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**Cognitive Pretesting Of the 2018 Police-Public Contact Survey**

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## Abstract

At the request of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Center for Behavioral Science Methods (CBSM) conducted cognitive testing of the redesign of the 2018 Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS), a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The PPCS examines the types of contacts respondents have had with police in the previous 12 months, whether these contacts were self-initiated or police-initiated, the number of contacts that occurred, the outcome of the encounter, and how respondents perceived the behaviors of the officers involved. The questionnaire is comprised of two parts – a screener to determine whether the respondent had any contact with police, and if so, a second component of the questionnaire capturing the details about the most recent encounter.

Due to findings from the previous field administration of the survey, testing focused on the PPCS screener questions. The findings from our testing indicate that respondents struggled to correctly include some of their contacts in response to the screener question intended to measure that type of contact. Respondents were not always able to make clear distinctions in how they classified crimes, disturbances, suspicious activity, non-crime emergencies, and non-emergency assistance. As a result, they reported the same incident in response to multiple questions because they were not sure which question was a more appropriate fit or whether a question was going to be asked that would better fit their situation.

**Keywords:** questionnaire design, cognitive interviews, screening questions, National Crime Victimization Survey

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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>HISTORY OF THE POLICE-PUBLIC CONTACT SURVEY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>STUDY METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>4</b>
4.1	EXPERT REVIEW .....	4
4.2	COGNITIVE INTERVIEWING .....	5
4.2.1	<i>Recruitment Criteria and Strategy.....</i>	<i>7</i>
4.2.2	<i>Respondent Characteristics .....</i>	<i>8</i>
4.2.3	<i>Interviewer Staffing and Training.....</i>	<i>9</i>
4.2.4	<i>The Cognitive Interview Protocol.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1	SCREENER QUESTIONS (Q1A-Q1L) .....	10
5.1.1	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1a: Report a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity..</i>	<i>10</i>
5.1.2	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1b: Non-crime emergency.....</i>	<i>11</i>
5.1.3	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1c: Non-emergency Assistance .....</i>	<i>13</i>
5.1.4	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1d: Neighborhood Watch.....</i>	<i>15</i>
5.1.5	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1e: Traffic Accident .....</i>	<i>16</i>
5.1.6	<i>PPCS Screener Question 2: Frequency of Driving .....</i>	<i>17</i>
5.1.7	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1f: Traffic Stop - Driver.....</i>	<i>17</i>
5.1.8	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1g: Traffic Stop-Passenger.....</i>	<i>20</i>
5.1.9	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1h: Street Stop.....</i>	<i>20</i>
5.1.10	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1i: Other Arrests.....</i>	<i>22</i>
5.1.11	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1j: Other Police or Self-Initiated Contacts.....</i>	<i>22</i>
5.1.12	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1k: Self-initiated.....</i>	<i>23</i>
5.1.13	<i>PPCS Screener Question 1l: Police initiated .....</i>	<i>24</i>
5.1.14	<i>PPCS Screener Verification Question .....</i>	<i>25</i>
5.2	MOST RECENT CONTACT .....	27
5.2.1	<i>Q3a-b. Date of Most Recent Contact.....</i>	<i>27</i>
5.2.2	<i>Q4. Time of Day.....</i>	<i>28</i>
5.2.3	<i>Q5. Length of Contact.....</i>	<i>28</i>
5.2.4	<i>Q6. Appropriate Amount of Time.....</i>	<i>29</i>
5.3	Characteristics of Street Stop .....	29
5.3.1	<i>Q10a-h. Reasons for Street Stop.....</i>	<i>30</i>
5.3.2	<i>Q11. Legitimate Reason for Street Stop.....</i>	<i>34</i>
5.4	CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAFFIC STOP .....	35
5.4.1	<i>Q12. Reasons for Traffic Stop.....</i>	<i>35</i>
5.4.2	<i>Q15a-k. Reasons for Traffic Stop.....</i>	<i>36</i>
5.5	OFFICER CHARACTERISTICS.....	39
5.5.1	<i>Q19. Ethnicity of Police Officer.....</i>	<i>39</i>
5.6	OUTCOME OF STOP .....	40
5.6.1	<i>Q28. Reason for ticket.....</i>	<i>40</i>
5.6.2	<i>Q31. Search or Frisk.....</i>	<i>40</i>

5.7	OUTCOME OF VOLUNTARY CONTACTS .....	41
5.7.1	<i>Q42. Improvement of Situation After Contacting Police</i> .....	41
5.7.2	<i>Q46. Police Behaved Properly</i> .....	41
5.7.3	<i>Q47. Police Behavior Motivated by Bias</i> .....	42
5.7.4	<i>Q48. Complaint Filed</i> .....	43
5.7.5	<i>Q54. Police Behaved Properly During Earlier Contacts</i> .....	43
<b>6</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>44</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>45</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>APPENDIX A: PPCS RECRUITMENT SCREENER</b> .....	<b>46</b>

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from the cognitive testing of the redesigned 2018 Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS), a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The PPCS examines the types of contacts respondents have had with police in the previous 12 months, whether these contacts were self-initiated or police-initiated, the number of contacts that occurred, the outcome of the encounter, and how respondents perceived the behaviors of the officers involved. The questionnaire is comprised of two parts – a screener to determine whether the respondent had any contact with police, and if so, a second component of the questionnaire capturing the details about the most recent encounter.

After completing an expert review of the questionnaire, researchers conducted 50 cognitive interviews over four iterative rounds of testing. The cognitive interviews were conducted with respondents aged 18 or older who reported experiencing at least one contact with the police in the previous 12 months. Due to findings from the previous field administration of the survey, testing focused on the PPCS screener questions. The clarity and performance of the screener is critical to ensure that the types of police encounters in-scope for the survey are adequately captured by the screener questions, that encounters are reported in response to the screener question intended to measure that type of contact, and that respondents are routed down the correct survey path to capture details about the encounter.

The findings from our testing indicate that respondents struggled to correctly include some of their contacts in response to the screener question intended to measure that type of contact. These errors occurred more frequently with questions about self-initiated contacts (contacts in which the respondent contacted the police to report something) versus police-initiated contacts. Respondents were not always able to make clear distinctions in how they classified crimes, disturbances, suspicious activity, non-crime emergencies, and non-emergency assistance. As a result, they reported the same incident in response to multiple questions because they were not sure which question was a more appropriate fit or whether a question was going to be asked that would better fit their situation. In addition to difficulty classifying the type of contact they experienced, respondents experienced recall issues that became apparent when responding to probing questions as part of the cognitive interview. Respondents either forgot about some contacts they had with the police or could not remember the actual number of contacts until discussing their experiences with the interviewer.

Due to the recurring issues experienced by respondents, introductory text was added before the screener questions explaining that the interviewer is going to ask about multiple reasons the respondent may have had contact with the police in the past 12 months. The introductory text also explained that they can say yes to more than one reason, but to choose the reason that best fits why they contacted the police on each occasion.

After Round 1 of cognitive testing, a verification question was added after the screener questions asking the respondent to verify whether the various types of police contacts the respondent reported were correct. The verification question explains that each contact should only be counted once. Once this verification question is asked and any incorrect information is corrected,

respondents reporting more than one contact are asked which contact occurred most recently to determine the appropriate path for the survey.

While the main focus of testing was correcting the screener questions, the full questionnaire was cognitively tested. Overall, the modules after the screener performed well and caused few issues for respondents. Some additional questions, such as question 10 (reasons for street stop) and question 15 (reasons for traffic stop) received minor revisions throughout the rounds of testing. The findings and revisions for all other questions of interest are discussed in detail in sections 5.2 through 5.7.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is a self-report survey conducted each year by the Census Bureau on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). Approximately 135,000 households in the United States, totaling 225,000 persons, are sampled and asked about their experiences with criminal victimization over the past six months. The NCVS provides data on the crimes experienced by the respondent, characteristics of the offender, and the victim's experience with the criminal justice system after a crime occurs. Household members aged 12 or older are eligible to respond and participants are interviewed every six months, and remain in the sample for three years.

In 1999, the Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) was introduced as a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey administered about every 3 years until 2015. The PPCS examines the types of contacts respondents have had with police in the previous 12 months, whether these contacts were self-initiated or police-initiated, the number of contacts that occurred, the outcome of the encounter, and how respondents perceived the behaviors of the officers involved.

The PPCS sample is nationally representative of residents in the United States who are aged 16 and older. BJS uses the data collected from this survey to calculate the population estimates of residents who have encounters with the police, the characteristics of these residents, the use of force by police, the residents' perceptions of the police involved in the encounter, and the trends over time in these estimates. In the most recent administration of the PPCS in 2015, approximately 70,959 residents were interviewed.

At the request of BJS, in 2017 the Police-Public Contact Survey was cognitively tested by the U.S. Census Bureau's Center for Behavioral Science Methods (CBSM). The purpose of this research was to test new and revised questions for the 2018 PPCS supplement to the NCVS. The PPCS is structured with two basic parts. In the first part a set of screener questions is asked that describe specific categories of police encounters (e.g., traffic stop, being stopped in public while walking, contacting the police about a crime). If the answer is "yes" to any of these screener questions, they are asked to think about the encounter (or the most recent encounter if there was more than one), and then a series of questions is asked about details of the (most recent encounter). After answering the series of questions about the details of the most recent encounter, respondents who reported more than one contact were asked three additional questions to capture events that may have occurred in *any* of the earlier contacts reported. These questions measured police use of force

(Q53a-b), if police behaved properly (Q54a-c), and if the respondent filed a complaint against the police (Q55) in any of the earlier contacts.

CBSM researchers conducted four iterative rounds of cognitive testing to examine whether respondents were reporting their police contacts in response to the screener question intended for that type of encounter, and whether respondents were being routed to the correct series of detailed questions based on the contact they identified as the most recent. Additional questions from select modules of the NCVS were also tested. This report presents the findings from 50 cognitive interviews, conducted by CBSM researchers between June and November 2017.

### **3 HISTORY OF THE POLICE-PUBLIC CONTACT SURVEY**

In 1994, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 was passed requiring the collection of data on the “*use of excessive force by law enforcement officers*” and the publishing of an annual report from the data collected (Greenfeld et al., 1997, p. iii). In 1996, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and BJS published the first annual report that detailed how to meet these requirements, which called for the implementation of the PPCS supplement. Later that year, the PPCS was administered as a pilot study and then administered every three years for each of the following five cycles: 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011. The survey was then not administered again until 2015, the last year it was fielded.

In 2002, police contact was measured using two survey questions – the first asking if the respondent had any contact with a police officer in the previous year, with a follow-up question asking if any of the contacts were in person, that is, face-to-face. In 2005 and 2008, police contact was measured with a single question asking if the respondent had any face-to-face contact with a police officer. From 2002 to 2008, the initial police contact question(s) were followed by a survey question asking how many face-to-face contacts had occurred.

Later in the survey, a series of questions was asked on the reason for the most recent police contact the respondent had experienced. The possible reasons included: (1) being involved or witnessing a traffic accident<sup>1</sup>; (2) being involved in a traffic stop; (3) reporting a crime or some other problem to the police; (4) getting some sort of service or assistance from police; (5) police were investigating a crime; (6) being suspected of something by police; (7) or another reason not previously reported. Respondents could choose only one reason for the most recent encounter.

In the 2011 PPCS, a new (?) series of screener questions was implemented to measure various contacts one may have had with police in the previous 12 months. Instead of just asking if respondents had any face-to-face contact with police, respondents were asked a series of yes/no questions to measure whether respondents had specific types of contacts. These questions eliminated the need for the series of questions asking about the reason for the most recent police contact. The questions started with types of contacts initiated by the respondent - reporting a crime or disturbance, reporting a non-crime emergency, participating in a block watch or other anti-crime programs with police, and approaching the police for help. The next items measured police-initiated contacts – being stopped by police in a public place, being stopped while driving a motor

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<sup>1</sup> In the 2008 questionnaire, witnessing a traffic accident was added to the question that asked about being involved in a traffic accident.

vehicle, being stopped while a passenger in a motor vehicle, being involved in a traffic accident, being arrested, and being stopped or approached by the police for any other reason.

With the new series of screener questions, the questionnaire was able to collect data on multiple types of contacts the respondent may have had with police officers. Police contact was also expanded to include voluntary interactions with police that were not limited to face-to-face contacts, by including phone call and email interactions (Berzofsky, Ewing, & DeMichele, 2017). For example, a respondent could include a contact that was consisted of calling law enforcement to report a crime or a non-crime emergency. Regarding the detailed set of questions about the encounter, the questionnaire still focused on the most recent encounter.

For the 2015 PPCS, the screener was expanded to ask respondents about the number of times each type of contact occurred in addition to whether any of those contacts resulted in an arrest. The inclusion of these items about the number of contacts made it possible to calculate an incident rate in addition to a prevalence rate, an estimate of all contacts with the police among the public. An incident rate is essential for purposes of measuring disparities in the criminal justice system. It also provides more context that allows for a more nuanced understanding of the frequency of contact between the police and the members of the public.

An additional major change in 2015 was the administration of use of force questions to all respondents, regardless of the type of contact experienced during their most recent encounter with police. The 2011 instrument did not allow for calculation of an overall estimate of the use of force by police for all types of contact. Questions pertaining to characteristics of officers in the police contacts were also improved for the 2015 instrument. The questions pertaining to race and ethnicity of officers were adjusted to match questions from the NCVS on the race of the offender.

## **4 STUDY METHODOLOGY**

### ***4.1 Expert Review***

Before cognitive testing of the PPCS began, an expert review of the questionnaire was conducted by CBSM in the spring of 2017. During the expert review, CBSM examined the 2015 questionnaire that was fielded (which included all the changes aforementioned), but with additional revisions. These included the addition of 12 new questions and the restructuring of the sections of the survey. The restructuring of the sections allowed for the removal of duplicate questions that appeared in different survey paths. When conducting the expert review, researchers focused on question order and the flow of the survey, as well as the wording of new questions that BJS wanted to measure in 2018. The recommendations from the expert review were used to modify the baseline questionnaire for cognitive testing.

Below is a list of the 12 new questions that were examined in the expert review and tested in the first round of cognitive testing (question numbers listed are the numbers from the final questionnaire):

- Were you ticketed for the same thing that you were stopped for, or for something different? (Q28)



- At any point during this contact, did the police refer to you using a slur or call you a degrading name? (Q46a)
- At any point during this contact, did the police make a sexual comment to you? (Q46b)
- At any point during this contact, did the police touch you in a sexual way or have any physical contact with you that was sexual in nature? (Q46c)
- Do you feel that any of the police behaviors during this contact were motivated by prejudice or bias against you, due to your actual or perceived race or ethnicity? (Q47a)
- Do you feel that any of the police behaviors during this contact were motivated by prejudice or bias against you, due to your actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation? (Q47b)
- Do you feel that any of the police behaviors during this contact were motivated by prejudice or bias against you, due to your actual or perceived religion? (Q47c)
- Do you feel that any of the police behaviors during this contact were motivated by prejudice or bias against you, due to your actual or perceived disability? (Q47d)
- Did you file a complaint against the police? (Q48)
- During any of your EARLIER contacts with police in the last 12 months, did the police refer to you using a slur or call you a degrading name? (Q54a)
- During any of your EARLIER contacts with police in the last 12 months, did the police make a sexual comment to you? (Q54b)
- During any of your EARLIER contacts with police in the last 12 months, did the police touch you in a sexual way or have any physical contact with you that was sexual in nature? (Q54c)

## **4.2 Cognitive Interviewing**

Five CBSM researchers conducted four iterative rounds of cognitive testing between June and November 2017 that resulted in 50 completed face-to-face cognitive interviews. All interviews were conducted in the Washington DC metropolitan area (Maryland, Virginia, and Washington D.C.). The results in each of the first three rounds were used to inform the questionnaire wording for the subsequent round. In Round 4, the final questionnaire was tested to examine whether all of the revised changes performed as expected (full documentation is available upon request). See Table 1 for the list of modules and the question content for each module:

**Table 1. Question Content by Module in the PPCS**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Question Content Tested</b>
Contact Screen Questions (asked of all respondents (Rs))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-initiated contacts respondent experienced</li> <li>• Police-initiated contacts respondent experienced</li> </ul>
Most Recent Contact (MRC) (asked of all Rs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of contact</li> <li>• Time of contact</li> <li>• Duration of contact</li> </ul>
Characteristics of Street Stop (asked of Rs reporting a street stop as the MRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people with the respondent</li> <li>• Reasons for the stop</li> </ul>
Characteristics of Traffic Stop (asked of Rs reporting a traffic stop as the MRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people with the respondent</li> <li>• Reasons for the stop</li> </ul>
Officer Characteristics (asked of Rs reporting a street stop or a traffic stop as the MRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of officers</li> <li>• Demographic characteristics of officers</li> </ul>
Outcome of Stop (all questions asked of Rs reporting a traffic stop as the MRC; subsets of questions in this module are asked of Rs reporting a traffic accident or an arrest as the MRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes of most recent stop</li> <li>• Interactions with the police</li> </ul>
Outcome of Voluntary Contacts (asked of all Rs reporting a voluntary (self-initiated) contact as the MRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with the police</li> <li>• Feelings about the police during the most recent stop</li> <li>• Additional information about interactions with police during earlier contacts</li> </ul>

In the introduction to the Contact Screen Questions section, respondents were told that for this interview, *police* refers to any law enforcement officer, and that the reference period for the interview was the past 12 months. Twelve screener questions were administered to all respondents on the different types of police contact a respondent could have experienced. If a respondent said yes to more than one type of contact, they were asked which contact was the most recent.

In Section B, all respondents were asked a set of follow-up questions about the characteristics of the (most recent) contact (e.g., date it occurred, whether other people were with the respondent at the time). Respondents were then routed to one of five paths through the follow-up questions (questions about a voluntary contact, a police-initiated street, a police initiated traffic stop, a traffic accident, or an arrest or other involuntary contact) depending on what type of police contact the respondent experienced. Only those respondents on the survey path for Street Stop or Traffic Stop were administered Section E (officer characteristics) and asked to discuss the characteristics of the officer or officers who stopped them.

#### 4.2.1 Recruitment Criteria and Strategy

Respondents from the general population who were aged 18<sup>2</sup> years or older were recruited with the goal of diversity of respondents by police contact type, sex, age, race, ethnicity, household income, and education level. To be eligible to participate, they had to have one or more of the following types of police contacts within the past 12 months:

- Pulled over for a traffic stop (while driving or as a passenger)
- Stopped by police in public (while walking or standing)
- Contacted the police to report a crime
- Asked the police for directions

The following recruitment methods were used: (1) a Broadcast email was sent to all Census Bureau employees based in Census headquarters in Suitland, Maryland to share with family members and friends who may be interested in participating and (2) a Craigslist advertisement was posted in the Volunteering section of the Washington D.C. community area of Craigslist.

Interested respondents were administered a screener questionnaire by telephone (see Appendix A for the screener questionnaire). Respondents were asked about any contacts they had with the police in the past 12 months, the number of police contacts they had, what occurred during their most recent contact with police, and a description of what happened during their previous contacts with police. Using the responses to the screener questions, the lead researcher attempted to identify what type of police contact the respondent may have had as the most recent contact, to ensure the recruiting targets by type of police contact were met.

There are five survey paths a respondent can be routed to depending on the police contact: voluntary (contacts in which the respondent contacted the police to report something), traffic stop, street stop, traffic accident, or arrests/other involuntary. The recruitment goals varied across the four rounds of cognitive testing since problematic paths and questions varied as a result of the prior round of testing. For Round 1, the primary goal was to recruit for the different types of police contact a respondent may have experienced. This was to ensure enough respondents progressed through each survey path so the questions were adequately tested. In Rounds 2 and 3, there was a focus to recruit respondents who experienced a street stop, a traffic stop as a passenger, or a voluntary contact to make sure the revisions following Round 1 improved the performance of the survey questions.

In Round 4, the focus was to recruit respondents who had reported more than three police contacts in the previous 12 months to see if they could accurately recall the number of contacts and types of police contacts they experienced. Other areas of focus during Round 4 were to examine if any of the police contacts were double reported, and to monitor the performance of the verification question in the reporting of the police contacts that was added to the questionnaire between rounds 1 and 2.

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<sup>2</sup> The universe for the PPCS is 16 years or older. Recruitment ads specified that we were looking for individuals ages 16 or older, but no one under the age of 18 called to participate in the study. The youngest respondent in the sample was 18 years old at the time of the interview.

## 4.2.2 Respondent Characteristics

The goal for this study was to balance the respondents based on the survey path the respondents went through in the interview. We also tried to recruit a diverse sample of respondents based on sex, race, ethnicity, education, age, and annual household income. Table 2 below provides respondent characteristics by round and overall.

**Table 2. Respondent Characteristics by Round**

	<b>Round 1</b> (n=15)	<b>Round 2</b> (n=15)	<b>Round 3</b> (n=10)	<b>Round 4</b> (n=10)	<b>Total</b> (n=50)
<b>Survey Path</b>					
Voluntary	3	5	4	6	18
Traffic Stop	4	4	3	1	12
Street Stop	4	4	3	2	13
Arrest	0	0	0	0	0
Accident/Other Involuntary	4	2	0	1	7
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	6	8	6	6	26
Female	9	7	4	4	24
<b>Race*</b>					
White	3	6	2	0	11
Black or African American	11	8	7	10	36
Asian	1	0	1	0	2
Blank	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Hispanic	0	1	1	0	2
Non-Hispanic	15	14	9	10	48
<b>Education</b>					
Completed high school	7	3	3	2	15
Some college, no degree	1	6	1	5	13
Associate's degree (AA/AS)	0	0	2	1	3
Bachelor's degree (BA/BS)	5	2	4	2	13
Post Bachelor's degree	2	4	0	0	6
<b>Age</b>					
18-30	6	2	2	4	14
31-45	5	5	3	1	14
46-55	2	4	2	3	11
56-65	2	3	3	2	10
Over 65	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Income</b>					
Less than \$25,000	3	7	4	5	19
\$25,000 to \$49,999	6	2	3	4	15
\$50,000 to \$99,999	3	4	3	1	11
\$100,000 or more	3	2	0	0	5

The voluntary survey path had the most respondents but this was by design. Eighteen respondents had a police contact which resulted in them routing through the voluntary survey path. The research goals focused on this survey path since the voluntary questions were found to be the most problematic for respondents. The remaining respondents were routed through the street stop (n=13), traffic stop (n=12), and accident/other involuntary paths (n=7). We were not able to recruit respondents to test the arrest survey path. This could be due to privacy concerns respondents may have had about reporting an arrest.

Recruiting for equal representation among the different demographic groups was difficult. This was because our recruitment focused on the type of police contact a respondent experienced for Rounds 1 to 3 and if the respondent had more than three contacts with the police in Round 4. As a result, there was unequal balance among some of the demographic groups, specifically race, ethnicity, and education. Sex was close to being balanced in each of the four rounds of testing. For race, there was difficulty balancing among the groups in cognitive testing as Black or African Americans had a large representation in three of the four rounds. Only two respondents were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin in cognitive testing, as recruiting for Hispanic respondents was difficult. Across the four rounds, a large majority of respondents were those who completed high school (n=15), completed some college but no degree (n=13), and a Bachelor's degree (n=13). Age diversity was achieved across the five different ranges across the four rounds except for those who were over 65. Income was represented among the different ranges across the four rounds except for those who were in a household of \$100,000 or more, where there were only five respondents.

#### **4.2.3 Interviewer Staffing and Training**

CBSM interviewers who had previous experience in conducting cognitive interviews, including other NCVS supplemental surveys, conducted all interviews. Prior to Round 1 of testing, all interviewers received training on administering the Police-Public Contact Survey protocol. The interviewing team discussed each question in the protocol and the purpose of the questions and the probing questions. Each interviewer conducted a practice interview with another interviewer prior to their first cognitive interview. Before the subsequent rounds, interviewer teams met to discuss revisions to the protocol and to ensure interviewers were prepared to conduct interviews with the new protocol.

#### **4.2.4 The Cognitive Interview Protocol**

The protocol focused on the new and revised questions of the PPCS. For Round 1, the “think aloud” technique and retrospective probing was used. The think-aloud technique was used so interviewers could understand the respondents’ thought process when answering each question. The think-aloud technique was only used in Round 1 since some respondents expressed confusion with the survey task as a result of thinking aloud.

Therefore, only retrospective probing was used for Rounds 2 to 4. After administering each section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked a series of retrospective probing questions. Retrospective probing in cognitive interviewing is the process where respondents complete either the full questionnaire or a section of it uninterrupted before being asked a series of probing

questions about the survey questions in the preceding section(s). The advantage of retrospective probing is that the respondent can complete the series of survey questions without any interruption. However, the disadvantage is they may have difficulty recalling their thought process as they answered some of the survey questions since time has elapsed (Willis, 2005). Retrospective probing was used instead of concurrent probing (where respondents are administered follow-up questions immediately after they answer a survey question) to avoid influencing respondents' answers for the subsequent related survey questions.

Many of the probing questions focused on the nature of the respondent's contact with the police and how respondents interpreted select survey items or particular phrases within the question wording. These probing questions were designed to capture the thought process of respondents when answering the survey questions. Interviewers noted any difficulties the respondent may have had when answering the survey questions or probing questions. After administration of the PPCS questionnaire, respondents were asked a series of debriefing items that focused on the respondent's experiences completing the interview, whether they had ever answered survey questions about experience with police in the past, and if they had any type of contact with police that was not discussed during the interview.

## 5 COGNITIVE INTERVIEW FINDINGS

This section of the report includes question-by-question findings of the cognitive interviews across all four rounds of testing. The original and final wording of each screener question is included, with a detailed explanation of why each revision was made following a round of testing (revisions to the question wording between rounds are shown in red font).

The results of this report focus mostly on the screener questions since those are the questions that were most problematic during pre-testing. The clarity and performance of the screener is critical to ensure that respondents are routed down the correct survey path to receive relevant follow-up questions about their most recent (or only) contact. The results of testing each of the screener questions is reported even if respondents had no issues with a particular screener item. The 12 new questions added prior to the expert review were probed on during tested, and are reported on in sections 5.6 and 5.7. The remaining questions in other sections of the questionnaire are not included in this report, as respondents exhibited no troubles with them, and they did not warrant any revisions.

### 5.1 Screener Questions (Q1a-Q1l)

#### 5.1.1 PPCS Screener Question 1a: Report a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity

<b><u>Q1a Original : Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
1a. Have you reported any kind of crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity to the police in the past 12 months?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No    Skip to 1b

Rounds 1 to 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Across all four rounds of testing, 24 respondents recalled reporting a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity to the police in the past 12 months. Respondents did not exhibit any issues comprehending what the question was asking during questionnaire administration. Respondents reported contacting the police to report robberies, vandalism, people being in places where they should not be, and domestic disturbances. However, when probed on the types of crimes, disturbances, or suspicious activities that come to mind after hearing this survey question, respondents said it might refer to things like reporting shootings, burglaries, and incidents of interpersonal violence. Some respondents reported during the probing portion of the interview that they also thought of traffic stops and traffic accidents which respondents had already been asked about during questionnaire administration and were therefore, not in scope for this question.

Those respondents who answered “yes” to reporting a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity were asked to report *How many times did this happen during the past 12 months?* One respondent from Round 1 felt it was challenging to give the precise number of times she reported this type of contact because crime occurs frequently where she lives. Despite some of the incorrect examples that respondents gave, it was evident that all understood what this question was asking due to the contacts they actually reported in response to Q1a, so no changes were recommended throughout all four rounds of testing.

**5.1.2 PPCS Screener Question 1b: Non-crime emergency**

<b><u>Q1b Original: Round 1</u></b>	
1b. Have you reported a <b><u>NON-CRIME EMERGENCY</u></b> , such as a medical emergency or a traffic accident you were not involved in, to the police?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to 1c
<b><u>Q1b Revision 1: Round 2</u></b>	
1b. Have you reported <b>an emergency that was NOT a crime</b> , such as a medical emergency or a traffic accident you were not involved in, to the police?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to 1c
<b><u>Q1b Revision 2: Rounds 3 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
1b. <b>The last question asked about reporting crimes or suspicious activity.</b> Have you reported an EMERGENCY that was NOT a crime to the police? These could include medical emergencies, or a traffic accident that you witnessed but were not involved in?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to 1c

## Round 1 Findings

Three respondents recalled reporting a non-crime emergency in the past 12 months. One of the three respondents reported the time their car was broken into. However, because a crime had occurred, this incident should have been reported in response to screener Q1a (crime, disturbance or suspicious activity) instead. When the interviewer probed this respondent to understand why they did not include this incident for screener Q1a, the respondent stated they were initially unable to think of all of the police contacts they had experienced since the survey had just begun. However, when asked Q1b, they were able to recall and report this incident.

During the probing portion of the cognitive interview, interviewers asked respondents what types of examples come to mind when hearing the question about non-crime emergencies. One respondent said:

**R01:** *"For me, when they say non-crime, I think about anything suspicious or a tip that I may have for the police, non-crime related. It could be.... Anything non-crime related to me would be traffic, needing a police report. Reporting a disturbance, like somebody too loud."*

Most respondents gave examples like reporting an accident or requesting medical assistance. Some respondents struggled to limit their thinking to *non-crime emergencies*. Our recommendation was to revise the wording to read *Have you reported an emergency that was NOT a crime*, in an attempt to make it more apparent to respondents that crimes should not be reported for Q1b.

## Round 2 Findings

Respondents continued to experience issues comprehending the types of contacts this question was asking about. Four respondents indicated they had reported emergencies that were NOT crimes in the past 12 months. However, one of those respondents did include the time she saw a refrigerator on a nearby parkway, which she believed to be a potential hazard to drivers. The respondent explained during questionnaire administration that she did not feel this was an emergency, but when she thought of places to include the incident, she felt it fit with screener 1b the best.

When we probed on what types of police contacts come to mind for this question, six respondents gave examples such as reporting an accident or needing medical assistance which were already listed in the question. It was also clear that respondents were including traffic accidents that they themselves were involved in despite the phrase specifying accidents *you were not involved in*. One respondent was confused and asked her interviewer for clarification because she was thinking of an accident she was involved in. Another respondent (R22) replied *"Someone playing music loud. Noisy neighbors,"* which are disturbances measured in screener Q1a (crime, disturbance or suspicious activity).

It was recommended that the wording be revised to further emphasize that Q1b is not asking about crimes, which should be reported in Q1a. The wording tested for Rounds 3 and 4 read: *The last question asked about reporting crimes or suspicious activity. Have you reported an EMERGENCY*



*that was NOT a crime to the police? These could include medical emergencies, or a traffic accident that you witnessed but were not involved in.*

Rounds 3 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

After revising the wording for Rounds 3 and 4, seven of 20 respondents recalled reporting emergencies that were not crimes in the past 12 months. The revisions were intended to reduce the number of false positives reported for this question. However, our findings from both rounds show that some respondents may have focused on one word or phrase in the question, and missed others. Even though the question specifies accidents they were not involved in, the inclusion of the phrase traffic accidents may have primed respondents to recall any traffic accident or emergency after hearing the words, making them miss the qualifier.

The seven respondents who replied “yes” recalled obtaining medical assistance for a parent or stranger having a health emergency, witnessing a traffic accident on the highway, calling the police on a neighbor playing very loud music, hearing someone fighting, and getting assistance for a neighbor’s home that was on fire.

When interviewers probed respondents to think more generally about the types of contacts with police that come to mind when they hear this question that they did not already mention, some respondents did continue to think of their own personal experiences as context. However, they also provided other examples such as calling 9-1-1 for a sick or injured person in need of a paramedic, witnessing a car accident, witnessing someone break a window open, “seeing a fire”, or a pedestrian calling the police because a car was going too fast and the driver almost hit them.

Although some respondents continued to think of the types of interactions that are being measured under screener 1a (crime, disturbance or suspicious activity), the findings from Rounds 3 and 4 suggest that respondents do comprehend this question, even though they may try to report a crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity. Researchers were confident that potential measurement error had been reduced as much as possible throughout testing, and that any misclassified incidents could be put under the appropriate screener by the field interviewer.

**5.1.3 PPCS Screener Question 1c: Non-emergency Assistance**

<u>Original Question 1c: Round 1</u>	
<p><b>1c. In the past 12 months, have you contacted or approached police for <u>NON-EMERGENCY</u> assistance such as court orders, asking directions, custody enforcement, or any other non-emergency situation?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes      2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to 1d</p>
<u>Question 1c Revision 1: Rounds 2 – Round 4 and Final Recommendation</u>	

<p>1c. In the past 12 months, have you contacted or approached police for <u>NON-EMERGENCY</u> assistance such as asking directions, custody enforcement, court orders, or any other non-emergency situation?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to 1d</p>
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Round 1 Findings

Six respondents indicated they have contacted or approached police for non-emergency assistance in the past 12 months. When probed by interviewers on the types of examples they thought of when they heard this question, respondents often mentioned asking police for directions and getting assistance with court matters such as custody orders.

Using the think-aloud techniques for Round 1, interviewers noticed that some respondents were double reporting the same incident for 1b (non-crime emergencies) and 1c (non-emergency assistance). During probing, researchers learned that two respondents also mentioned traffic accidents and medical emergencies as examples, both are not in scope. Despite the confusion, all respondents appeared to have a clear understanding of the difference between an emergency and a non-emergency. They characterized emergencies as requiring “immediate assistance.”

Because asking law enforcement for directions was assumed to be the most common example listed, a minor revision was made to reorder the list of examples from most common to least common in hopes that respondents would most likely hear their situation listed first in the examples.

Rounds 2 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

After reordering the examples listed in the survey question for Q1c, respondents displayed less difficulty with the wording. In Rounds 2 through 4, twenty respondents who answered “yes” to this question recalled asking the police for directions, obtaining information on child custody, approaching a police officer who ticketed their vehicle for not having the holes necessary to affix the license plate, getting assistance when locked out of their car, calling the police when an Uber drove off with a respondent’s purse still inside the vehicle, and inquiring that an unknown vehicle parked in front of their home be removed. Respondents did not struggle to describe what they believe the difference to be between emergencies and non-emergencies.

**R21:** *“Emergency is being robbed or seeing someone breaking someone home or someone assaulting someone.”*

**R24:** *“The immediacy of someone’s safety being threatened in like a bodily harm kind of way. Charging at someone with a knife or something. Or I’m witnessing a domestic violence situation.”*

**R27:** "An emergency is something probably that needs immediate attention whether it be the police, firemen or EMT, versus something that you can just take a report and deal with it later on."

When respondents were asked to phrase this survey question in their own words, they suggested the question means asking for directions, non-emergencies, "approaching for simple question or questioning", and "in a matter that you didn't have to deal with someone breaking the law or needing assistance." After reviewing the overall performance of this question, and acknowledging that respondents may vary by the types of incidents or situations that they deem urgent so there is no single right answer, no additional recommendations were made to this question.

#### 5.1.4 PPCS Screener Question 1d: Neighborhood Watch

<b>Original Question 1d: Round 1</b>	
<p><b>1d. In the past 12 months, have you participated in neighborhood watch or other anti-crime programs <u>WITH</u> police?</b></p> <p><b>FR Note: Neighborhood watch also refers to block watch or community watch programs.</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes      2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1e on page 6</a></p>
<b>Q1d Revision 1: Rounds 2 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p><b>1d. In the past 12 months, have you participated in <b>an organized</b> neighborhood watch or other anti-crime programs <u>WITH</u> police?</b></p> <p><b>FR Note: Neighborhood watch also refers to block watch or community watch programs.</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes      2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1e on page 6</a></p>

#### Round 1 Findings

Participating in a neighborhood watch or other kind of anti-crime program with police was not something that was very common for our respondents. During Round 1, only one respondent (R14) answered "yes" to this question. However, this respondent's answer was a false positive. Due to the negative interactions this respondent had experienced with a neighbor (taking pictures of the respondent, yelling at the respondent) and contacting the police frequently to report his behaviors, law enforcement advised her and her other neighbors to contact them anytime they saw suspicious activity. This respondent should not have answered "yes" based on this scenario alone because based on her explanation, she did not participate in a formal anti-crime program.

To learn more about the different terms respondents are familiar with to describe neighborhood watch programs, interviewers probed respondents if they were also familiar with the term *block watch*. Even though four of 15 respondents reported they have heard the term *block watch* before, everyone stated *neighborhood watch* is more widely known than *block watch*.

Since the one respondent struggled to comprehend that this question is measuring participation in a formal neighborhood watch program, the question was revised to explicitly ask about participation in an *organized neighborhood watch* with police.

Rounds 2 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Of the nine respondents who reported that they have heard of the term *block watch*, eight stated the term *neighborhood watch* is more often used than *block watch*.

Of the nine respondents who have heard the term, five said that *block watch* means the same thing as *neighborhood watch*. Two respondents said *block watch* refers to a smaller area than neighborhood watch ("Yes, it's like you're watching the block and not the whole neighborhood"). The second respondent stated she's quite sure *block watch* means "probably just that one block" and *neighborhood watch* means the "whole neighborhood." Two respondents were not asked if they mean the same thing.

When asked to explain what this question is asking in their own words, respondents understood this question to mean either being part of an organization or team that patrols the neighborhood, or engaging in community activities or assisting police to keep the neighborhood safe without mention of an organized effort. Because the revisions following Round 1 of testing continued to perform well, no additional recommendations were made for this question.

**5.1.5 PPCS Screener Question 1e: Traffic Accident**

<b><u>Original Q1e: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
<p><b>1e. In the past 12 months, have you been involved in a traffic accident in which the police came to the scene?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">Q2</a></p>

Rounds 1-4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Across four rounds of testing, 13 respondents reported being involved in a traffic accident in which police came to the scene. This survey question performed very well amongst the 50 respondents recruited to participate in cognitive testing. Due to the lack of issues, no changes were made to this question.

**5.1.6 PPCS Screener Question 2: Frequency of Driving**

<b>Original Question 2: Rounds 1 – 2 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p><b>Q2. Before continuing with additional questions about contacts you may have had with the police, I would like to find out how often you usually drove in the past 12 months. Did you drive...</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Every day or almost every day?                  2 <input type="checkbox"/> A few days a week?                  3 <input type="checkbox"/> A few days a month?                  4 <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a year?                  5 <input type="checkbox"/> Never?</p>

Rounds 1-2 Findings and Final Recommendation

Before transitioning to the survey questions that measure respondents’ experience with police-initiated contacts, respondents were asked how frequently they have driven within the past 12 months. *Every day or almost every day* (23) and *Never* (12) were selected the most by our respondents. No respondents selected *a few times a year*. During Rounds 1 and 2 of testing, interviewers probed respondents to learn if a response option was missing that could better describe how often they drove. All respondents replied that the response option they needed was listed. Since this survey question performed well during Rounds 1 and 2 and no recommendations were made, cognitive testing of this question was completed in Round 2.

**5.1.7 PPCS Screener Question 1f: Traffic Stop - Driver**

<b>Original Question 1f: Rounds 1 – Round 2</b>	
<p><b>Now I am going to ask you questions about any time in the past 12 months when police initiated contact with you.</b></p> <p><b>1f. Have you been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle, NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1g</a></p>
<b>Q1f Revision 1: Round 3 (Reverted to this version for Final Recommendation)</b>	

<p><b>Now I'm going to ask you about 4 types of reasons why the police may have initiated contact with you in the past 12 months. If the police initiated contact with you on multiple occasions, you can say yes to more than one reason but please choose the reason that best fits why police initiated contact with you on each occasion.</b></p> <p><b>1f. Have you been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle, NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1g</a></p>
<p><b><u>Q1f Revision 2: Round 4</u></b></p>	
<p><b>Now I'm going to ask you about 4 types of reasons why the police may have initiated contact with you in the past 12 months. If the police initiated contact with you on multiple occasions, you can say yes to more than one reason but please choose the reason that best fits why police initiated contact with you on each occasion.</b></p> <p><b>1f. NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail, have you been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1g</a></p>

Rounds 1 and 2 Findings

When asked about being pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle in the past 12 months, 12 of the 30 respondents in Rounds 1 and 2 answered “yes”. However, no respondents exhibited any significant issues with the question wording.

During Round 1, when one respondent was asked the follow up question (*Were you arrested during [this contact/any of these contacts]?*) for the traffic stop she reported in Q1f, she stated that she had been arrested. However, during probing it became clear this arrest occurred during a street stop, which is measured by the next question, Q1h (*In the past 12 months, have you been stopped by the police while standing, walking, or sitting in a public place or sitting in a parked vehicle?*), which had not been administered to the respondent yet. The cause of the misreport appeared to be due to the unique circumstances. Though the arrest occurred during a street stop, it was the result of a bench warrant from an unpaid traffic ticket. This caused the respondent to associate the arrest with the initial traffic stop, and she did not know that another question was coming about street

stop. The respondent did correctly report the street stop and subsequent arrest when they interviewer asked Q1h and the follow-ups.

Another respondent exhibited difficulty during Round 2 when she misclassified a contact that she had with police under this question. She recalled the time she saw an officer speeding on the highway, and pulled over to the side of the road with the intentions of letting him pass. When the officer saw her pull over, he pulled over behind her and told her that her actions were suspicious. The respondent initially reported this contact under Q1f, and answered no to Q1h (street stop, see full question wording in section 5.1.9). During probing, after discussing her experiences and answering probing questions about her understanding of the questions, she told the interviewer that she initially included this incident under Q1f (traffic stop), but now felt the best option was Q1h (street stop), and asked to change her earlier responses to reflect this.

Following Round 2, the introduction text for police-initiated contacts (questions 1f-1j) was concurrently modified with the introduction text for respondent-initiated contacts (questions 1a-1e.) These revisions were made to let the respondent know they will hear a list of contacts to choose from, and to select the contact that best describes the interaction they had with police.

### Round 3 Findings

Three respondents reported having been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle. One respondent (R31) did not comprehend the question and replied “*Not driving violations? And non-driving violations?*” before answering yes or no. Due to the respondent’s uncertainty, the interviewer then read the survey question once again to the respondent, and the respondent replied “no”. Later during the interview, the respondent was asked about his most recent interaction with police. The respondent recalled that his most recent interaction was when he was pulled over for speeding. When asked why he did not report this contact under screener Q1f, the respondent stated the wording *NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail* caused confusion, and thought this question was asking only about non-driving violations such as when a person received their speeding ticket by mail and were not pulled over in person.

After convening with NCVS researchers, the decision was made to modify the question for the last round of testing, moving the exclusionary clause *NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail* to the beginning of the survey question so that respondents could more clearly hear what not to include.

### Round 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Two respondents reported having been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle in the past 12 months. One respondent who said “yes” was speeding while driving a motor vehicle. The second respondent was pulled over by an undercover police officer who noticed she was talking on the telephone while driving.

Most of the respondents recruited during this round understood that this question is about people who may have been pulled over by a police car while driving a motor vehicle. Two of the 10 respondents who participated in this round of testing did not drive, and stated they could not place themselves in this scenario, and therefore, were unable to give their interpretations of the phrase *captured by camera and ticketed by mail*.

This version was only tested during Round 4. Therefore, the final recommendation was to use the original wording of this survey question, moving the exclusionary clause back to the end of the question: *Have you been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle, NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail?*

**5.1.8 PPCS Screener Question 1g: Traffic Stop-Passenger**

<b><u>Original Question 1g: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
<b>1g. Have you been riding in a motor vehicle that was pulled over by police while someone else was driving?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1h</a>

Rounds 1-4 and Final Recommendation

Across the four rounds of testing, thirteen of 50 respondents reported riding in a motor vehicle that was pulled over by police while someone else was driving in the past 12 months. Respondents did not experience any difficulty with this question. During Rounds 1 and 2, interviewers probed on their understanding of this question. All respondents reported this question was measuring police contacts for which they were not driving a motor vehicle, but were passengers in a vehicle while someone else was driving. Due to the lack of comprehension issues, this question did not require any revisions and testing was completed in Round 2.

**5.1.9 PPCS Screener Question 1h: Street Stop**

<b><u>Original Question 1h: Round 1</u></b>	
<b>1h. In the past 12 months, have you been stopped by the police while standing, walking, or sitting in a public place or sitting in a parked vehicle? This could include being stopped because the police suspected you of something, were looking for information, were investigating a crime or disturbance, or if they stopped you for some other reason.</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to <a href="#">1i</a>
<b><u>Question 1h Revision 1: Rounds 2 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	



<p><b>1h. In the past 12 months, have you been stopped by the police while standing, walking, or sitting in a public place or sitting in a parked vehicle? This could include being stopped because the police were looking for information, were asking about a crime or disturbance, suspected you of something, or if they stopped you for some other reason.</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No Skip to 1i</p>
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Round 1 Findings

Nine of the 15 respondents reported having been stopped by the police while standing, walking, or sitting in a public place or parked vehicle. However, one of the nine struggled to identify the appropriate answer to this question. During the administration of the questionnaire she replied “yes”, but later on after hearing screener Q1j (*Other than what you have already told me about, have you contacted the police or did the police initiate contact with you for any other reason in the past 12 months?*), she changed her answer from “yes” to “no” for Q1h.

**R04:** *"Well, it sounds like that question [1H] that I originally answered yes to, it sounds like I fit the description - the police stopped me and wanted information, or I could be a potential.... they knew who I was and they sought me out ...But then when I got to the other question for any other reason, I was like well, that's a better fit."*

Because the above respondent thought this question was stating she fit the description and may be a suspect, we revised the wording, listing *were looking for information* as the first example so that it does not get lost due to the length of the survey question. We also recommended changing the order of examples resulting in the following list: *This could include being stopped because the police were looking for information, were asking about a crime or disturbance, suspected you of something, or if they stopped you for some other reason.*

As previously reported above in the findings for Q1f (traffic stop), a respondent should have included the resulting arrest from her street stop here, but did not.

Rounds 2 -4 Findings and Final Recommendation

After revising the wording, a total of 17 respondents of the 35 respondents across Rounds 2 through 4 reported being stopped by police in the past 12 months. One respondent (discussed in Q1f above) did experience difficulty selecting the appropriate response to this question. She initially included the incident as a traffic stop and replied “no” to this question. It was not until the respondent was asked Check Item B2 (*You just mentioned several contacts with the police. Which of these was the most recent?*) that she decided to change her answer and include her police contact as a street stop.

Respondents were asked to interpret what this question is asking in their own words. Four respondents suggested this question is implying that they were targeted and stopped by police for no reason at all.

**R19:** *“You’re approached but you’re not doing anything wrong.”*

**R20:** “I didn’t do anything.... They have engaged me in some sort of way to make it feel like I’m being detained.”

**R24:** “I kind of interpret it as like there's no reason for them to contact me. Not because of anything I'm doing, it's just totally unfounded and borderline harassment.”

**R25:** “Have the police racial profiled me or pulled me over for not an efficient reason.”

Not all respondents believed this question was measuring the times they were being targeted by police or the police felt they were suspicious. Seven respondents indicated this question is asking about an array of things, such as the cops were investigating something unrelated to the respondent and were contacting them to obtain information about a crime.

As we continued monitoring the performance of this question, it was evident that respondents understood the meaning of this question and knew what types of incidents were applicable here. No further revisions were recommended.

**5.1.10 PPCS Screener Question 1i: Other Arrests**

<b>Original Question 1i: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<b>1i. In the past 12 months, have you been arrested during any contact with the police that you have not told me about yet?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No

Rounds 1-4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Only two of 50 respondents from Rounds 1 through 4 reported being arrested during any contact with the police in the past 12 months for something that they had not already revealed to their interviewer. One respondent had a warrant for her arrest for an unrelated prior incident and the police arrested her home. The second arrest was the result of someone reporting a disturbance at her location; the interaction escalated and the police ultimately arrested the respondent. These incidents indicate that the question works as intended to capture miscellaneous arrests that do not occur during the other types of contacts asked about in the screener questions.

Due to the limited number of respondents who reported this type of contact with the police, probing questions were administered for all four rounds of testing to ensure that respondents did not experience any difficulty with this question. This survey question performed well among all respondents therefore, no changes were made to this question.

**5.1.11 PPCS Screener Question 1j: Other Police or Self-Initiated Contacts**

<b>Original Question 1j: Round 1</b>	
<b>1j. Other than what you have already told me about, have you contacted the police or did the police initiate contact with you for any other reason in the past 12 months?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM 1J</a> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM B</a>

<b>Question 1j Revision 1: Rounds 2 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
1j. Other than what you have already told me about, <b>in the past 12 months</b> , have you contacted the police or did the police initiate contact with you for any other reason?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM 1J</a> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM B</a>

Round 1 Findings

Six respondents indicated they had another contact with police in the past 12 months that they had not reported in response to other screener questions. Of those six respondents, three incorrectly answered this question. One respondent did not report the time they contacted the police about a suspicious person which is measured by Q1a (*Have you reported any kind of crime, disturbance, or suspicious activity to the police in the past 12 months?*) The other respondent did not report the time she was pulled over while talking on the phone and driving for Q1f (*Have you been pulled over by the police while driving a motor vehicle, NOT including any driving violations captured by camera and ticketed by mail?*) The third respondent who incorrectly answered this question recalled an incident that was out of scope because it occurred two years ago.

Two respondents could not recall during probing what incident they were thinking of that made them reply “yes” to this question. With the implementation of think aloud and the length of the screener, twenty minutes may have lapsed by the time they were asked to reflect back to their answers for these questions. Researchers agreed that it may be challenging for some respondents to recall during probing what they were thinking of at the time they were first administered this question.

The recommendation proposed for the following round of testing was to move *in the past 12 months* from the end of the question towards the beginning of the question, so that respondents remember the context of the reference period while formulating their answer.

Rounds 2-4 Findings and Final Recommendation

The revision was tested with 35 respondents, of which 11 respondents answered “yes” to this question. Five respondents who replied “yes” double-reported their response with some previously reported police contact. Three respondents reported something here that they had already mentioned in Q1a which asks about reporting crimes, disturbances, or suspicious activity, while two others reported contacts in Q1c (non-emergency assistance) and Q1h (street stops), respectively. Despite the potential issues of respondents double-reporting contacts, no additional changes were recommended to this question because we expect to capture and correct these errors in the verification question that was added in Round 2 (see section 5.1.14).

**5.1.12 PPCS Screener Question 1k: Self-initiated**

<b>Original Question 1k: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
1k. Was this contact/Were any of these contacts initiated by you?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM 1K</a>

Round 1 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Nine respondents replied “yes” to this question because they replied “yes” to Q1j (17 respondents answered “yes” to Q1j). All respondents were clear that this question is measuring if the respondent is the individual who initiated contact with the police. Due to the lack of difficulty respondents experienced with this question, no changes were recommended.

**5.1.13 PPCS Screener Question 11: Police initiated**

<b><u>Original Question 11: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
<b>11. Was this contact/Were any of these contacts/Were any of the other contacts initiated by the police?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM 1L</a> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM B</a>

Round 1 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Twelve respondents replied “yes” to this question after mentioning there were other contacts they have yet to report. Respondents did not experience any difficulty answering this question and were very clear that this question is asking if the police were the ones to initiate contact with them.

### 5.1.14 PPCS Screener Verification Question

<b>Original Verification Question: Round 2</b>	
<p>VI. You mentioned the following contacts with the police in the past 12 months, {contact<sub>1</sub> ___ number of times}, {contact<sub>2</sub> ___ number of times}, and {contact<sub>x</sub> ___ number of times ...}. Is everything that I have correct?</p>	<p>[IF YES] Go to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM B2</a> BELOW.</p> <p>[IF NO] <b>Which of these is incorrect?</b> If anything you have recorded in your checklist is incorrect, verify with R what is incorrect such as, the type of contact or number of times it happened. After verifying the change, read the list again before recording it in your checklist and reading CHECK ITEM B2.</p>
<b>Verification Question Revision 1: Rounds 3 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p>VI. You mentioned <b>having several contacts with the police in the past 12 months. I am going to read you a list of what I have recorded to make sure everything is correct. Each contact should only be counted once. You said you had the following contacts with the police,</b> {contact<sub>1</sub> ___ number of times}, {contact<sub>2</sub> ___ number of times}, and {contact<sub>x</sub> ___ number of times ...}. Is everything that I have correct?</p>	<p>[IF YES] Go to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM B2</a> BELOW.</p> <p>[IF NO] <b>Which of these is incorrect?</b> If anything you have recorded in your checklist is incorrect, verify with R what is incorrect such as, the type of contact or number of times it happened. After verifying the change, read the list again before recording it in your checklist and reading CHECK ITEM B2.</p>

#### Round 2 Findings

The verification question was added to the questionnaire in Round 2 because researchers realized some respondents were double-reporting contacts. We needed a way to confirm they captured the correct types of contacts, and the number of times these contacts occurred. As a result of adding the verification question, one respondent corrected her interviewer because she double-reported a non-crime emergency (we learned this contact occurred two years ago and was out of scope).

A second respondent approached by police while sleeping in his car also double-reported this single contact. He reported this contact for both Q1f (traffic stop) and Q1h (street stop). His contact with police was more challenging for researchers to classify because an individual sleeping in a car could lead to a ticket or a DUI if the car is running, even if the gears are in park. It was recommended that the verification question be modified to not only confirm the interviewer

recorded the correct types of contacts, but to also confirm that each contact was only counted once so we revised the introduction of this question to read: *You mentioned having several contacts with the police in the past 12 months. I am going to read you a list of what I have recorded to make sure everything is correct. Each contact should only be counted once.*

Rounds 3 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

The revisions made to the verification question after Round 2 helped interviewers reduce potential survey error by confirming the number and types of contacts reported by respondents, and identifying if any changes needed to be made. The verification question served as a catch-all to not only capture contacts there were double-reported, but to also verify that a respondent classified their incident under the most applicable police contact now that they had heard all screener questions.

**5.1.15 PPCS Screener Most Recent Contact Question**

<b><u>Original Check Item B2: Round 1</u></b>	
Check Item B2. <b>You just mentioned several contacts with the police. Which of these was the most recent?</b>	
<b><u>Check Item B2 Revision 1: Rounds 2 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
Check Item B2. <b>We just talked about several contacts with the police. Which of these was the most recent?</b>	

Round 1 Findings

None of the 15 respondents in this round experienced any comprehension issues with this question. Three respondents struggled to recall which contact was the most recent. The first two respondents realized during the probing portion of the interview that they forgot to mention a contact during the screener, which also happened to be the contact that was the most recent. The third respondent recalled during the probing questions for street stop that they made a cognitive error, and this was not the most recent contact, but the time they were pulled over for a traffic stop was. The inability to recall which contact with police was the most recent is an issue that researchers expected some number of respondents to have. Therefore, no recommendations were made to address this problem because they were not comprehension related.

After Round 1 testing, a verification question (discussed in the section 5.1.14) was added before Check Item B2 to confirm that interviewers listed the correct types of contacts given by the respondent. To supplement this addition, the wording for this question was revised slightly from *You just mentioned several contacts* to *We just talked about several contacts* so that the introduction of this question was not redundant.

## Rounds 2 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Thirteen respondents reported having more than one contact with the police in the past 12 months and were asked to select which was most recent. The results from testing reveal that respondents did not have any issues with the wording of this question, therefore, no further wording changes were recommended.

### 5.2 *Most Recent Contact*

#### 5.2.1 Q3a-b. Date of Most Recent Contact

<b>Original Question 3a-b: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p><b>3a. During what month and year did that contact occur?</b></p> <p>FR Notes: Encourage respondent to give exact month. Reference period: ^BEGREFMOPPCS 2016 through ^ENDREFMOPPCS 2017</p> <p><b>3b. Did you mean [MONTH] 2016, or [MONTH] 2017?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> January 2 <input type="checkbox"/> February 3 <input type="checkbox"/> March 4 <input type="checkbox"/> April 5 <input type="checkbox"/> May 6 <input type="checkbox"/> June 7 <input type="checkbox"/> July 8 <input type="checkbox"/> August 9 <input type="checkbox"/> September 10 <input type="checkbox"/> October 11 <input type="checkbox"/> November 12 <input type="checkbox"/> December 97 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know exact month within reference period</p>

## Rounds 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Respondents did not exhibit any comprehension issues with this question, therefore, no recommendations were made to revise the wording. However, four respondents did struggle to recall the exact month their contact with police occurred. When administered this question, respondents would reflect on what they remembered around the date the contact happened to give context of what month it occurred. One respondent who was interviewed in August 2016 recalled the date her contact took place (June of 2016) and realized her only and most contact was outside of the reference period we mentioned at the beginning of the survey.

**R21:** *"Because you said between August 10th of '16 but since this incident happened in June '16 that's before so it wouldn't apply to your survey. Am I correct?..."*

**5.2.2 Q4. Time of Day**

<b>Original Question 4: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p><b>4. About what time of day did this contact occur?</b></p> <p>[If R just says “during the day,] <b>Would you say it occurred between 6am and 12 noon, or between 12 noon and 6pm?</b></p> <p>[If R just says “at night,] <b>Would you say it occurred between 6pm and 12 midnight, or between 12 midnight and 6am?</b></p>	<p>During Day</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> After 6am – 12 noon</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> After 12 noon – 6pm</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don’t know what time of day</p> <p>At night</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm – 12 midnight</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> After 12 midnight – 6am</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> Don’t know what time of night</p> <p>OR</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don’t know whether day or night</p>

Rounds 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Respondents had limited cognitive issues with this question. The majority of respondents were confident in their answers for the general time of day that their most recent contact occurred. Similar to the previous question, during what month and year did that contact occur, respondents thought through what they recalled about the contact, such as being late for work, paying attention to the time because they had somewhere to be, and that it was still early in the morning. Due to the lack of issues, no recommendations were made for this question.

**5.2.3 Q5. Length of Contact**

<b>Original Question 5: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p><b>5. About how many minutes would you say this contact lasted?</b></p>	<p>___ number of minutes</p> <p>OR</p> <p>___ hours and ___ minutes</p>

Rounds 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

All respondents gave an estimate of how long their contact lasted. Eight respondents, however, did give ranges (7-8 minutes, 10-15 minutes). This question performed well across all rounds of testing. Therefore, no changes were made to this question.

After testing was complete, BJS proposed coding the amount of minutes a contact lasted as ranges to aid field interviewers when respondents were unsure of the answer. This modification will be implemented in the 2018 administration.



### 5.2.4 Q6. Appropriate Amount of Time

<b>Original Question 6: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<b>6. Would you say the police spent an appropriate amount of time with you?</b> [If R just says “no”] <b>Would you say the police spent too much time or too little time with you?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No, too much time 3 <input type="checkbox"/> No, too little time 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

#### Rounds 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Across all four rounds of testing, three respondents believed their contact with police took longer than necessary and that officers spent too much time with them. Respondents were also probed on what the term *appropriate* means to them in *appropriate amount of time*. They defined it as the following:

**R01:** "A reasonable time. Did they take an elaborate amount of time on me? If people call for a disturbance, and you see there's no disturbance and there's no perpetrator around, but they spent a numerous amount of time flashing their lights in my car. Doing things that they didn't have jurisdiction to do at the time. There were too many of them. Too many of them asking questions and telling me to be still..."

**R16:** "Meaning, he did his job, as far as if he's suspicious or whatever, he asked the questions, did what he was supposed to do."

**R38:** "For the situation, was it adequate time, enough time, dedicated to the situation."

Since all respondents understood the meaning of this question, no revisions were suggested.

### 5.3 Characteristics of Street Stop

**5.3.1 Q10a-h. Reasons for Street Stop**

<b>Original Question 10a-h: Round 1</b>	
<p><b>10. What was the reason given for this stop?</b></p> <p><b>Did the police...</b></p> <p>10a. say they suspected you of something?</p> <p>10b. say you matched the description of someone they were looking for?</p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Were the police...</b></p> <p>10c. seeking information about another person?</p> <p>10d. investigating a crime?</p> <p>10e. providing a service or assistance to you?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>CHECK ITEM C:</b> Was the respondent alone at the time of the stop?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to Q10h (Q7 = NO)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No    <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Q10f (Q7 = YES)</p>	
<p>10f. Did someone you were with match the description of someone the police were looking for?</p> <p>10g. Was someone you were with suspected of something?</p> <p>10h. Was there some other reason? [If yes] What was the other reason?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Specify _____</p>

**Question 10a-h Revision 1: Rounds 2 – 3**

**With this next question, I'm going to read a list of 8 possible reasons that an officer may have given for stopping you. You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones that best fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you.**

**Did the police...**

1  Yes    2  No

10a. say they suspected you of something?

1  Yes    2  No

10b. say you matched the description of someone they were looking for?

-----  
**Were the police...**

1  Yes    2  No

10c. seeking information about another person?

1  Yes    2  No

10d. investigating a crime?

1  Yes    2  No

**CHECK ITEM C:** Was the respondent alone at the time of the stop?

- Yes     Skip to Q10h (Q7 = NO)  
 No     Go to Q10f (Q7 = YES)

10f. Did someone you were with match the description of someone the police were looking for?

1  Yes    2  No

10g. Was someone you were with suspected of something?

1  Yes    2  No

10h. Was there some other reason?  
[If yes] What was the other reason?

1  Yes    2  No

Specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 10a-h Revision 2: Round 4 and Final Recommendation**

<p><b>With this next question, I'm going to read a list of 8 possible reasons that an officer may have given for stopping you. You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones <b>that best fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you during your most recent contact with police.</b></b></p> <p><b>Did the police...</b></p> <p>10a. <b>say they suspected you of something?</b></p> <p>10b. <b>say you matched the description of someone they were looking for?</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Were the police...</b></p> <p>10c. <b>seeking information about another person?</b></p> <p>10d. <b>investigating a crime?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>CHECK ITEM C:</b> Was the respondent alone at the time of the stop?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to Q10h (Q7 = NO)  <input type="checkbox"/> No   <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Q10f (Q7 = YES)</p>	
<p>10f. <b>Did someone you were with match the description of someone the police were looking for?</b></p> <p>10g. <b>Was someone you were with suspected of something?</b></p> <p>10h. <b>Was there some other reason?</b>          [If yes] <b>What was the other reason?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Specify _____</p>

Round 1 Findings

During Round 1 of cognitive testing, six respondents were asked to provide the reason police gave them for why they were stopped because they replied “yes” to Q9 (*Did the police give a reason for stopping you?*).

Three respondents had difficulty selecting the response option that was most applicable to their situation. The first respondent answered “yes” to *Was there some other reason* because he was stopped for making a gesture and mumbling. The second respondent was stopped for loitering, and selected “yes” to Q10d: *investigating a crime*. Although loitering is against the law, she stated that *investigating a crime* is a “harsh” reason to describe why they were stopped by police, and that breaking a rule or law is a better way to describe her situation.

The third respondent provided their personal opinion about why they were stopped, and not the reason they were given by police for the stop. The respondent believed he matched the description for a crime that police were investigating. Due to this respondent’s cognitive error, it was recommended that the tone of this question be more conversational to prepare the respondent that a list of reasons will be read, and to choose the reason that is most applicable to what they were told by police. Two sentences were added as a lead-in to the series of 8 questions: *With this next question, I’m going to read a list of 8 possible reasons that an officer may have given for stopping you. You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones that best fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you.*

### Rounds 2 and 3 Findings

In Round 2, three of the four respondents indicated in Q9 that police gave them a reason for why they were stopped, and were therefore asked this question. Of those three respondents, all struggled with the options provided for Q10. However, their responses to Q10a-Q10h suggest that the revision to the intro after Round 1 improved the performance of the question.

One respondent answered “yes” to “*was there some other reason?*” and specified that the police asked her what she was doing. The respondent was driving on the highway when a cop had his lights on behind her. She pulled over to the side of the road to let the officer pass, but her actions made the officer suspicious and he asked her what she was doing. Her difficulty was likely due to being in the wrong survey path due to misreporting the type of police contact she had.

One respondent answered “yes” to both “*was someone you were with suspected of something?*” and “*was there some other reason?*” specifying that the other reason was to ask what they were doing in the parking lot. As with the previous respondent, this respondent’s difficulty was likely due to being in the wrong survey path.

One respondent on the street stop survey path said “yes” to 10c (seeking information) and 10d (investigating a crime). She was approached by police in the parking lot of her apartment complex to ask questions about a shooting that had occurred.

In round 3, two of three respondents who had street stops as their most recent contact reported in Q9 that the police gave them a reason for why they were stopped. One respondent struggled with limiting his thought process to his most recent contact only. As he selected reasons an officer gave, he selected responses for an earlier contact that had occurred in the past 12 months, as well as his most recent contact.

For the final round of testing, the recommendation was made to add text to remind the respondent that Q10 is referring to the respondent’s most recent contact (*You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones that best fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you during your most recent contact with police*).

## Round 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

During Round 4, only two respondents were administered this survey question. However, one of the respondents failed to answer these questions about his most recent contact. When the first few options were read to the respondent, he did limit his thinking to only his most recent contact. As the interviewer began to make his way through reading the list of reasons, the respondent answered “yes” for other previous contacts with police. The interviewer reminded the respondent that these questions are still only about his most recent contact.

Despite the cognitive difficulty that the one respondent displayed, no changes were recommended for this question. The introduction text for this question reinforced that this question series was about the most recent contact the respondent had with police. Also, this respondent struggled throughout the interview to attentively listen to the words being read, as he appeared eager to discuss some of the problems he has faced with police during their interactions on several occasions. Researchers were confident that this question was not broken and that this respondent may have been outlier.

### **5.3.2 Q11. Legitimate Reason for Street Stop**

<b><u>Original Question 11: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
<b>11. Would you say the police had a legitimate reason for stopping you?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know All responses skip to <a href="#">Q14 on page 29</a>

## Rounds 1 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Eight of 17 respondents across all four rounds of testing said the police did have a legitimate reason for stopping them, whereas nine respondents said that the police did not have a legitimate reason for stopping them. When interviewers probed respondents on their interpretation of the word “legitimate”, they suggested this word means “good enough”, “probable cause”, “lawful”, “reasonable”, “[not] accusing you of something you had nothing to do with,” and “They had a reason and that no matter what I felt about it, it was okay.”

Interviewers probed respondents on the types of street stops that they considered legitimate. Stopping someone whom you know has committed a crime (and not because they fit the description) was the most popular response. Respondents added that it is not legitimate for police to stop someone because they “match the description”. Because respondents did not experience any comprehension issues with this question, no revisions were needed.

## 5.4 Characteristics of Traffic Stop

### 5.4.1 Q12. Reasons for Traffic Stop

<b><u>Original Question 12: Round 1</u></b>	
12. Was anyone else in the vehicle with you at the time of the traffic stop? Please remember to include babies and small children.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Q13 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to Q14
<b><u>Question 12 Revision 1: Rounds 2– 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
12. Was anyone else in the vehicle with you at the time of the traffic stop? Please remember to include [read if passenger: the driver,] babies and small children.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Go to Q13 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to Q14

#### Round 1 Findings

Four respondents were on the traffic stop survey path, and were asked to report if anyone else was in the vehicle with them when the traffic stop occurred. One respondent who was a passenger during the traffic stop, indicated that no one else was in the vehicle with her at the time of the traffic stop. Because she was the passenger, she should have answered *yes*, counting the driver. Interviewers believe the respondent may have thought this question was asking about additional passengers other than the driver, whom she had already mentioned earlier during the interview. It was recommended for the following round that a fill be added for passengers only to ensure that drivers are being captured in this question as well. The phrase changed from *Please remember to include babies and small children* to *Please remember to include [read if passenger: the driver,] babies and small children*.

#### Rounds 2 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

The revised wording tested during Rounds 2 through 4 performed well. Six respondents reported there were additional occupants in the car at the time of the traffic stop. No additional changes were needed. After testing was complete, researchers recommended that question 12 only be asked of traffic stop-drivers, and that *yes* be automatically programmed for those respondents who identified a traffic stop while being a passenger as their most recent contact. Because passengers will no longer be reminded to include the driver, babies, and small children in their counts of people in the car at the time of the traffic stop, this clause was also added to Question 13: *How many other people were in the vehicle with you at the time of the traffic stop? Please remember to include [read if passenger: the driver,] babies and small children*.

**5.4.2 Q15a-k. Reasons for Traffic Stop**

**Original Question 15a-k: Round 1**

<p><b>15. What reason or reasons did the officer(s) give for stopping the vehicle? Was it for...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>a. Speeding?</b></li><li><b>b. Aggressive or reckless driving?</b></li><li><b>c. Vehicle defect like headlight or tail light out, window tinting, or obstructed plates?</b></li><li><b>d. Issues with or check of driver's license, license plate, or vehicle registration?</b></li><li><b>e. Roadside check for drunk drivers?</b></li><li><b>f. Seatbelt violation?</b></li><li><b>g. Illegal turn or improper lane change?</b></li><li><b>h. Stop sign or stop light violation?</b></li><li><b>i. Using a cell phone while driving, including talking or texting?</b></li><li><b>j. Police conducting an investigation or suspicious activity?</b></li><li><b>k. Some other reason?</b></li></ul>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Specify _____</p>
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**Question 15a-k Revision 1: Rounds 2 – 3**

**With this next question, I'm going to read a list of 11 possible reasons that an officer may have given for stopping you. You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones that best fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you.**

**15. Were you stopped for...**

**a. Speeding?**

1  Yes 2  No

**b. Aggressive or reckless driving?**

1  Yes 2  No

**c. Vehicle defect like headlight or tail light out, window tinting, or obstructed plates?**

1  Yes 2  No

**d. Issues with or check of driver's license, license plate, or vehicle registration?**

1  Yes 2  No

**e. Roadside check for drunk drivers?**

1  Yes 2  No

**f. Seatbelt violation?**

1  Yes 2  No

**g. Illegal turn or improper lane change?**

1  Yes 2  No

**h. Stop sign or stop light violation?**

1  Yes 2  No

**i. Using a cell phone while driving, including talking or texting?**

1  Yes 2  No

**j. Police conducting an investigation or suspicious activity?**

1  Yes 2  No

**k. Some other reason?**

1  Yes  2  No

Specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 15a-k Revision 2: Round 4 and Final Recommendation**

With this next question, I’m going to read a list of 11 possible reasons that an officer may have given for stopping you. You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones that best fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you **during your most recent contact with police.**

15. Were you stopped for...

- a. Speeding?
- b. Aggressive or reckless driving?
- c. Vehicle defect like headlight or tail light out, window tinting, or obstructed plates?
- d. Issues with or check of driver’s license, license plate, or vehicle registration?
- e. Roadside check for drunk drivers?
- f. Seatbelt violation?
- g. Illegal turn or improper lane change?
- h. Stop sign or stop light violation?
- i. Using a cell phone while driving, including talking or texting?
- j. Police conducting an investigation or suspicious activity?

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes 2  No

1  Yes  2  No

Specify \_\_\_\_\_

Round 1 Findings

In Round 1, four respondents were asked this question. One was unable to select an option that fit their situation. A respondent who was pulled over for making an illegal u-turn was unsure during the think aloud how to best answer Q15b: *aggressive or reckless driving*. He asked the interviewer to skip this question so that he could hear more options before selecting yes or no for Q15b. Ultimately, the respondent did say “yes” to 15g: *illegal turn or improper lane change*. During probing, the respondent revealed that once he heard all of the different reasons listed in the questionnaire, he knew that *aggressive or reckless driving* did not fit his situation.

As we suggested with Q10, we thought respondents should know that there will be several reasons to choose from before reading the list of reasons for their traffic stop. We recommended adding *With this next question, I’m going to read a list of 11 possible reasons that an officer may have given for stopping you. You can say yes to more than one reason but please choose ones that best*

*fit the reason or reasons the officer(s) gave you.*

Given the length of the list in Q15, we also suggested randomly ordering the response options for each respondent to eliminate possible order effects. After a discussion with PPCS stakeholders, the survey sponsors decided the randomization of response options was not feasible to implement for the 2018 data collection.

### Rounds 2 -3 Findings

Overall, the revised question 15 with added intro text appeared to work well. Across Rounds 2 and 3, only five respondents answered this question. Three appeared to correctly categorize the reasons without errors. Two of the five respondents answered this question incorrectly. One respondent correctly reported the reason as *Police conducting an investigation or suspicious activity*, but then also said “yes” to *some other reason*, specifying that the officer saw the driver “conducting a hand-to-hand.” He described that a hand-to-hand is when person A gets out of their car to approach car B and give them something [illegal]. A second respondent selected *some other reason* because they felt they were being profiled and that was the reason for their stop. They were told by their officer that the registration was incorrect. However, the respondent stated during the interview that their paperwork “*matched*” the registration.

A minor revision was made to the introduction text for this question to remind the respondent that this question is still referring to their most recent contact with police. The modification to the introduction was made concurrently with the revisions to Q10 which measures the reasons provided by police during a street stop.

### Round 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

During this round, only one respondent reported being given a reason for the nature of their traffic stop. When the respondent was pulled over, the officer indicated he was stopping the respondent for driving 15 miles over the speed limit. The respondent told the interviewer that although he does not know his exact speed, he is certain he did not go over the speed limit. Due to the lack of issues with this question in this round, and because this question was only cognitively tested with one respondent, no additional recommendations were made.

## **5.5 Officer Characteristics**

### **5.5.1 Q19. Ethnicity of Police Officer**

<b><u>Original Question 19: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
<b>19. Was the police officer of Hispanic or Latino origin?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

### Rounds 1 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Nine respondents reported a street stop or traffic stop as their more recent contact with police in the past 12 months and were administered the section on Officer Characteristics. Although

respondents did not experience any difficulty comprehending what this question was asking, two respondents did struggle to identify the ethnicity of the officer who stopped them. The first respondent (R01) initially reported his officer was not Hispanic, but when administered the race question, stated one officer might be Hispanic because of his last name. The other respondent was unsure if one of the officers was Hispanic and answered, “*don't know*”. No recommendations were made to this question.

## 5.6 Outcome of Stop

### 5.6.1 Q28. Reason for ticket

<b><u>Q28 Original: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
28. Were you ticketed for the same thing that you were stopped for, or for something different?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> The same thing 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Something different

#### Round 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendations

Question 28 is in section F, Outcome of Stop. Respondents who are on a police-initiated path are first asked question 27: *During this contact were you given a ticket? Please do not include any verbal or written warnings given to you by the police.* If the respondent says they were given a ticket, they are then asked Q28 as a follow up. Six out of the 50 respondents were asked this question over all four rounds (three in round 1, and 1 in each of rounds 2 - 4).

This was a newly added question for the 2018 questionnaire. Therefore, during rounds 1 and 2, interviewers probed on respondent understanding of the question by asking them to tell the interview what the question is asking in their own words. The four respondents who were asked that probing question were easily able to correctly explain what the question was asking. Since respondents exhibited no issues understanding or answering the question, the probe was removed from the protocol for rounds 3 and 4, and no changes to the question wording were necessary.

### 5.6.2 Q31. Search or Frisk

<b><u>Original Question 31: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
31. At any time during this contact, did the police search you, frisk you, or pat you down?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to CHECK ITEM G 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to CHECK ITEM G

#### Rounds 1 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Only four of 50 respondents reported being searched, frisked, or pat down by police in the past 12 months. Interviewers probed respondents on what the word *frisk* means in Q31. Respondents described *frisk* as physically searching the respondent’s body and pockets, some noting that it was the same as a “*pat down*.” One respondent simply stated that it is the police term for “*search*.”

**R01:** "Frisk means... touching in a manner of intending to do harm in a manner of do my job. So if I'm frisking you, I may be checking your pockets, but I may be pushing, putting my hand down and pushing on your leg. Doing something extra than what I have to do."

Although the depth of how respondents described this question varied, all appeared to have an accurate understanding of the term. Due to the lack of comprehension issues, no revisions were made to this question.

## 5.7 Outcome of Voluntary Contacts

### 5.7.1 Q42. Improvement of Situation After Contacting Police

<b>Original Question 42: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p>42. Did the situation improve after you contacted the police?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes            2 <input type="checkbox"/> No            3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>

#### Rounds 1 – 4 Findings and Final Recommendation

Six respondents reported during questionnaire administration their situations improved after contacting police. Respondents did not have any comprehension issues with this question. However, during the first round of testing when one respondent was administered Q42, he asked his interviewer what situation was this question referring to. Although the respondent had been administered other questions in this survey path (Q40: *How did you contact the police?* and Q41: *Did the police respond right away to your request?*), it is possible that the respondent may not have known Q40 and Q41 were about his most recent contact with police as well. Due to the lack of comprehension issues with this question, no changes were recommended.

### 5.7.2 Q46. Police Behaved Properly

<b>Q46 Original: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<p>46. At any point during this contact, did the police...</p> <p>a. Refer to you using a slur or call you a degrading name?</p> <p>b. Make a sexual comment to you?</p> <p>c. Touch you in a sexual way or have any physical contact with you that was sexual in nature?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>

Round 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendations

Question 46 is a follow-up question that respondents receive if they indicate that they do not feel the police behaved properly in question 45 (*Looking back on this contact, do you feel the police behaved properly?*). Fifteen of the 50 respondents were asked question 46 (three in round 1, five in round 2, five in round 3, and 2 in round 4).

This question was newly added, and had not been previously tested. To ensure the question was easy to understand and answer, a follow-up probing question was asked of respondents who answered Q46. Respondents were asked to describe what the question is asking in their own words. Responses to probing questions indicated that the questions were easy to understand, and that respondents interpreted them correctly. The questions performed well throughout all rounds of cognitive testing. No changes were made to the question wording.

**5.7.3 Q47. Police Behavior Motivated by Bias**

<b><u>Q47 Original: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</u></b>	
<p><b>47. Do you feel that any of the police behaviors during this contact were motivated by prejudice or bias against you, due to...</b></p> <p><b>a. your actual or perceived race or ethnicity?</b></p> <p><b>b. your actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation?</b></p> <p><b>c. your actual or perceived religion?</b></p> <p><b>d. your actual or perceived disability?</b></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>

Round 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendations

Like Q46, Q47 is asked if respondents indicate that they feel the police did not behave properly in response to Q45. Fifteen respondents were asked this question during the four rounds of cognitive testing. Again, this was a newly added question, so it was probed on during cognitive testing. Results from the cognitive testing indicated that the questions performed well, and that respondents easily understood what the series of questions were asking. Since the questions did not cause any difficulty for respondents or interviewers, no changes were made to the wording during cognitive testing.

#### 5.7.4 Q48. Complaint Filed

<b>Q48 Original: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<b>48. Did you file a complaint against the police?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Go to <a href="#">Q49</a> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Skip to <a href="#">CHECK ITEM J</a>

#### Round 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendations

Question 48 is another follow-up question asked of respondents who reported that they feel the police did not behave properly during their most recent contact. Fifteen respondents were asked this question during the four rounds of cognitive testing. Of those 15 respondents, 14 said they did not file a complaint, and one respondent said that they did file a complaint. The question did not cause any problems for respondents or interviewers. No changes were made to the question wording throughout testing.

#### 5.7.5 Q54. Police Behaved Properly During Earlier Contacts

<b>Q54 Original: Rounds 1 – 4 and Final Recommendation</b>	
<b>54. During any of your EARLIER contacts with police in the last 12 months, did the police...</b>	
<b>a. Refer to you using a slur or call you a degrading name?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<b>b. Make a sexual comment to you?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
<b>c. Touch you in a sexual way or have any physical contact with you that was sexual in nature?</b>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    2 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

#### Round 1 - 4 Findings and Final Recommendations

Question 54 is asked of all respondents who reported more than one contact with police during the past 12 months. Of the 50 respondents in the sample, 43 reported having more than one contact, and thus were asked this question. Forty-two of the respondents said “no” to all three items in Q54, and one respondent said “yes” to item a and “no” to items b and c.

This question was newly added prior to testing the 2018 supplement. The question mirrors Q46, but asks about any of the respondents earlier contacts, rather than the most recent contact. The same probing questions that were asked after Q46 were asked after respondents answered Q54. The responses to probing questions made it clear that respondents did not have any trouble

interpreting or answering the questions. Since it caused no issues for interviewers or respondents throughout testing, no changes were made to the question wording.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, the findings from the Police-Public Contact Survey screener indicate that respondents struggled more to comprehend the questions about self-initiated contacts with police than they did questions measuring contacts that police initiated. During testing, we saw overlap in how respondents classified crimes, disturbances, suspicious activity, non-crime emergencies, and non-emergency assistance. Although respondents had similar definitions for emergency and non-emergency, they varied on the types of situations and examples they classified as an emergency versus a non-emergency.

During all four rounds of iterative testing, respondents who had multiple contacts with police faced greater obstacles at not only recalling these different types of contacts, but also how frequently these contacts occurred. To assist field interviewers during data collection, at the conclusion of Round 1 of testing, we recommended that a new verification question be added once all screener questions had been administered. The newly added verification question performed well during the remaining rounds of testing, and helped interviewers record accurate data.

The sections of the instrument following the screener gave respondents limited cognitive difficulty. Questions 10 (reasons for street stop) and 15 (reasons for traffic stop) were both measuring the reasons officers gave the respondent for their stop, therefore both questions were revised simultaneously. The final revisions made the questions not only flow naturally, but informed respondents up front that they would be read a list of numerous reasons to choose from that law enforcement may have given. Although we were concerned that lengthening the question stem would add burden to respondents, both questions 10 and 15 performed well after these revisions were made.



## 7 REFERENCES

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**8 APPENDIX A: PPCS Recruitment Screener**

1. **How often did you usually drive in the past 12 months. Did you drive...**

- Every day or almost every day?**
- A few days a week?**
- A few days a month?**
- A few times a year?**
- Never?**

2. **Have you had any contact with the police in the last 12 months? This could include times you contacted the police, as well as times that the police initiated the contact.**

- Yes**     **No**      **DK**

3. [If yes] **How many contacts have you had with police in the last 12 months?** \_\_\_\_\_

4a. [If one contact] **Can you tell me a little about the contact with the police?**

Write in \_\_\_\_\_

4b. [If more than one] **Starting with the most recent contact, can you tell me a little about that contact with the police?** Write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Who initiated the contact with the police. Did...**

- You contact the police?**
- Someone else contact the police for you?**
- The police initiate the contact?**
- DK**

4c. [After asking about most recent] **Were any of the other contacts with police for a different reason than the one you just told me about?**  **Yes**     **No**      **DK**

4d. [If yes] **Can you tell me a little about that contact with the police?**

Write in \_\_\_\_\_

**Who initiated the contact with the police. Did...**

- You contact the police?**
- Someone else contact the police for you?**
- The police initiate the contact?**
- DK**