

Household and person nonresponse

Welcome to the National Crime Victimization Survey Knowledge Corner. This short video will focus on household and person nonresponse.

There are three types of nonresponse in the NCVS – household noninterviews, person noninterviews, and item nonresponse. This video provides an explanation of household and person noninterviews. Item nonresponse is explained in a separate NCVS Knowledge Corner video.

At the closeout of an interview period, each sample household is assigned a final interview outcome code, indicating whether the household was an interview or a noninterview. Household noninterviews occur when no one from a selected household participates in the NCVS. There are three types of household noninterviews – Type A, Type B, and Type C, which will each be described in the following slides.

Type A noninterviews occur when sample households consist of persons who are eligible for interview, but none of the persons can be interviewed for a specific reason. For example, the field representative makes repeated visits to the home, but no one is there or the entire household refuses to participate.

Every effort is made to avoid this type of noninterview to keep the unit and maintain a representative sample. Census tries to prevent Type A noninterviews by sending advance letters, making repeated attempts at contact, and letting households schedule interviews at their convenience.

A noninterview adjustment is applied to occupied sample units that were qualified to participate in the survey, but from which an interview was not obtained. Household and person weights are applied so that Type A noninterviews are represented in the sample.

Type B noninterviews occur when an interview is not obtained because the unit is ineligible for the interview at the present time (such as a household vacancy) but could become eligible in the future. For example, a house may be vacant during one interview period, but a family moves in, and that family may participate in the next interview period. Unlike Type A noninterviews, Type B noninterviews cannot be prevented.

Since Type B noninterviews might become eligible in the future, they are revisited in subsequent periods that the unit is in the sample. If the unit becomes eligible, the household is interviewed. The sample size is sufficiently large to allow for Type B noninterviews.

Type C noninterviews occur when units are permanently ineligible. For example, demolished or condemned units have no eligible respondents, and no eligible persons will move into them in the future.

Unlike Type A and Type B noninterviews, Type C noninterviews will not become eligible in the future, and they are permanently removed from the sampling frame. The sample size is sufficiently large to allow for Type C noninterviews.

Type Z noninterviews occur when an interview is obtained from at least one eligible household member, but not obtained from all eligible persons in the household. For example, one person may be unwilling, unable, or unavailable to participate.

Unlike Type A, B, and C noninterviews, a Type Z noninterview relates to a household member, not the entire sample household.

For this type of noninterview person, a few personal characteristic items are filled in on the Basic Screen Questionnaire. The household remains the same and the Type Z noninterview may be interviewed in the future. Type Z noninterviews can be handled through editing, weighting, or imputation.

For additional information on the NCVS, see the NCVS page on the BJS webpage. You can also see the NCVS technical documentation for more information about the methodology. Please email askbjs@usdoj.gov with any questions and your email will be forwarded to the BJS statisticians with topical experience. Finally, you can access the NCVS public-use data files at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data.

Thank you.