preparedness and Response

- Assess hazards that are likely to be present
- Implement a plan and establish policies and practices for safety and social distancing
 - Consider teleworking, flexible work hours, staggering employees, closing or limiting access to common areas, prioritizing job functions, and resuming operations in phases

CAUTION

Program Preparedness and Response (Continue)

- Consider the type of controls or personal protective equipment (PPE) needed
- Expect higher absenteeism,
 - Cross-train employees to perform essential functions
- If implementing health checks, conduct them safely and respectfully, and treat information learned as confidential

Protect Visitors From Exposure



- Place tape marks, signs, or other visual cues 6 feet apart on the floor to indicate where to stand
- Place posters that encourage hand hygiene
- If possible, provide mechanisms to clean hands, and cover nose and mouth (e.g., soap and water, touchless alcohol-based hand sanitizer stations, and masks)

Protect Visitors From Exposure (Continue)

- Perform routine cleaning of all frequently touched surfaces, kiosks, equipment, handrails, and doorknobs
- Communicate the measures that have been adopted to visitors



How Registration Officials Can Protect Themselves From Exposure

- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet
- Install physical barriers such as partitions
- Use National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health approved particulate respirator (i.e., N-95 or higher level respirator)
- Practice proper hand hygiene
- Do not touch your face with unwashed hands



How Registration Officials Can Protect Themselves From Exposure (Continue)



- Use disposable gloves
- Use eye protection (i.e., goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face).
- Consider using disposable isolation gown or coveralls, but maintain access to duty belt and gear
- Ensure duty belt and gear are disinfected after contact with individual

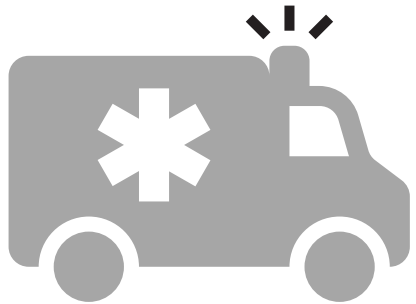
How Registration Officials Can Protect Themselves From Exposure (Continue-2)

- Consider whether field work is still appropriate and necessary
 - Is there sufficient personnel for two staff members to do field work, or do you have to go by yourself?
- Identify alternatives
 - Phone or video check-ins
 - Prioritize higher tier/risk offenders
 - Have a plan to resume once COVID concerns have subsided



How Registration Officials Can Protect Themselves From Exposure (Continue-3)

- When in the field:
 - Have a trained Emergency Medical Service/Emergency Medical Technician (EMS/EMT) assess and transport anyone you think might have COVID-19 to a healthcare facility
 - Ensure only trained personnel wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) have contact with individuals who have or may have COVID-19



How Registration Officials Can Protect Themselves From Exposure (Continue-4)

- If close contact occurred during apprehension
 - Clean and disinfect duty belt and gear prior to reuse using a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the product label.



Additional Information

- For more information, please visit:

What Law Enforcement Personnel Need to Know about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website

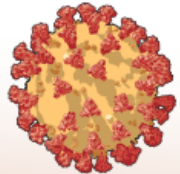
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-law-enforcement.html>.


What law enforcement personnel need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The outbreak first started in China, but cases have been identified in a growing number of other areas, including the United States.

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness.

- Data suggests that symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Symptoms can include fever, cough, difficulty breathing, and shortness of breath.
- The virus causing COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2. It is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person via respiratory droplets among close contacts. Respiratory droplets are produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes and can land in the mouths or noses, or possibly be inhaled into the lungs, of people who are nearby.
 - Close contact increases your risk for COVID-19, including:
 - Being within approximately 6 feet of an individual with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time.
 - Having direct contact with body fluids (such as blood, phlegm, and respiratory droplets) from an individual with COVID-19.

<h4>To protect yourself from exposure</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If possible, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet.• Practice proper hand hygiene. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available and illicit drugs are NOT suspected to be present, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.• Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.• Have a trained Emergency Medical Service/Emergency Medical Technician (EMS/EMT) assess and transport anyone you think might have COVID-19 to a healthcare facility.• Ensure only trained personnel wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) have contact with individuals who have or may have COVID-19.• Learn your employer's plan for exposure control and participate in all-hands training on the use of PPE for respiratory protection, if available.	<h4>Recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</h4> <p>Law enforcement who must make contact with individuals confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 should follow CDC's Interim Guidance for EMS. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html.</p> <p>Different styles of PPE may be necessary to perform operational duties. These alternative styles (i.e., coveralls) must provide protection that is at least as great as that provided by the minimum amount of PPE recommended.</p> <p>The minimum PPE recommended is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A single pair of disposable examination gloves,• Disposable isolation gown or single-use/disposable coveralls*,• Any NIOSH-approved particulate respirator (i.e., N-95 or higher-level respirator); facemasks are an acceptable alternative until the supply chain is restored, and• Eye protection (i.e., goggles or disposable face shield that fully covers the front and sides of the face). <p>*If unable to wear a disposable gown or coveralls because it limits access to duty belt and gear, ensure duty belt and gear are disinfected after contact with individual.</p>	<h4>If close contact occurred during apprehension</h4> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean and disinfect duty belt and gear prior to reuse using a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the product label.• Follow standard operating procedures for the containment and disposal of used PPE.• Follow standard operating procedures for containing and laundering clothes. Avoid shaking the clothes. <p>For law enforcement personnel performing daily routine activities, the immediate health risk is considered low. Law enforcement leadership and personnel should follow CDC's Interim General Business Guidance. Search "Interim Guidance for Businesses" on www.cdc.gov.</p> 
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 [cdc.gov/COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID-19)

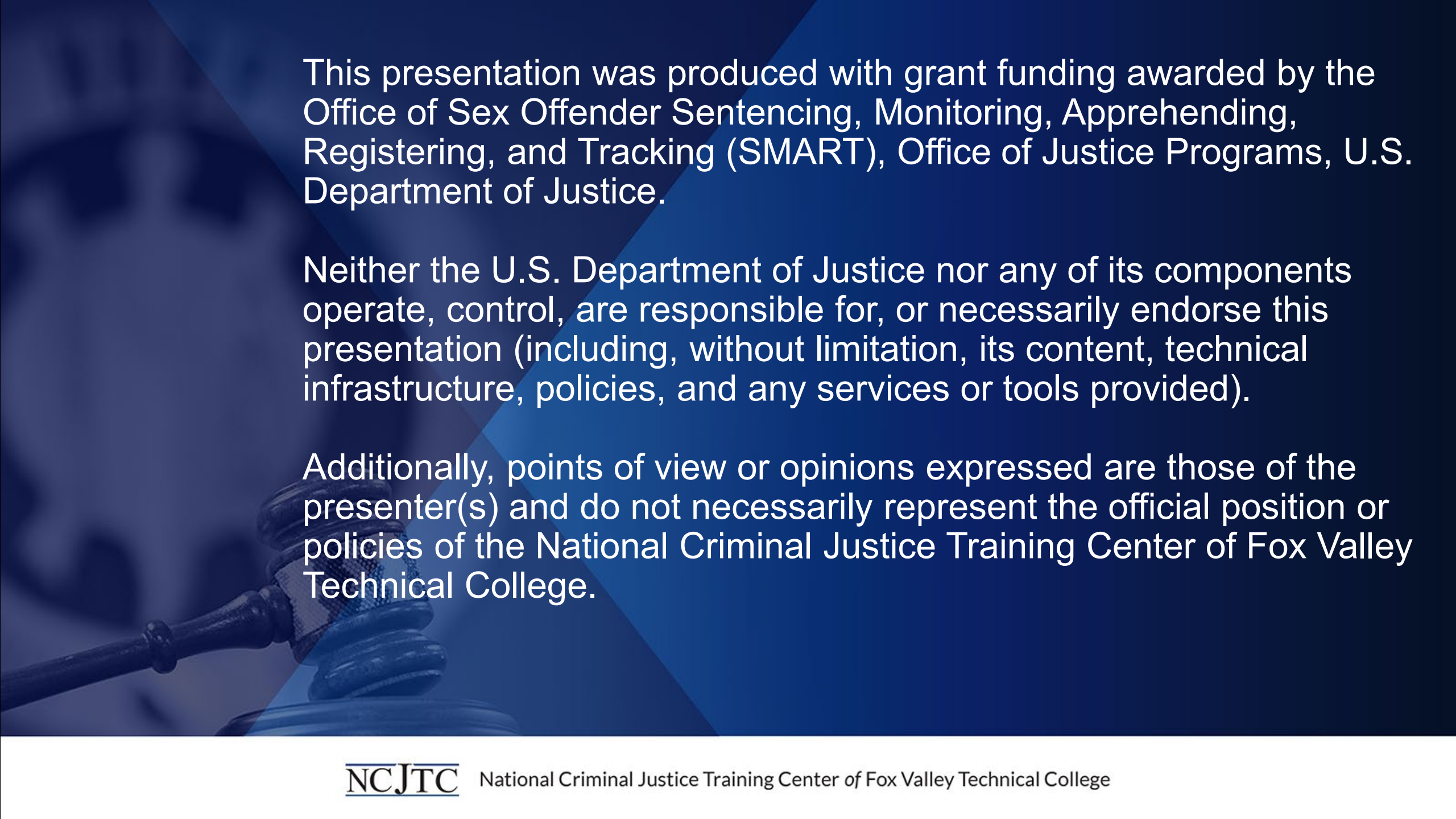


Paul Fuentes
fuentes@fvtc.edu

Lea Geurts
geurtsl@fvtc.edu

Chris Lobanov-Rostovsky
lobanovr@fvtc.edu

Kevin Mariano
Mariano@fvtc.edu



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