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Computer Crime Statistics—2020

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I am grateful to Maria Gutierrez for research assistance.

Introduction

This research report by Florida Atlantic University's Center for Forensic Accounting is the result of compiling FBI internet crime statistics from 2015 through 2020. It shows trends in internet crimes across the U.S. states with the highest reported victim losses or number of victims. This information can be used for public awareness and by government for law enforcement and policy making.

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) created the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) in 2000 to receive internet crime complaints from the public. Once someone files a complaint, FBI classifies it into a crime type so that data can be sorted and disseminated to law enforcement agencies and the public. Every year, FBI's IC3 publishes general data with victim numbers and loss amounts for each type of internet crime. Separately, IC3 publishes annual data for each of the U.S. states and territories.

Over the years, FBI data show some internet crimes persist and others have diminished or disappeared. Newer and more sophisticated types of crimes now prevail that may be linked to organized crime organizations. This report shows online crime trends over the last six years for states having higher internet crime activity during 2020 and focuses on changes from 2019 to 2020. The states identified for our 2020 report are: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Texas. We have identified these top states as having the largest victim monetary losses or number of victims in 2020. Illinois is new to the 2020 report while Washington in the 2019 report dropped out.

We also identified eight internet crimes for analysis: (i) Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise (BEC/EAC), (ii) Confidence Fraud/Romance, (iii) Identity Theft, (iv) Investment fraud, (v) Non-Payment/Non-Delivery, (vi) Real Estate/Rental, (vii) Spoofing, and (viii) Tech Support fraud. Of these crimes, we added Non-Payment/Non-Delivery and Tech Support fraud to the 2020 report as these online scams had large increases in victim losses and victim numbers during 2020 that may be linked to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise was once again the top online crime with reported victim losses in 2020 of $1.9 billion.[1] BEC/EAC explained about one-third to three-quarters of all online victim losses during 2020 in the six top states. It accounted for 76% of all online victim losses in Ohio, 65% in New York, 59% in Illinois, 43% in Texas, in 39% in Florida, and 35% in California. The ratio of victim losses from this scam to all online crime losses for 2020 increased in Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas, and declined in California and Ohio.

The second top internet crime in 2020 was Confidence Fraud/Romance where losses and number of victims increased to $600 million in victim losses.[2] In 2020, the ratio of Confidence Fraud/Romance victim losses to all online crime losses was 19% in California, 14% in Florida and Texas, 9% in Illinois, 6% in New York, and 5% in Ohio. The loss ratio grew during 2020 in California, Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Texas, and declined in Florida.

Investment fraud became the third largest online crime in 2020 with victim losses of $336 million.[3] Online Non-Payment/Non-Delivery was fourth highest followed by Identity Theft.

In Florida, Identity Theft was the second largest online crime in 2020 for victim losses after BEC/EAC. Confidence Fraud/Romance and Real Estate/Rental scams also continued to be predominant Internet crimes in the state. In 2020, Florida was the only state among to top states to experience a decline in victim losses to Confidence Fraud/Romance.

Data collection

The FBI, through its Internet Crime Complaint Center IC3, has been receiving internet related fraud complaints from victims since 2000. The IC3's website www.IC3.gov is a website for victims to file suspected internet related crimes. Filing a complaint requires the victim or complainant to provide detailed information on the internet crime. Detailed information requested when filling a complaint includes:[4]

- Victim's name, address, telephone, and email
- Financial transaction information (e.g., account information, transaction date and amount, who received the money)
- Subject's name, address, telephone, email, website, and IP address
- Specific details on the person was victimized
- Email header(s)
- Any other relevant information believed necessary to support the complaint

After the information in the complaint is gathered, it gets classified by crime type and analyzed to identify present and future crime trends. Intelligence reports are prepared with these data and are disseminated to law enforcement.

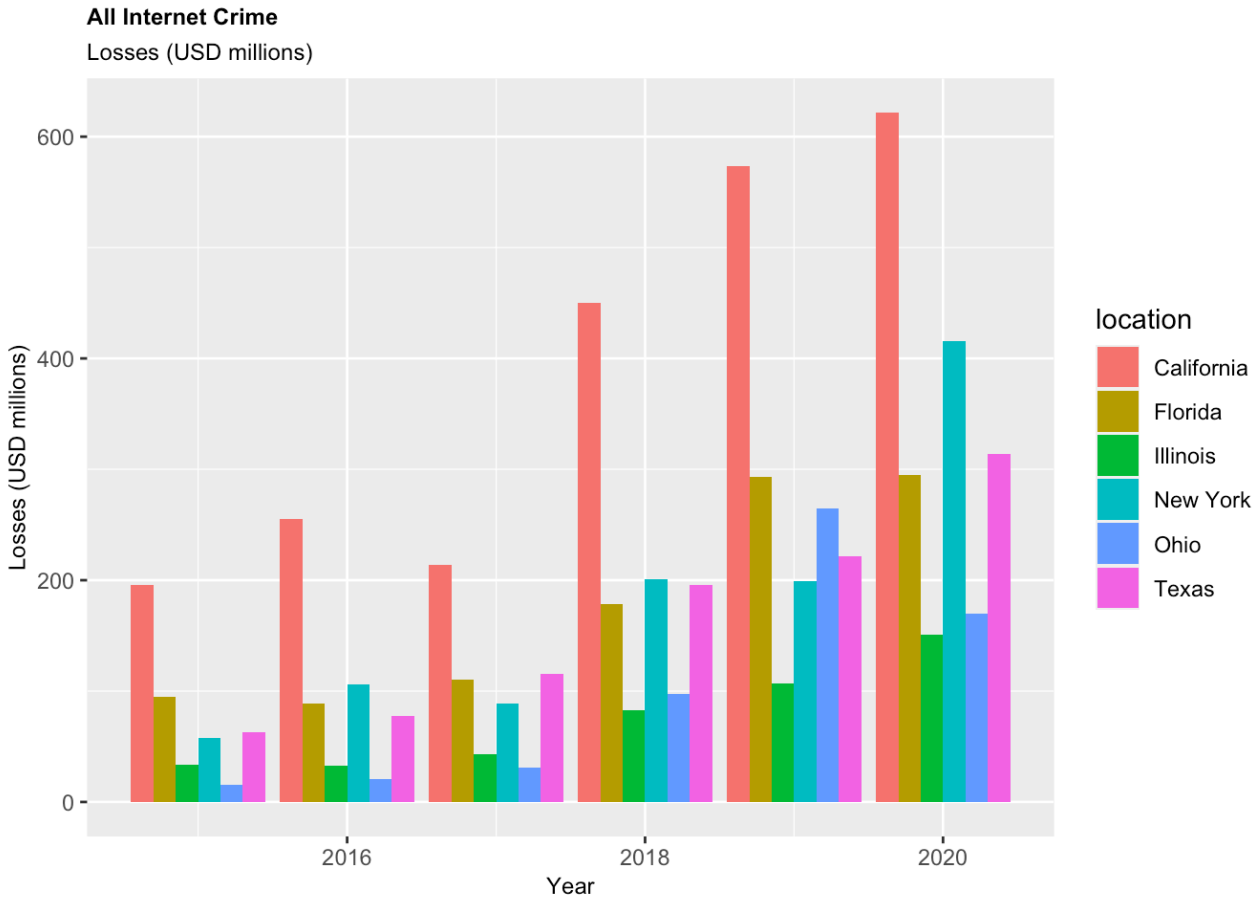
It is important to bear in mind that the FBI reports only include reported internet crimes, which are only a portion of the real number of internet crimes committed every year in the United States.

Data analysis

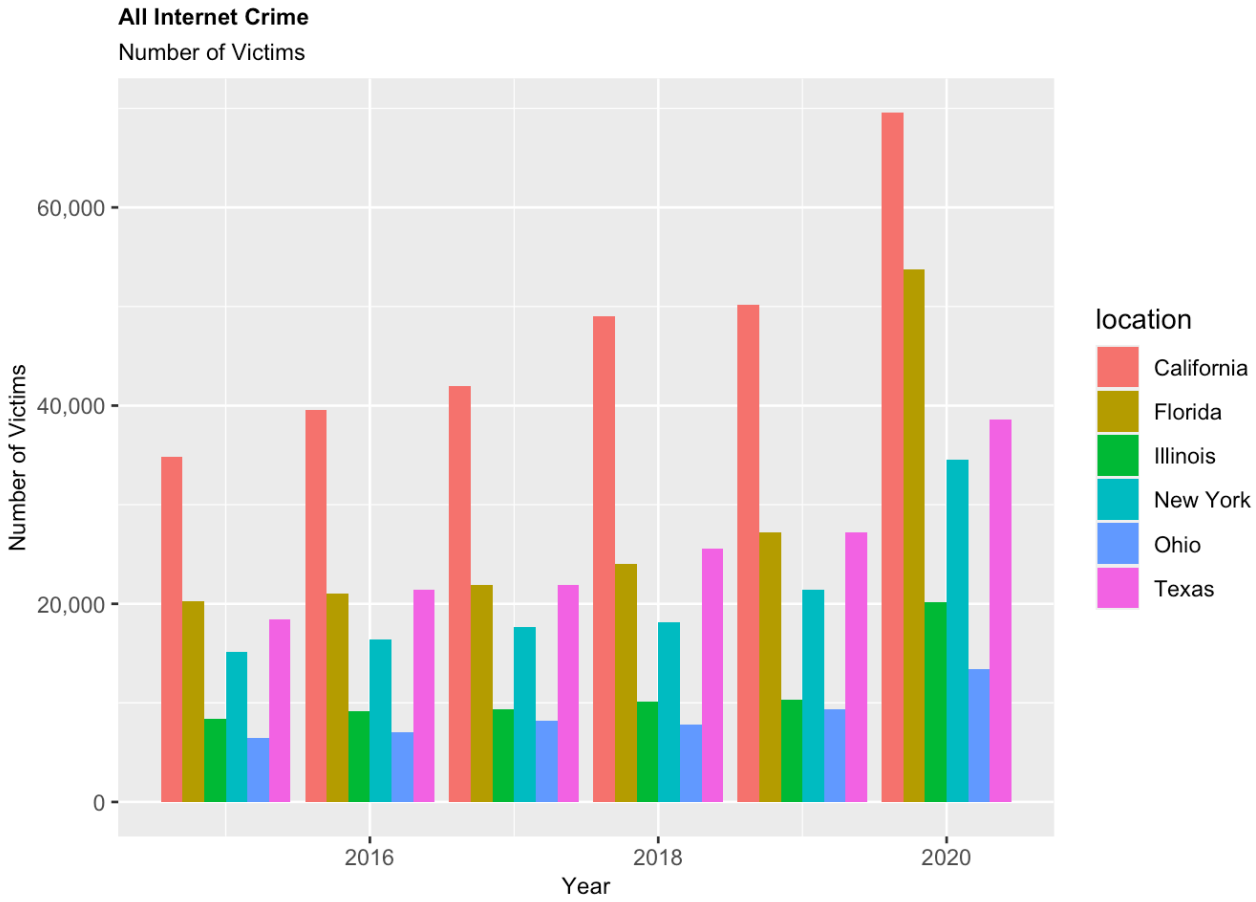
All Internet Crime

This report covers six years from 2015 to 2020 as these years contain comparable information for crime types in FBI data. The agency used different data formats in earlier years. Our report herein shows the reported internet crime in absolute numbers of victim losses and numbers of victims, and relative loss rates and victim rates accounting for population. The loss rate is defined as the amount of monetary victim losses divided by the population in millions. Similarly, the victim rate is defined as the number of victims divided by the population in millions. Further, our report uses internet crime and internet fraud interchangeably.

Six top states were selected for the analysis based on the highest victim losses or number of victims in 2020. The six top states are: California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Texas.



The overall trends from 2015 were rapid growth of victim losses and a slower increase in the number of victims through 2019. Yet, during 2020, victim losses continued to increase compared to the previous year but at a much lower pace, while victim numbers grew faster than in any other year in our study. Florida had the highest growth rate in the number of victims from All Internet Crime during 2020 of 98%, followed by Illinois, and New York of 95% and 61%, respectively.

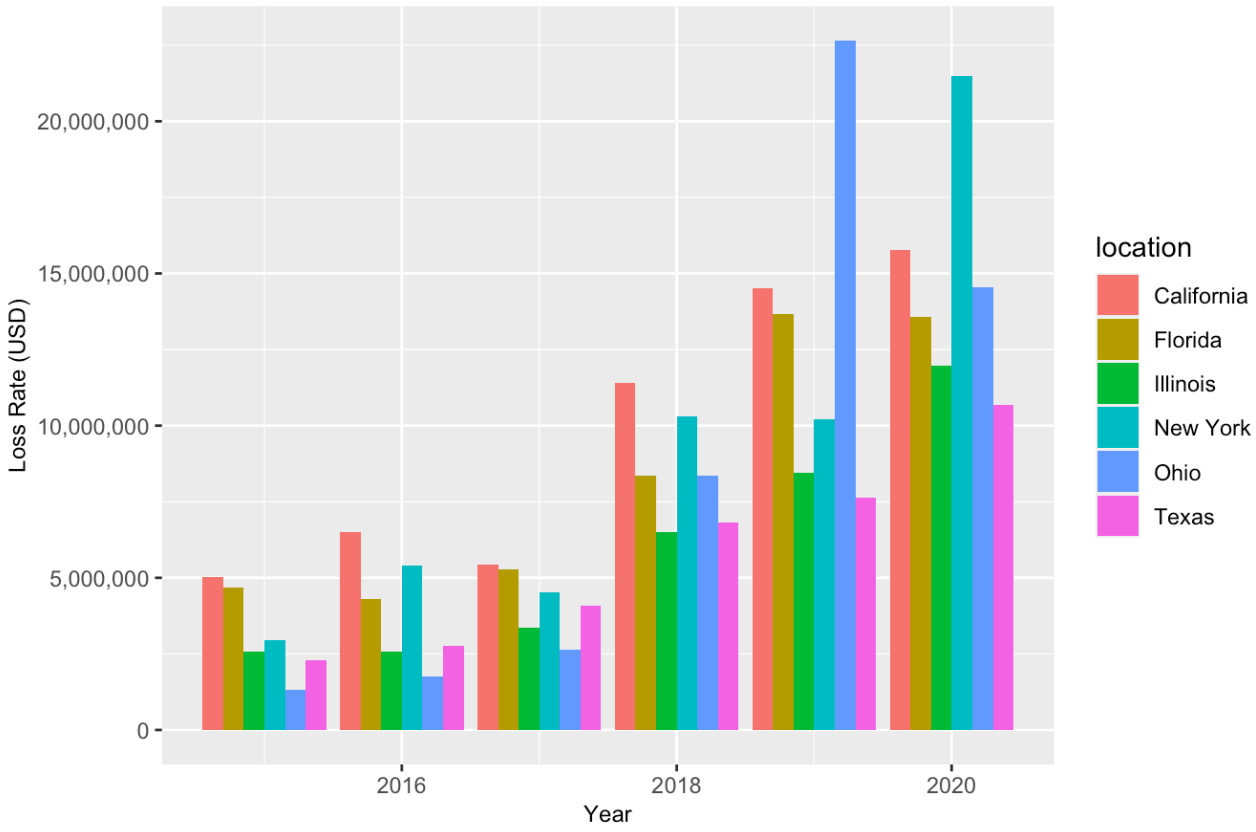


California continued to be the top state with the highest amount of victim losses and the largest number of victims in 2020. California had a slight increase of 8% in victim losses, from $573.6 million in 2019 to $621.4 million in 2020. In contrast, the number of victims in California increased by 39% during 2020, much faster than its growth of monetary victim losses.

Florida is second highest for the number of victims in 2020 after California. Moreover, the number of victims to All internet Crime in Florida jumped from 27,178 in 2019 to 53,793 in 2020. From 2015 through 2020, Florida had the highest percentage increase in victim numbers among the top states of 165%. After Florida is Illinois with a 140% increase over these years.

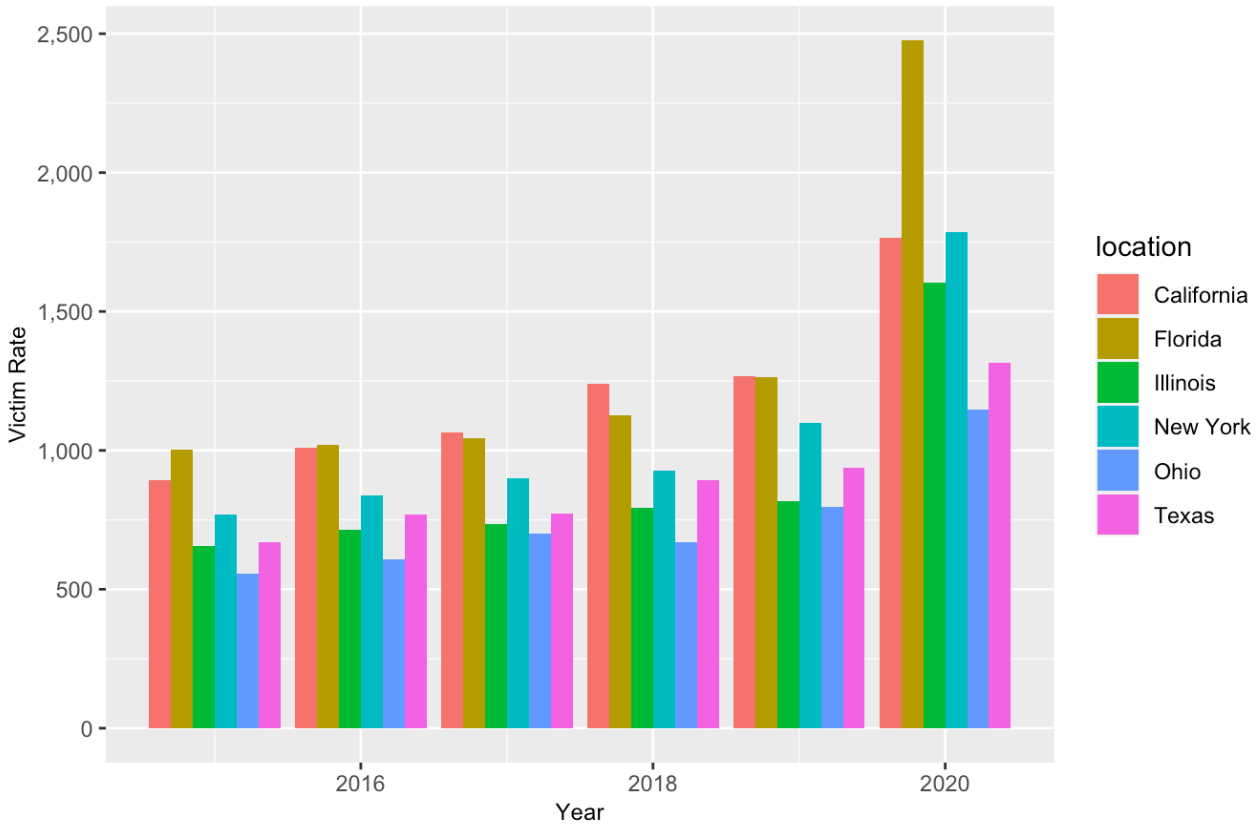
All Internet Crime

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



All Internet Crime

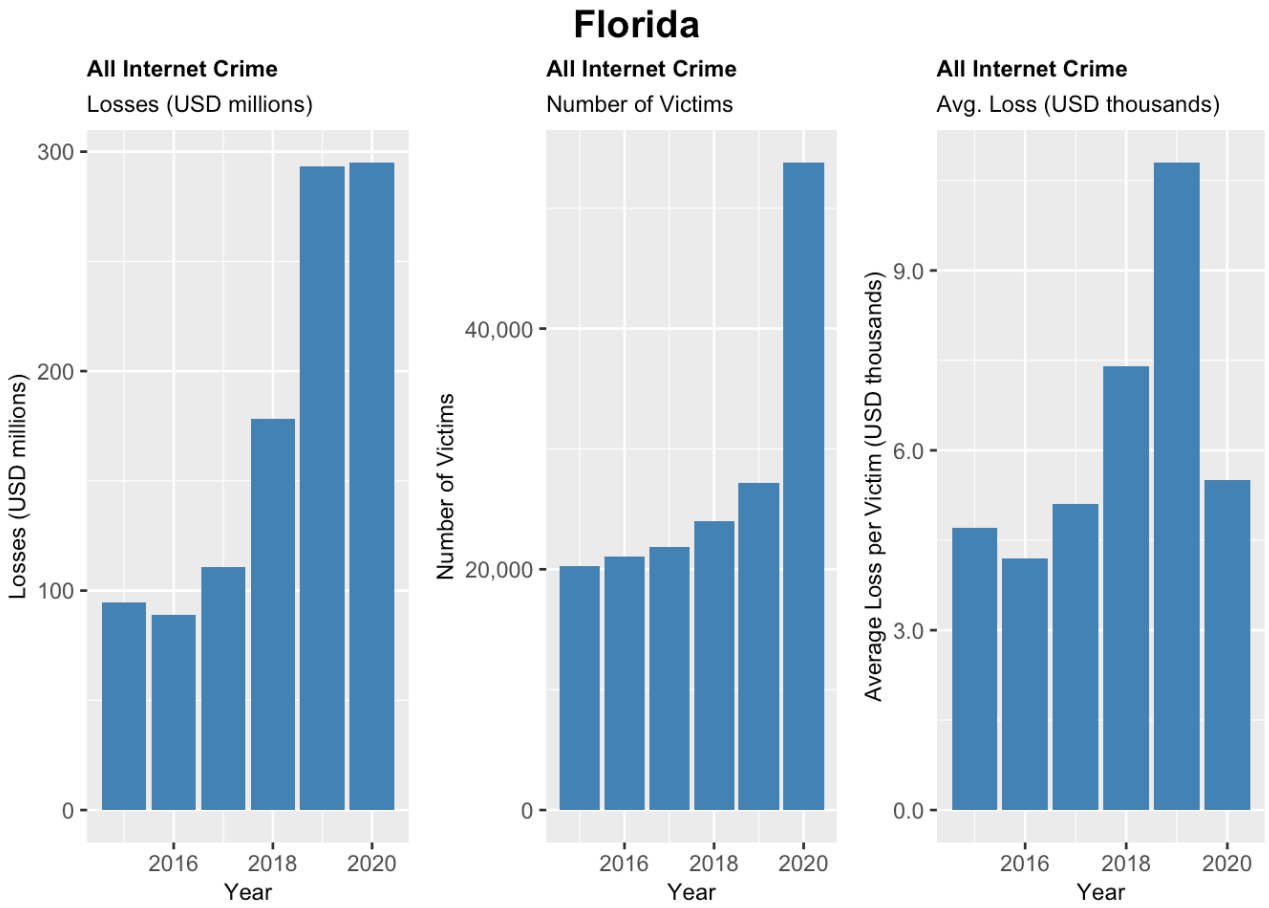
Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



Although in absolute terms California had the largest number of victims in 2020, Florida had the largest population-adjusted victim rate of 2,475.1 victims of online crime per one million in population, followed by New York with 1,784.4, and California with 1,766.4.

Going back to victim losses, New York had the largest population-adjusted loss rate of $21.5 million of victim losses to online crime per one million in population, jumping from $10.2 million in 2019, a 111% increase for 2020.

Ohio continues to be one of the highest states for loss rates among the top states in 2020. Yet, Ohio was the only top state to have a decrease in its loss rate in 2020 in contrast to its very large increase during 2019. Overall, Ohio continues to have a relatively high population-adjusted victim loss rate of $14.6 million per one million in population for 2020, the third highest among the top states.



Top types of internet crimes

Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise, as well as Confidence Fraud/Romance, continued to be the top internet crimes in 2020. In addition, online crimes such as Non-Payment/Non-Delivery and Tech Support scams became prominent in 2020 for their increase in victim losses and victim numbers.

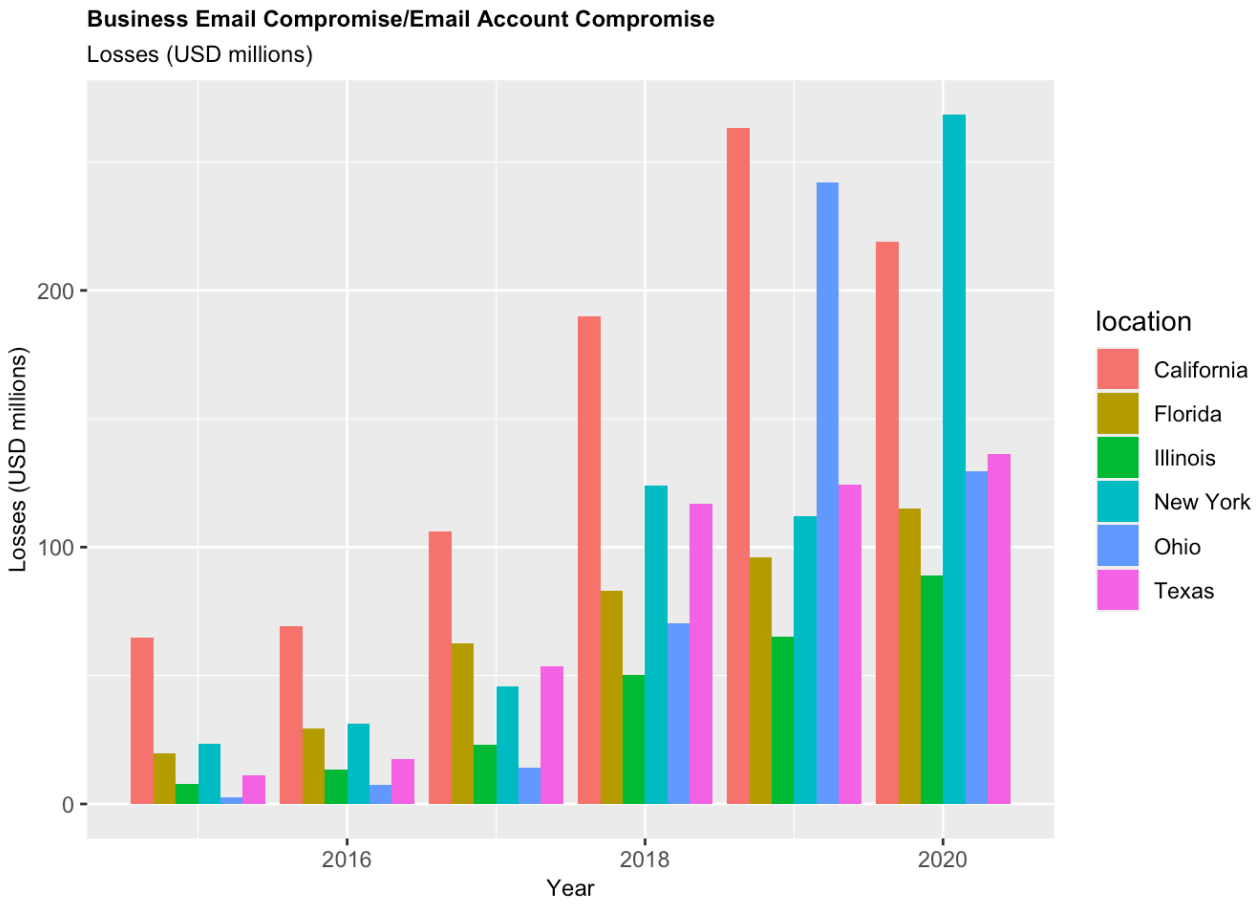
Business email compromise/Email account compromise

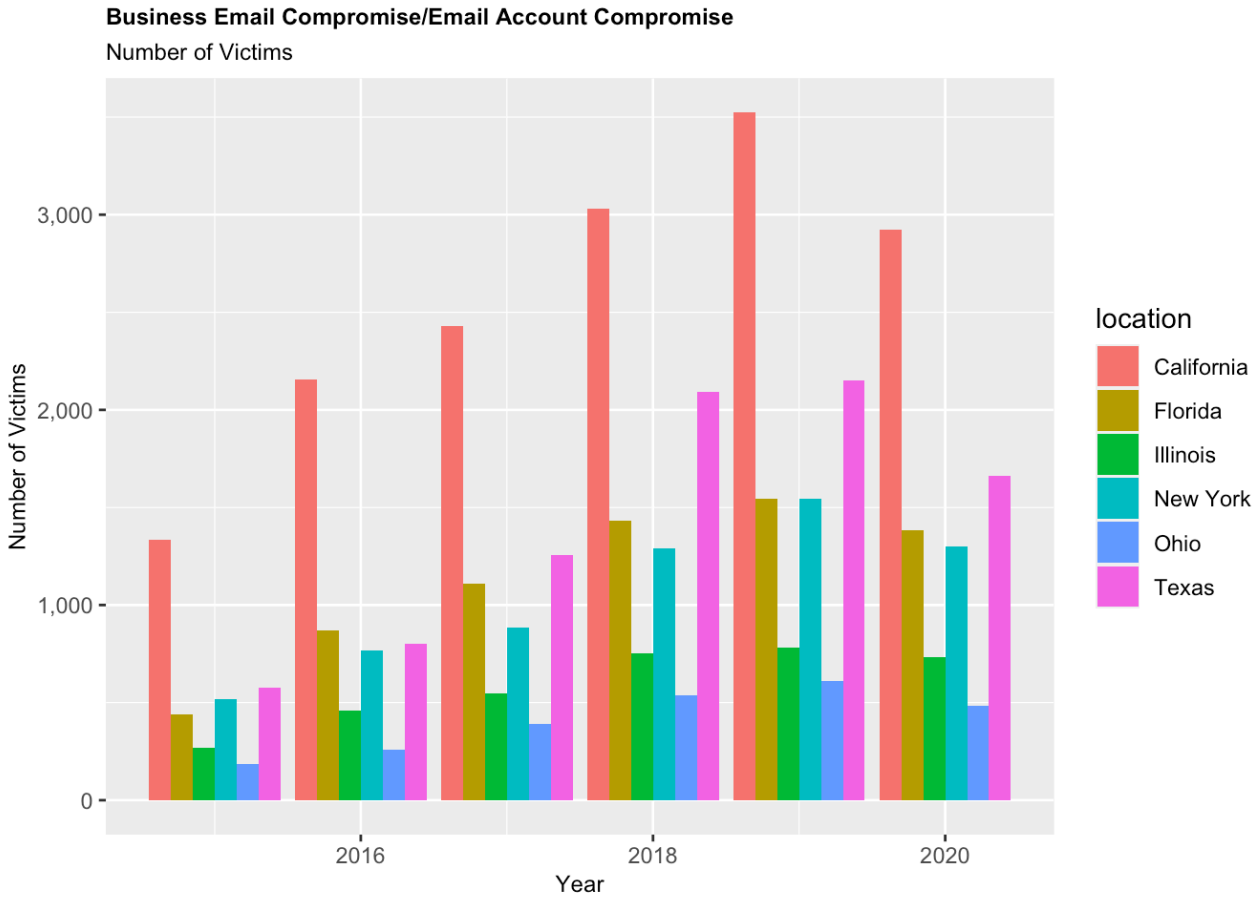
Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise takes place when business or personal email accounts are hacked or spoofed with the purpose of diverting and requesting electronic wire transfers to fraudulent money accounts. This scheme perhaps started with the hacking of the email

account of an organization's senior manager and causing an email from the manager's account to an employee directing them to make a bank wire transfer to a money account belonging to the hacker.

This scam has expanded from hacking of businesses to hacking and spoofing into personal email accounts. Such scams obtain sensitive information to divert funds from many kinds of victims including lawyers, company vendors, and the real estate sector. In addition, the FBI's IC3 has received increasing complaints where victims receive seemingly credible emails or text messages purportedly from a known trustworthy person requesting their victims buy gift cards that get diverted to the criminal.

According to the FBI report, BEC/EAC was the top online crime in 2020 with reported losses of $1.9 Billion.[5] Overall BEC/EAC victim losses grew slightly compared to 2019. This scheme has grown at varying rates in four of the six top states during 2020 while declining 46% in Ohio and 17% in California. Since 2019, New York victim losses increased by 139%, but only 10% in Texas.


Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise
Losses (USD millions)
Losses (USD millions)
200
100
0
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas


Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise
Number of Victims
Number of Victims
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

In 2020, all the top states had a decline in the number of victims from the numbers in 2019. California had the highest number of victims reaching 2,924 victims, yet a decline of 17% from 2019. Texas had the second-highest number of victims, but it had the largest decline of 23% among the top states. Additionally, the number of victims in Ohio decreased by 21%, in Florida by 11%, and in Illinois by 6%.

In New York, monetary losses to BEC/EAC scams were the highest in absolute and relative numbers of all top states increasing 139%, from $112.2 million in 2019 to $268.3 million in 2020. Moreover, BEC/EAC has increased by 1,040% in New York since 2015. BEC/EAC is the costliest internet crime for New Yorkers making up 65% of all its victim losses in 2020. Although losses in New York went up in 2020, the number of victims decreased by 16% from the previous year.

Illinois had the second-highest growth in victim losses in 2020, from $65.2 million in 2019 to $88.8 million in 2020, a 36% increase. Meanwhile, in Florida, victim losses increased 20% from $96.2 million in 2019 to $115.0 million in 2020. The number of victims in Florida, like in the other top states, decreased 11%, from 1,546 in 2019 to 1,381 in 2020.

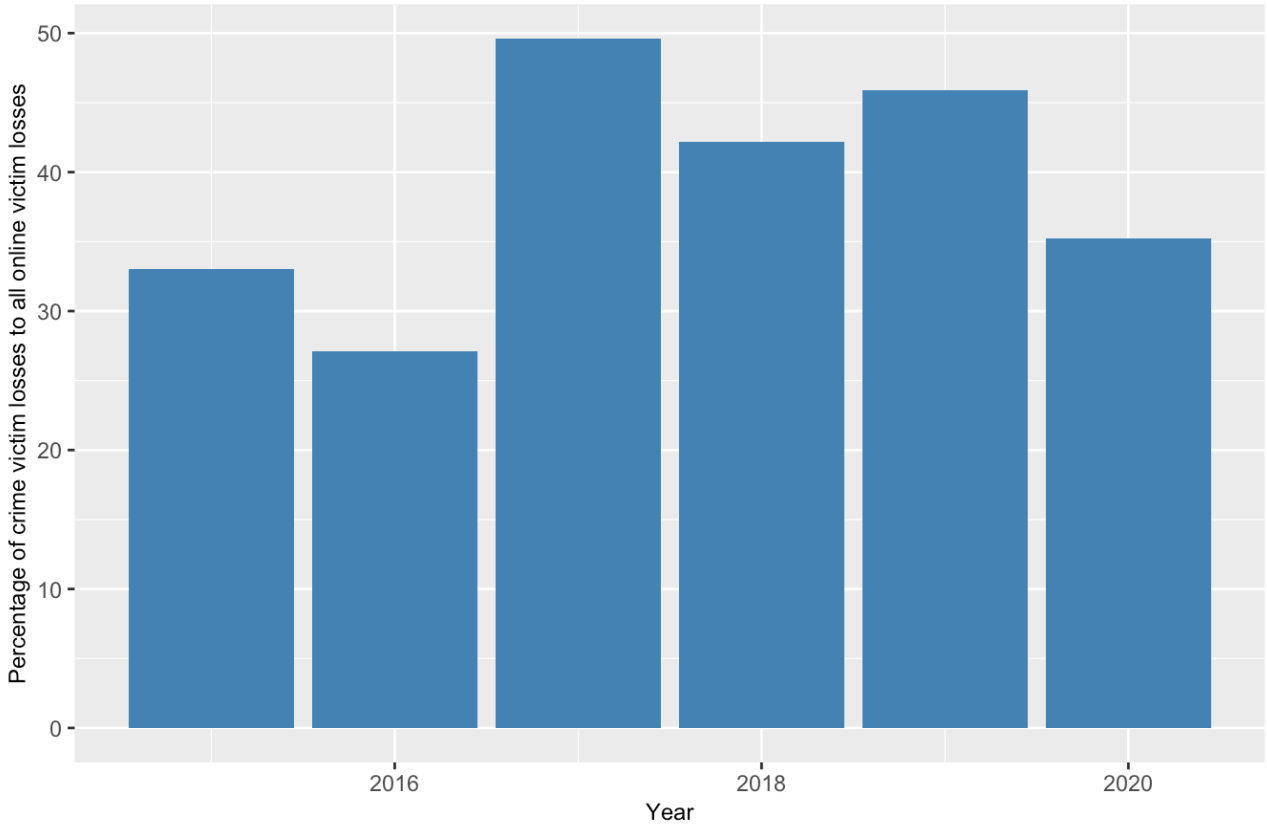
In Texas, growth in victim losses was the lowest among the top states. Texas victim losses increased 10%, from $124.2 million in 2019 to $136.2 million in 2020, but victim numbers declined from 2,149 in 2019 to 1,662 in 2020, the highest decline among the top states.

In contrast with the other four states, California and Ohio's victim losses declined from 2019 through 2020. California had the first decline in victim losses to BEC/EAC since 2015, from $263.3 million in 2019 to $219.1 million in 2020, placing the state at second-highest after New York. Ohio, also experienced a decline from the unprecedented growth in 2019. Ohio's victim losses declined from $242.1 million in 2019 to $129.7 million in 2020.

In terms of the ratio of victim losses from BEC/EAC to all internet crime losses during 2020, Ohio continued to have the highest ratio of 76% since 2019. In New York and Illinois, BEC/EAC accounted for 65% and 59%, respectively, while Texas was 43%, and California 35%. Florida, on the other hand, for a consecutive year had one of the lowest ratios among the top states of 39%.

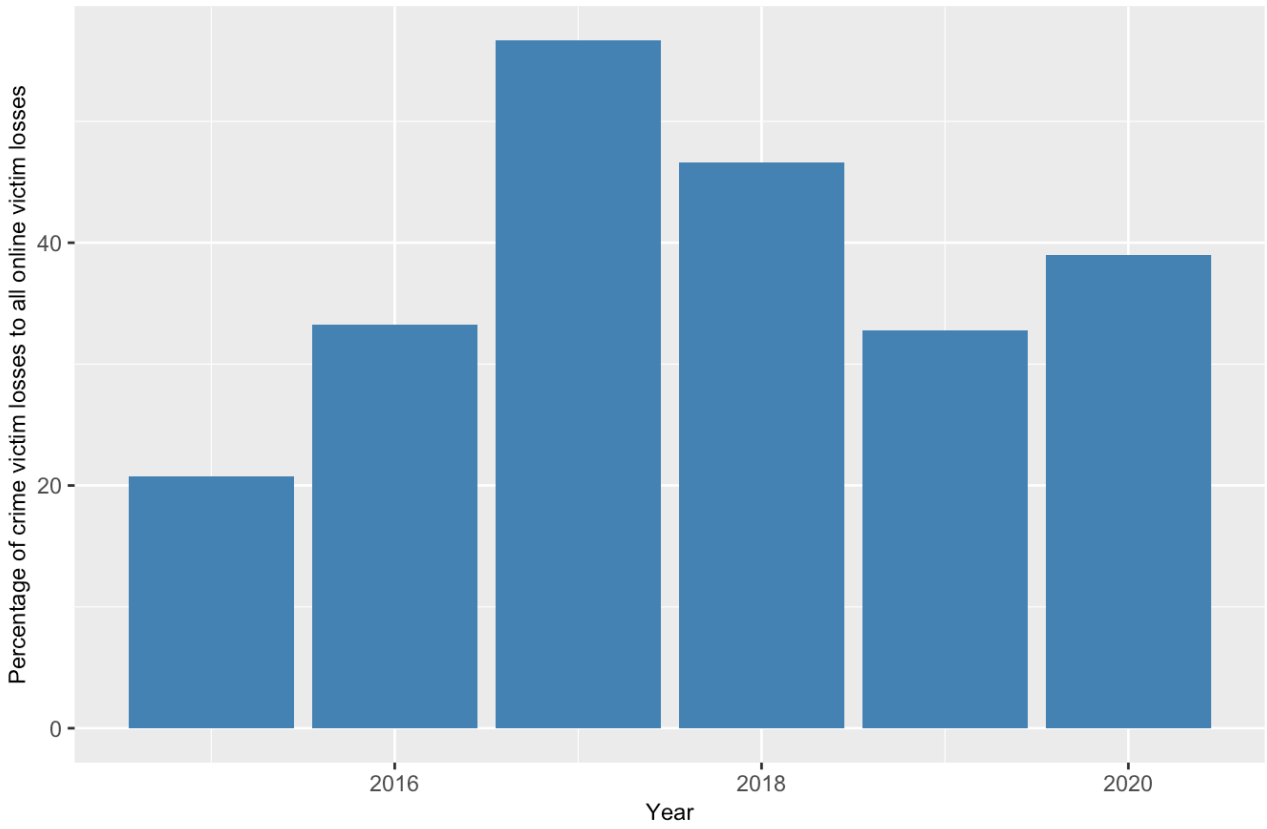
California --- Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



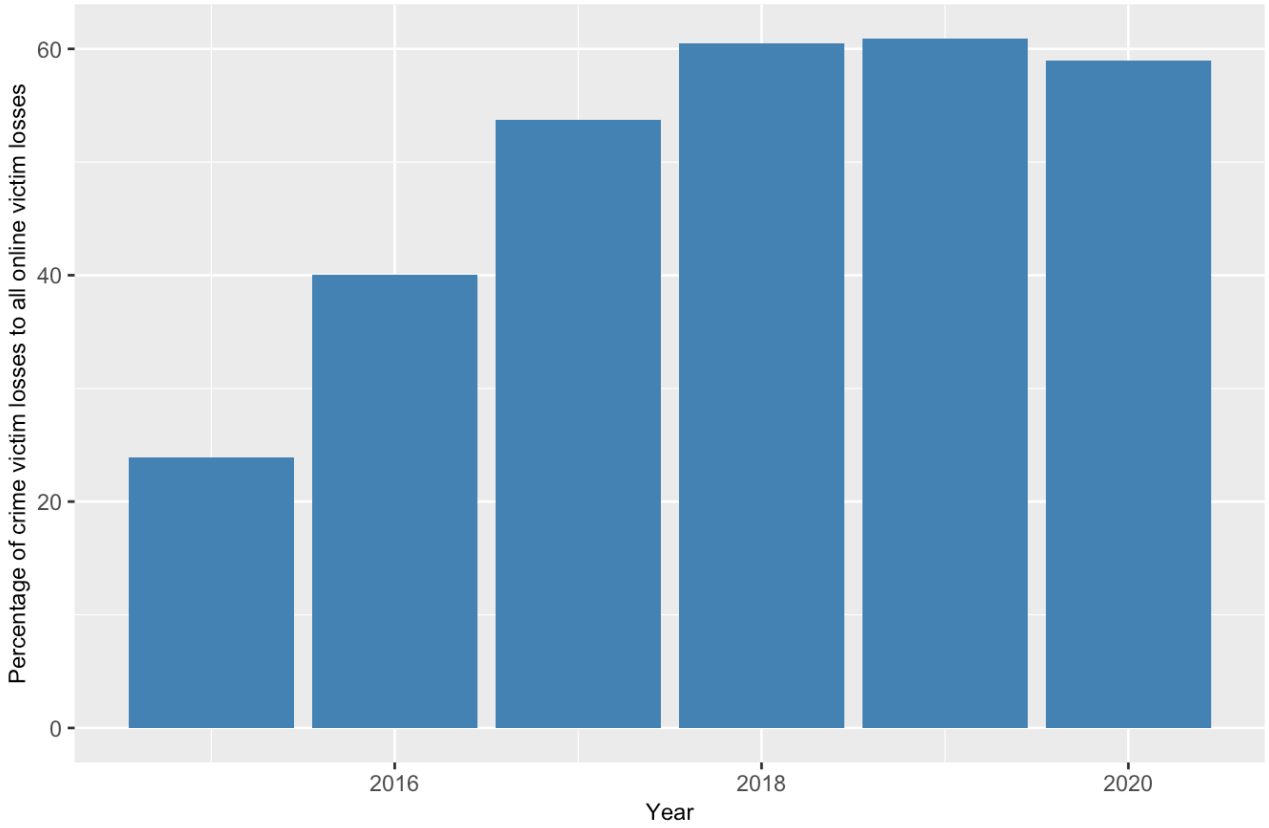
Florida --- Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



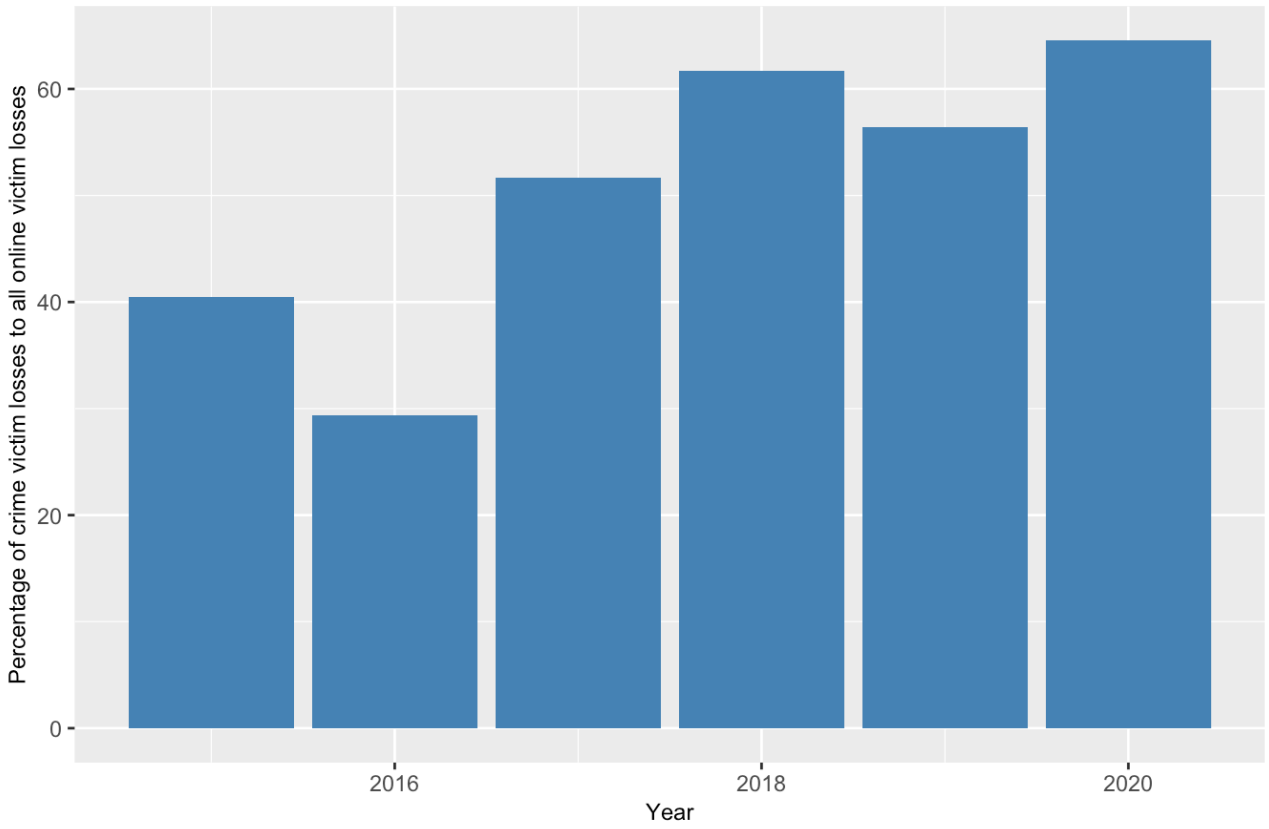
Illinois --- Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



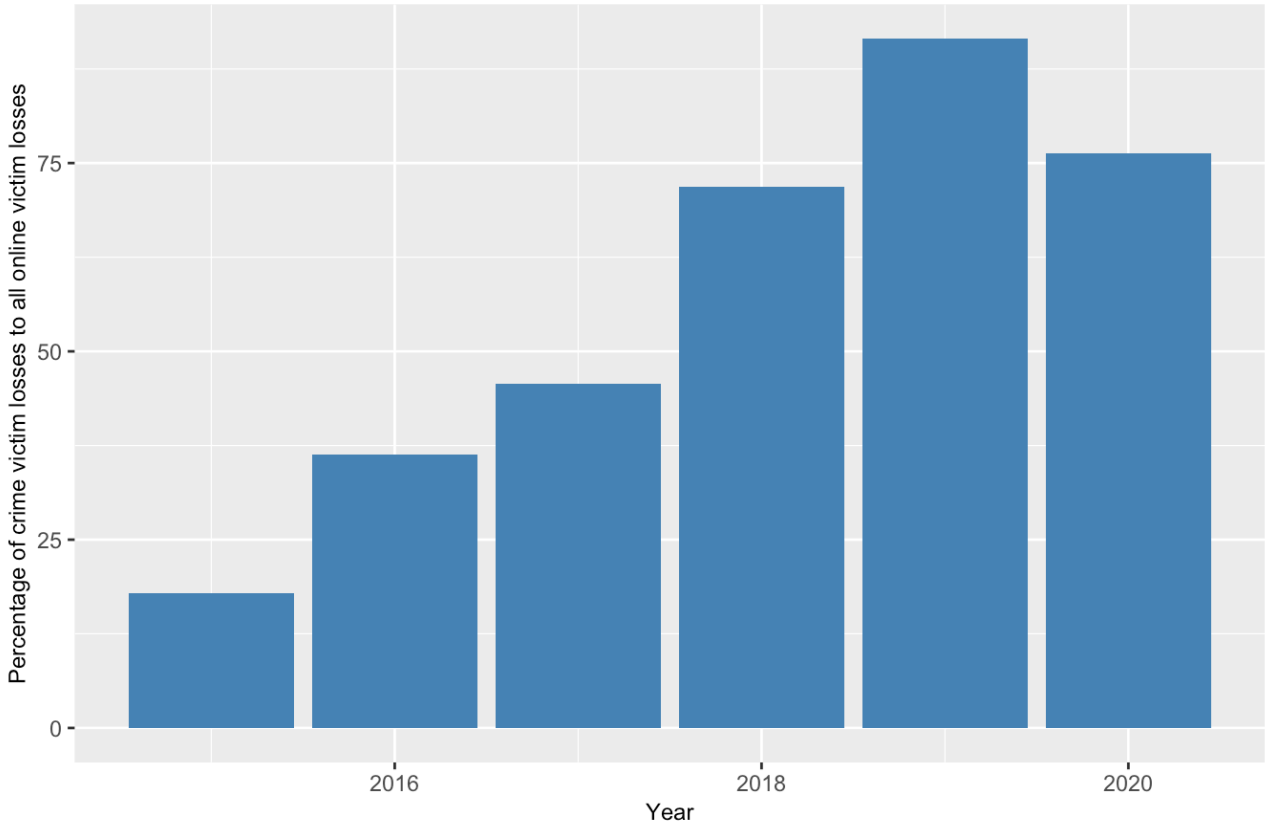
New York --- Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



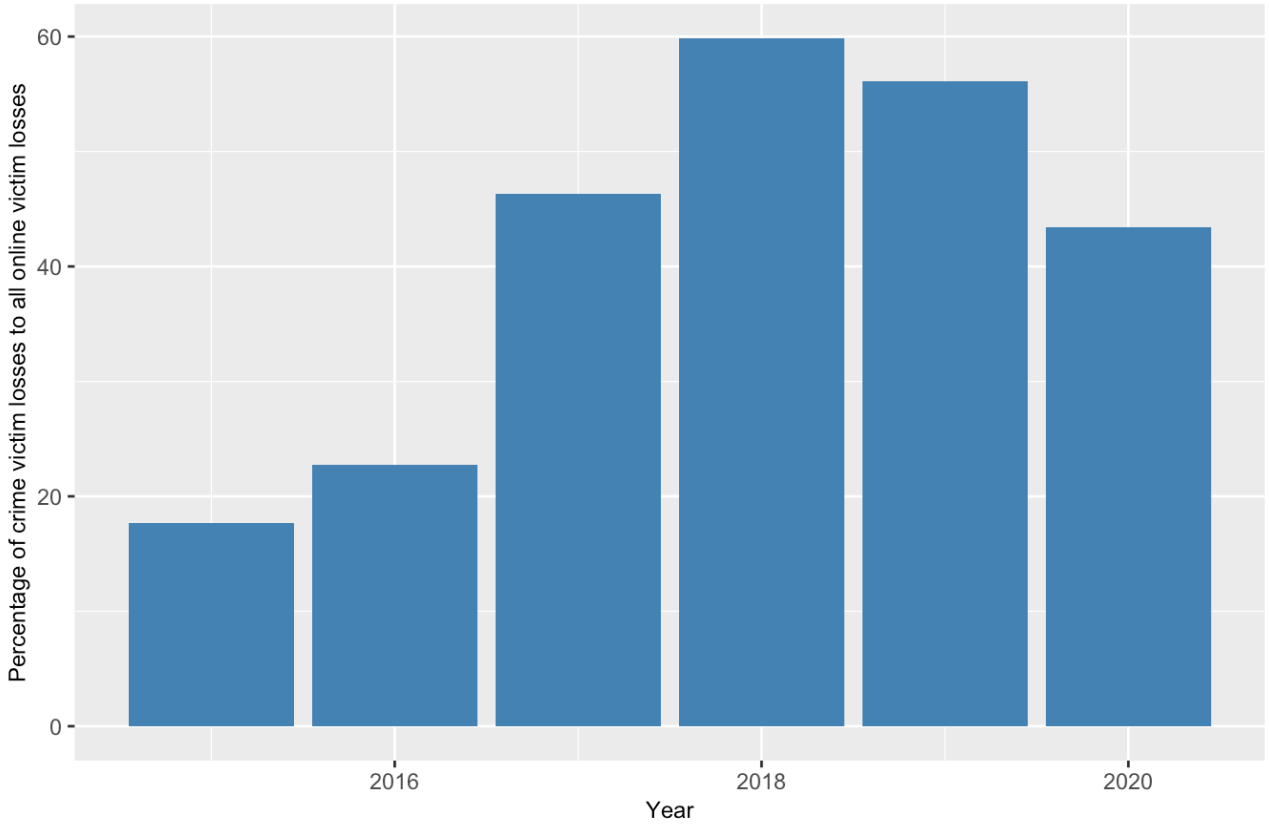
Ohio --- Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



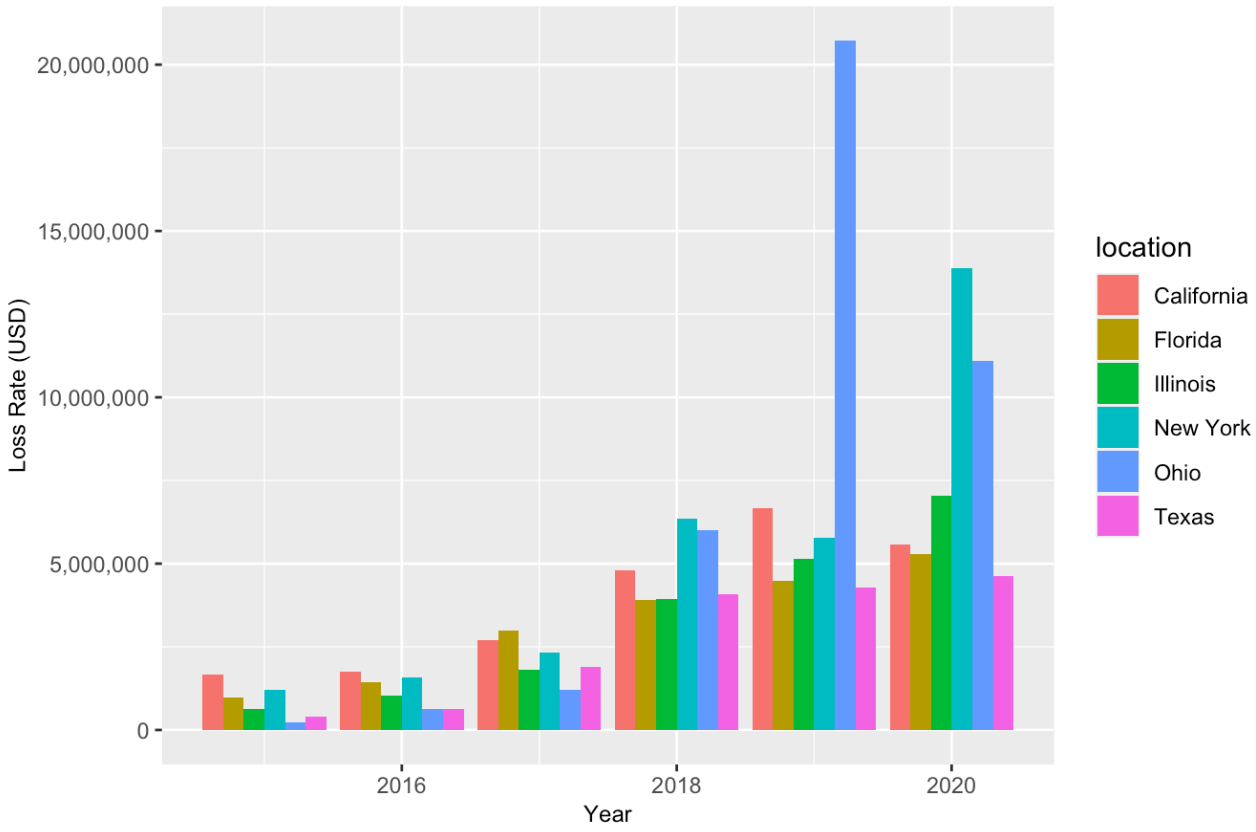
Texas --- Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



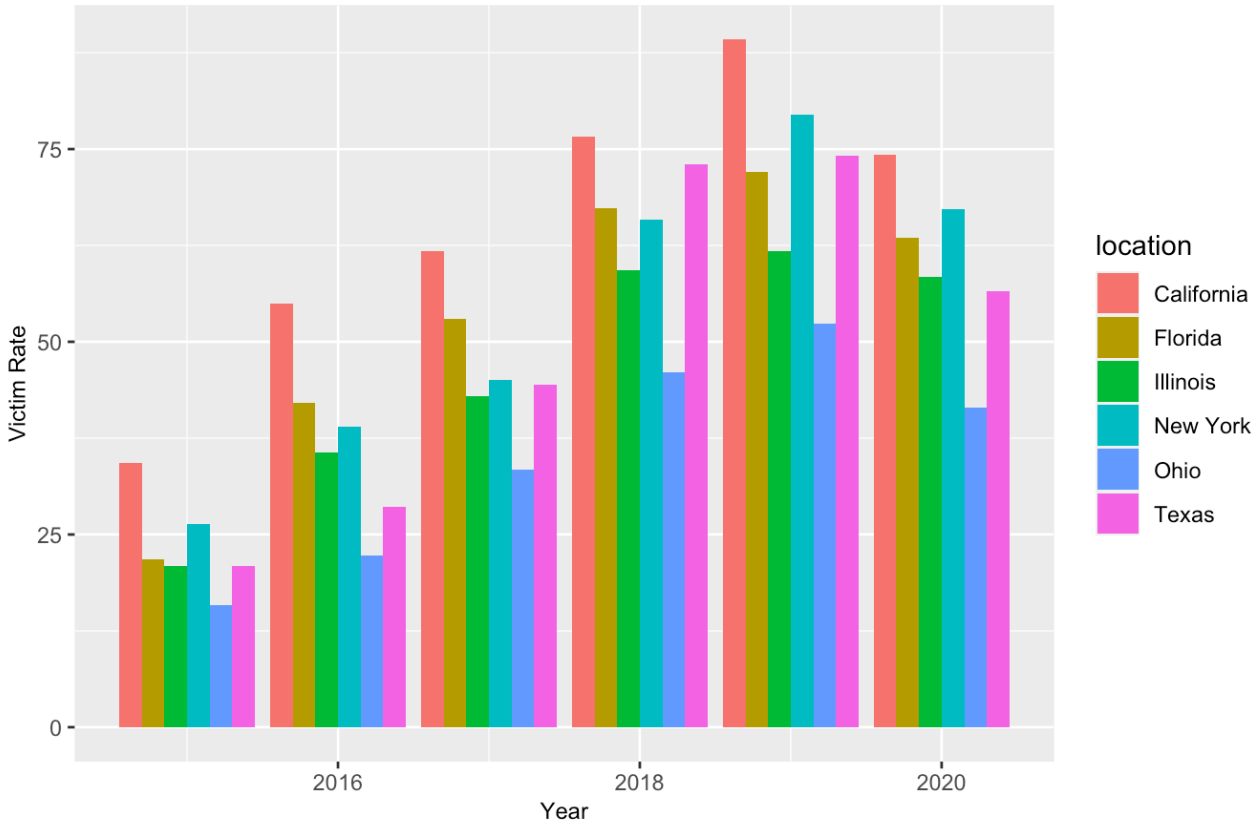
Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



In relative terms, New York experienced victim losses of $13.9 million per one million in population in 2020 from BEC/EAC scams while victims in Ohio, second highest, lost $11.1 million, and Illinois, third-highest, $7.1 million.

Meanwhile, in California, Florida, and Texas, the states with the lowest loss rates among the top states, the 2020 loss rates were $5.6 million, $5.3 million, and $4.6 million per one million in population, respectively.

Victim rates in 2020 showed a different story from loss rates, where California had the highest rate of 74.3 victims per one million in population. New York and Florida followed with 67.2 and 63.5, respectively.

Illinois and Texas were fourth and fifth-highest with victim rates of 58.4 and 56.6, respectively, and Ohio, last with 41.5 victims per one million in population.

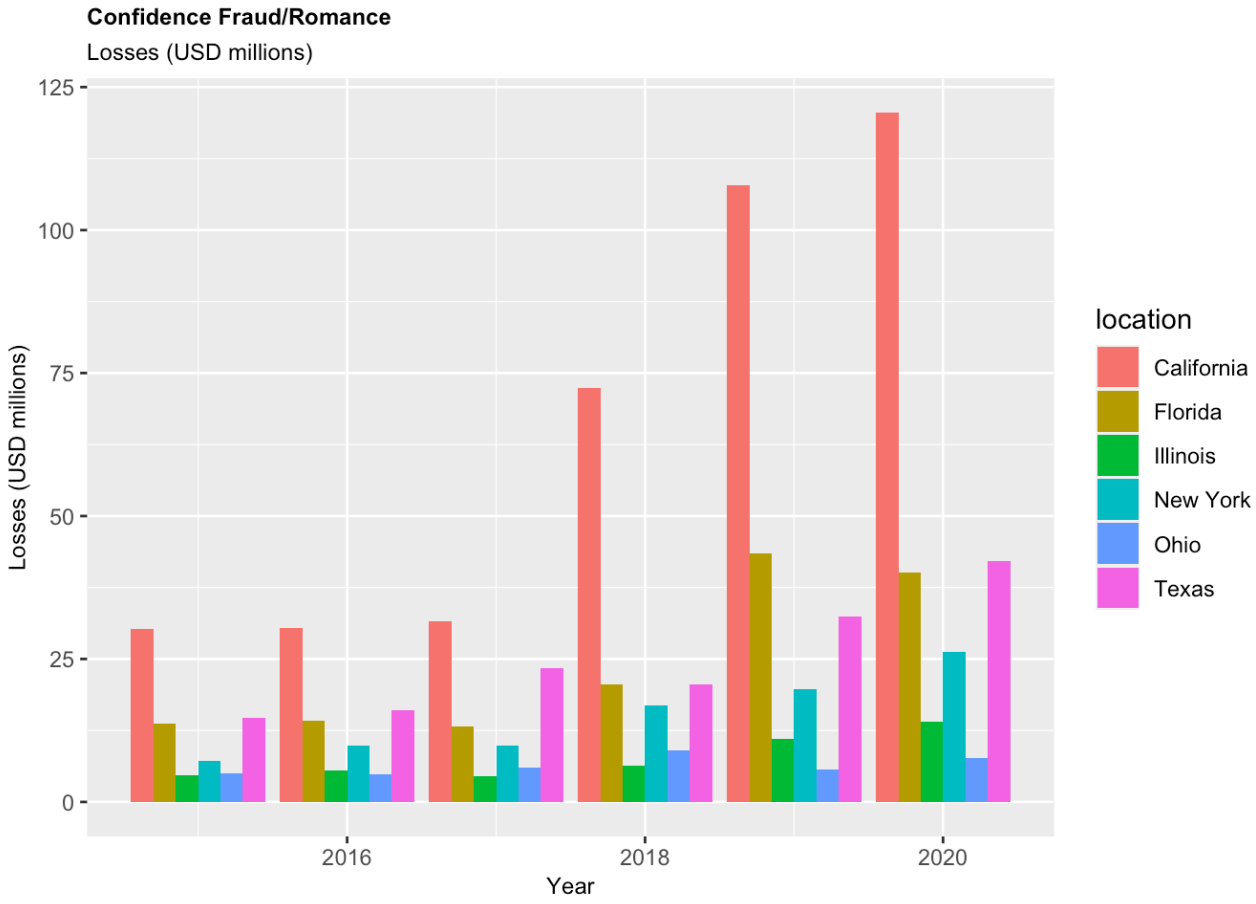
In sum, 2020 losses from BEC/EAC slowed down from the rising pace from previous years. Nevertheless, BEC/EAC still accounted for more than 55% of all online losses in New York, Ohio, and Illinois. In Ohio, nearly all victim losses, 76%, were to BEC/EAC. In contrast, In Florida and California, BEC/EAC portion was 39% and 35%, respectively. Additionally, all top states had a decline in victim numbers, meaning that losses per victim in 2020 might have increased.

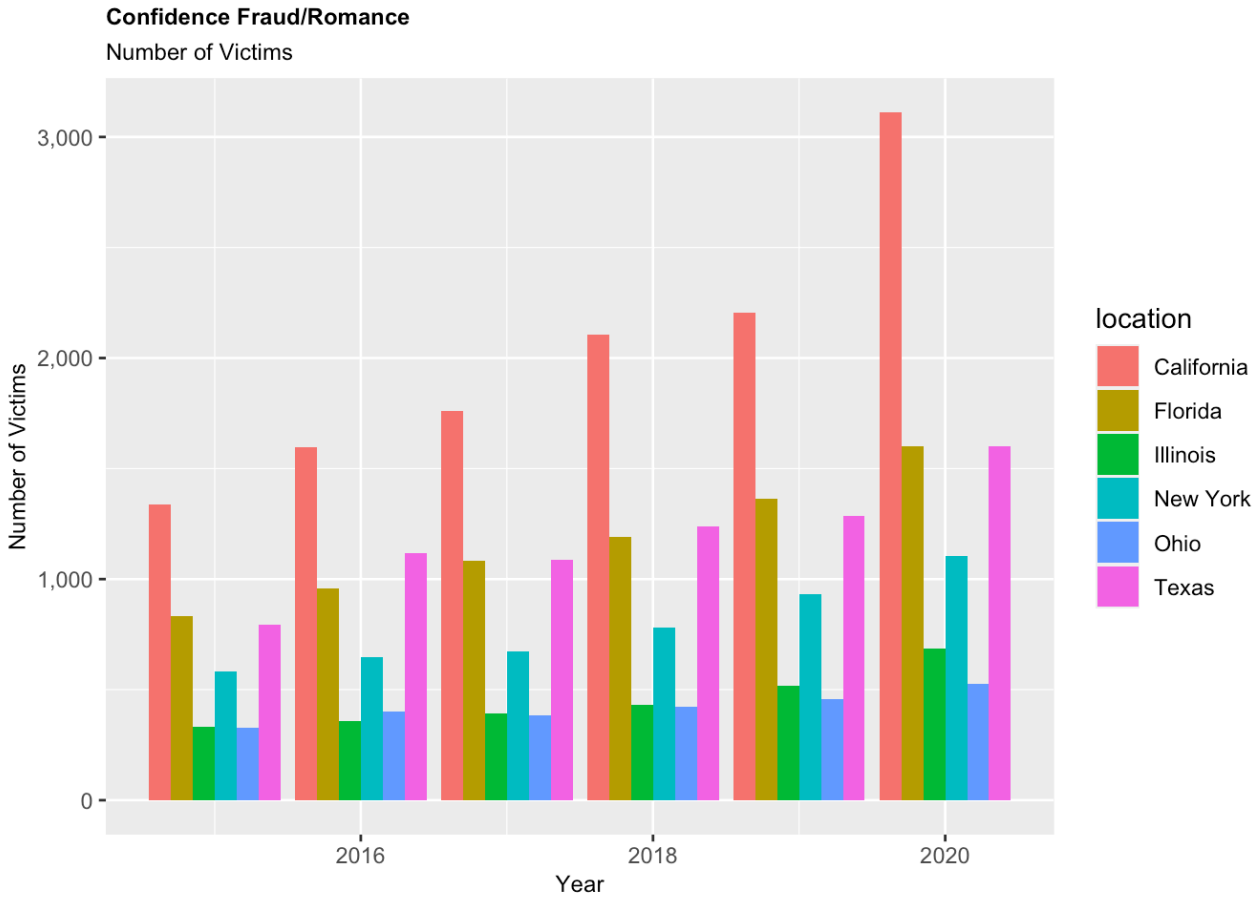
Confidence Fraud/Romance

The second-largest and growing Internet crime is Confidence Fraud/Romance scams. This scheme generally occurs when an online fraudster pretends to be in a friendly, romantic, or family relation to win the trust of the victim. The typical goal of a fraudster is to obtain money, finances, or other valuable possession from the victim. Variations of this crime include romance/dating fraud and grandparent fraud. Like BEC/EAC, Confidence Fraud/Romance scams have become more important as the victim losses and the number of victims have increased over the past six years. In 2020, Confidence Fraud/Romance scams reported to FBI from all regions had the second-highest level of victim losses of $600.2 million after BEC/EAC losses.

In 2020, Confidence Fraud/Romance victim losses in California were 19% of the state's total online losses, followed by Florida and Texas each with 14%, Illinois with 9%, New York with 6%, and Ohio with 5%. Comparing 2019 and 2020 proportions of losses from this crime to total online losses, Ohio had an increase in victim losses relative to its total losses, while California stayed about the same, and Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas had declines.

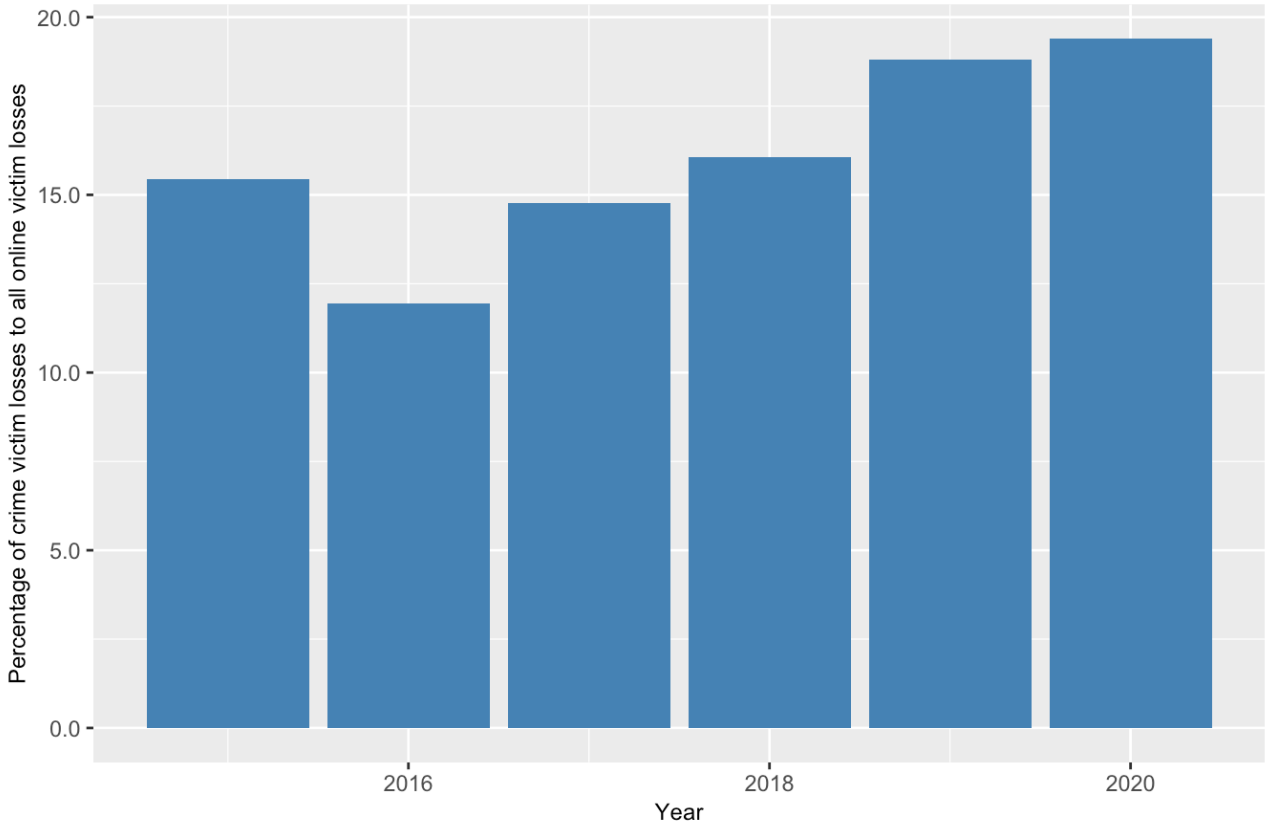
During 2020, victim losses to Confidence Fraud/Romance online scams grew in five of the six top states. Ohio and New York had the highest growth of 35% and 34% respectively, followed by Texas with 30%. Illinois and California increased in 2020 by 27% and 12% respectively. In contrast, Florida was the only top state to experience a fall in victim losses during 2020 with a decline of 8%.


Confidence Fraud/Romance
Losses (USD millions)
125
100
75
50
25
0
Losses (USD millions)
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas


Confidence Fraud/Romance
Number of Victims
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
Number of Victims
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

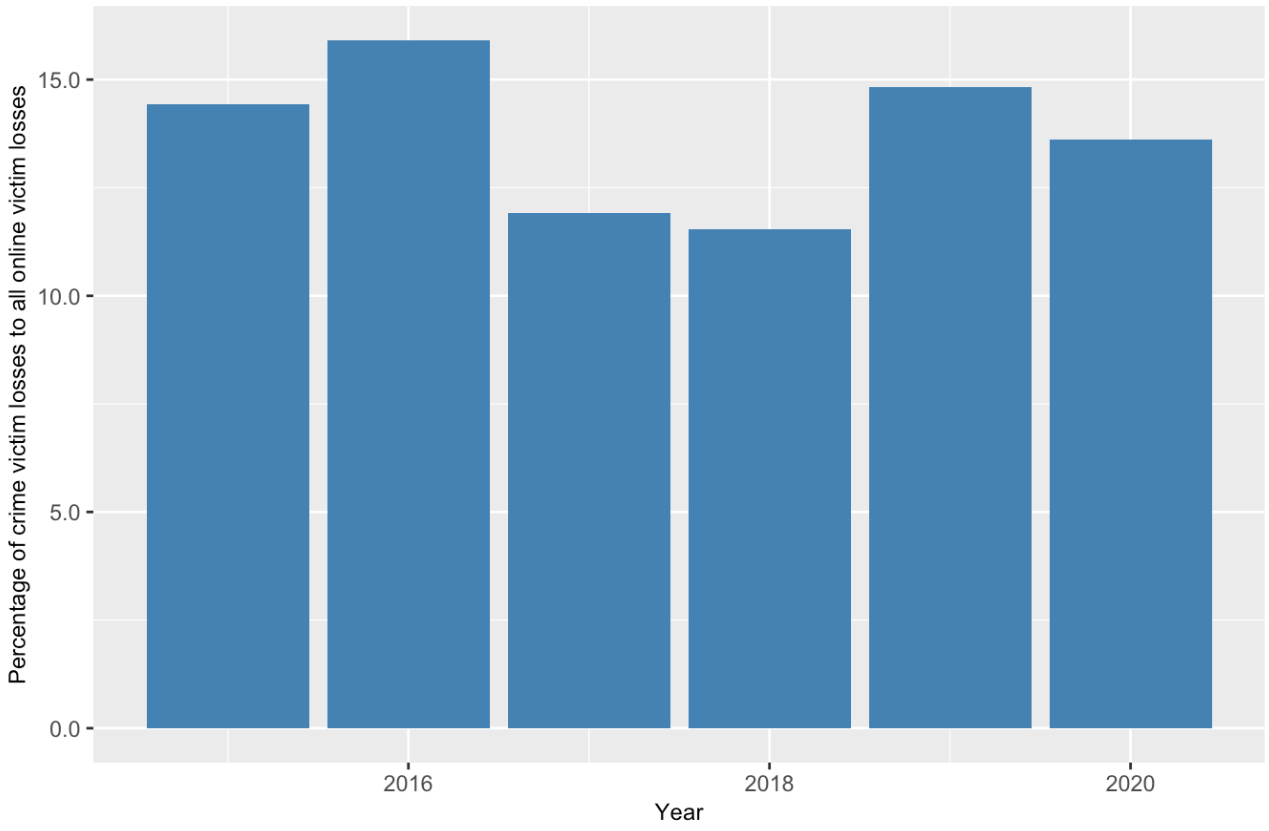
California --- Confidence Fraud/Romance

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



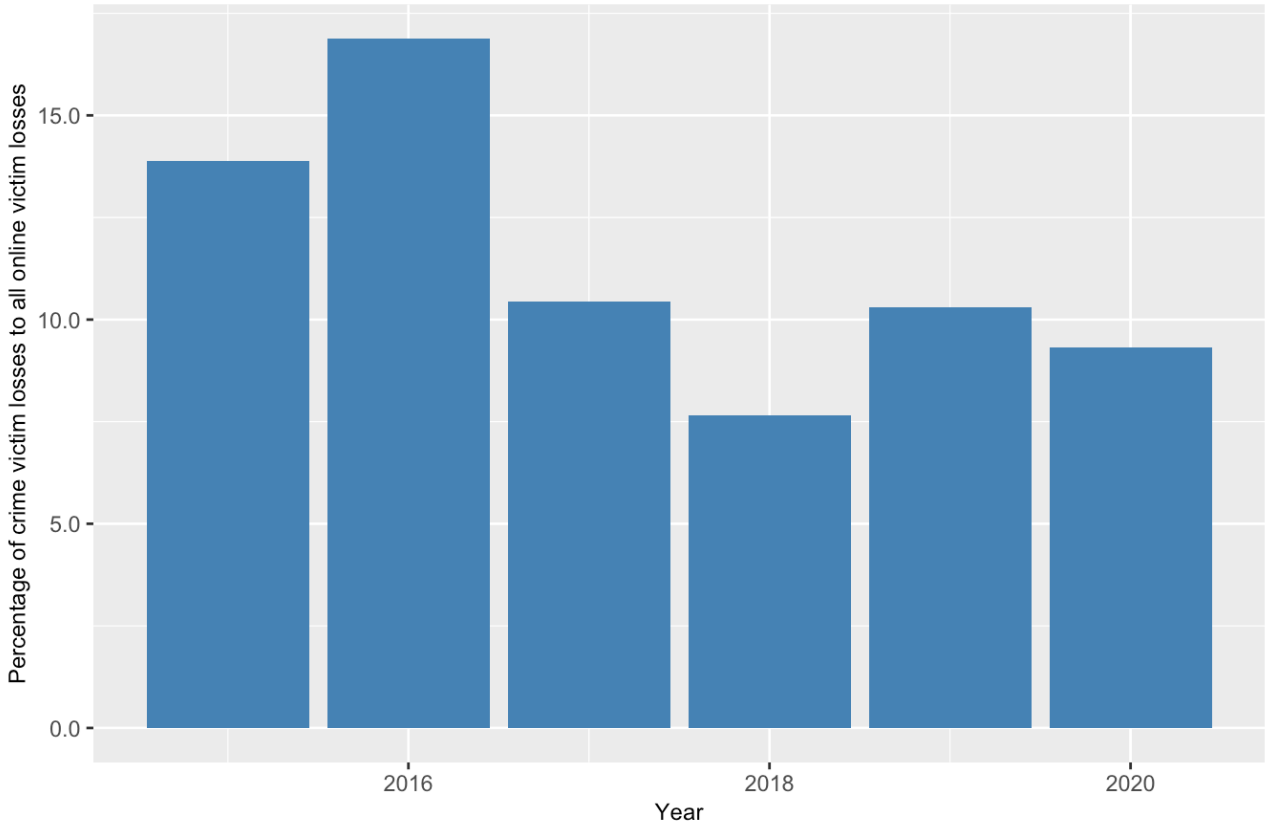
Florida --- Confidence Fraud/Romance

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



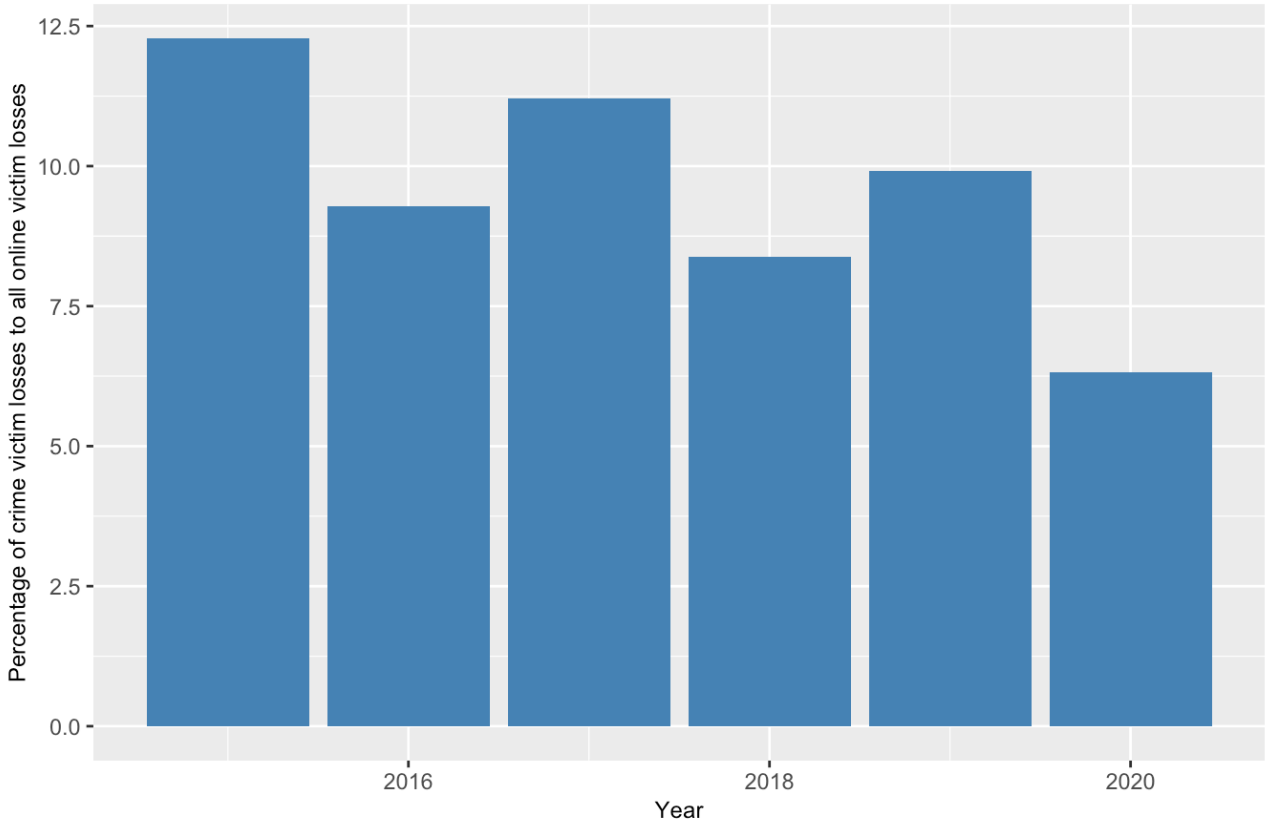
Illinois --- Confidence Fraud/Romance

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



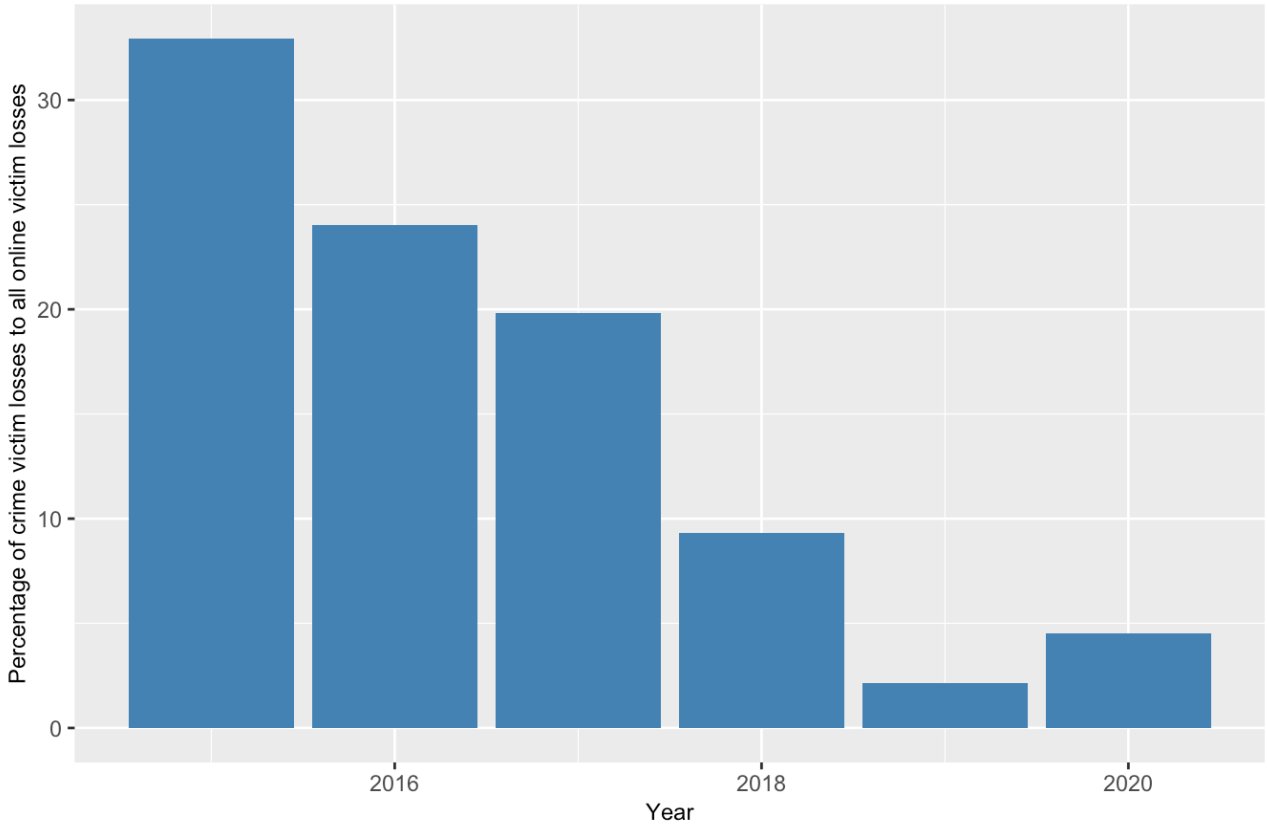
New York --- Confidence Fraud/Romance

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



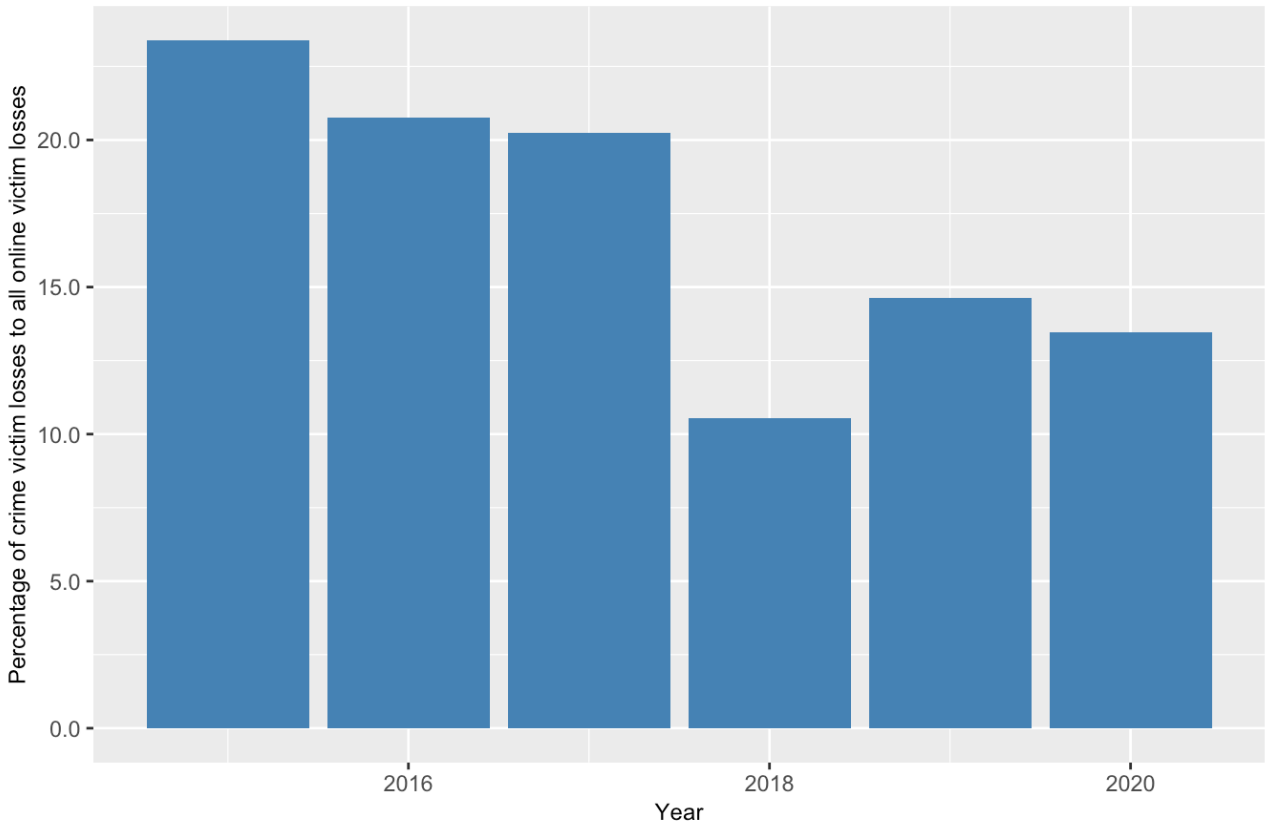
Ohio --- Confidence Fraud/Romance

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



Texas --- Confidence Fraud/Romance

Percentage of victim losses from this crime to all online victim losses



In absolute numbers, California had both the highest victim losses and highest number of victims for 2020 increasing from $107.9 million in 2019 to $120.5 million in 2020, and from 2,206 to 3,110 victims. Moreover, in Illinois, similar to California, the number of victims grew faster than victim losses during 2020 with losses of $11.0 million in 2019 increasing to $14.0 million in 2020 as the number of victims grew from 518 to 688.

In contrast, victim losses in New York, Ohio, and Texas grew faster than the number of victims during 2020, which implies that scammers were getting more per victim on average in 2020. In New York, losses increased 34% from $19.7 million in 2019 to $26.3 million in 2020 while the number of victims grew 19%, from 931 to 1,103. In Ohio, losses grew 35% from $5.7 million to $7.7 million and the number of victims 16%, from 456 to 528. Texas' victim losses grew 30% from $32.4 million in 2019 to $42.2 million, with the number of victims increasing 25% from 1,287 to 1,602.

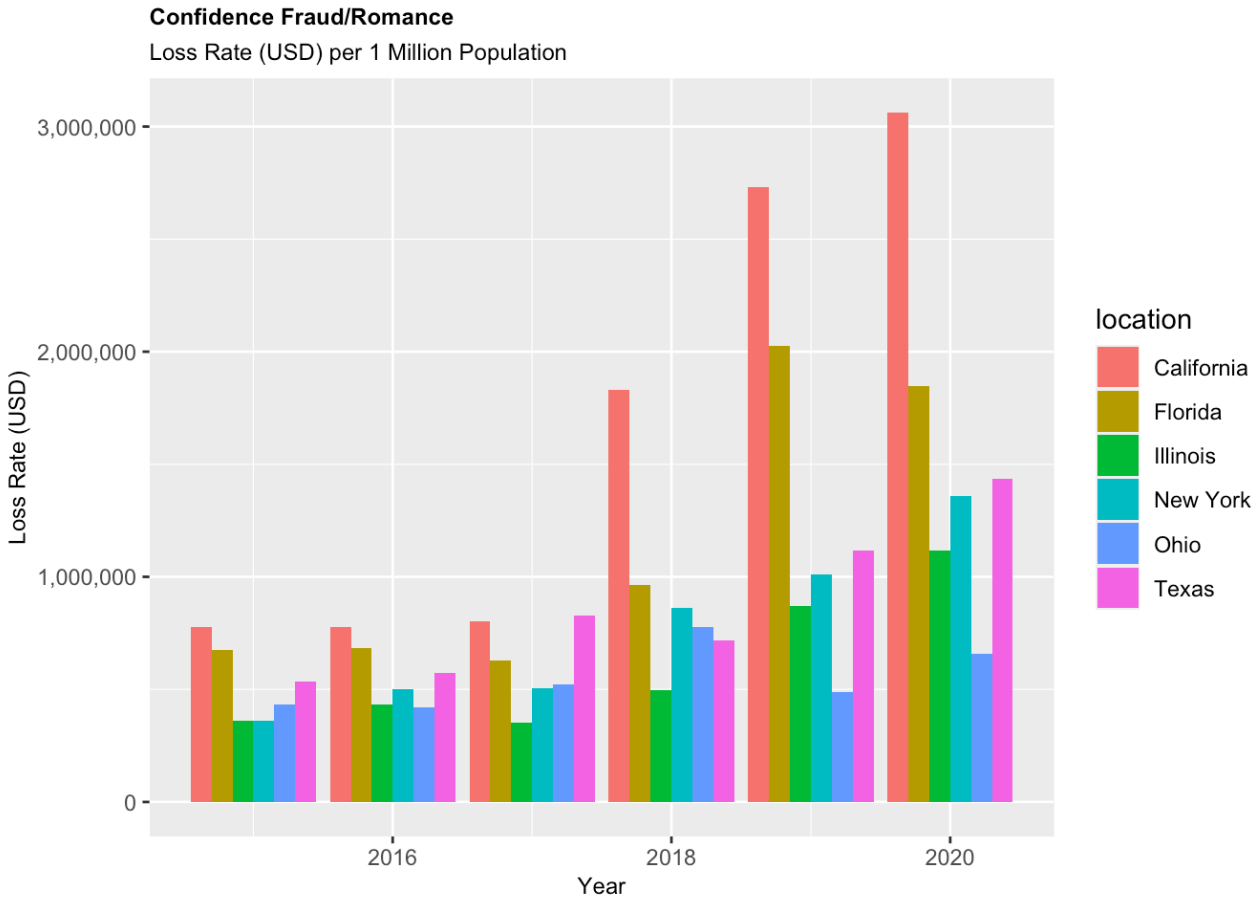
Florida had a decrease in victim losses from $43.5 million in 2019 to $40.2 million in 2020. In contrast, the number of victims increased 18% from 1,363 to 1,603, ranking second after California among the top states.

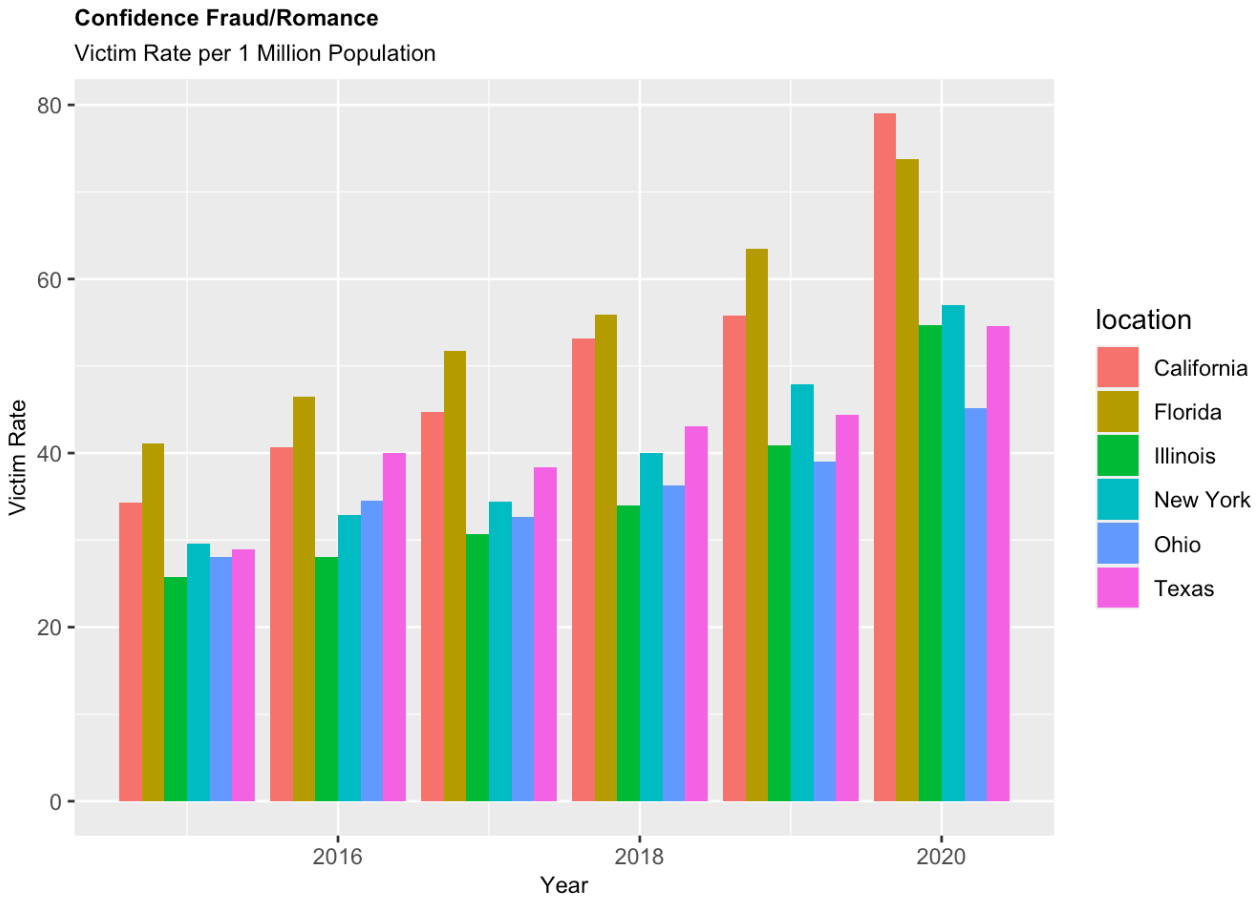
In terms of loss rates, California had the highest population-adjusted losses among the top states in 2020. Its loss rate has continued to increase rapidly since 2018. California's loss rate was $3.0 million per one million in population, up from $2.7 million in 2019. The state also had the highest victim rate of 79.0 per one million in population for 2020.

Florida follows California with a loss rate of $1.8 million per one million in population during 2020. Nevertheless, Florida's loss rate declined from $2.0 million in 2019. In contrast, Florida's victim rate grew from 63.5 victims per one million in population in 2019 to 73.8 victims in 2020, the second-highest victim rate among the top states

For 2020, Texas had the third-highest loss rate across the top states of $1.4 million per one million in population and a victim rate of 54.6 per one million in population. New York had a marginally lower loss rate compared to Texas and a victim rate of 57.0 per million in population. Illinois had a loss rate of $1.1 per one million in population and a victim rate of 54.7.

Ohio had the lowest Confidence Fraud/Romance victim losses and number of victims among the top states in 2020 as it did the previous year. Nevertheless, both loss rates and victim rates increased during 2020 in Ohio, with a loss rate of $659,000 per one million in population and a victim rate of 45 per million, compared to $490,000 and 39 the previous year.


Confidence Fraud/Romance
Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population
3,000,000
2,000,000
1,000,000
0
Loss Rate (USD)
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

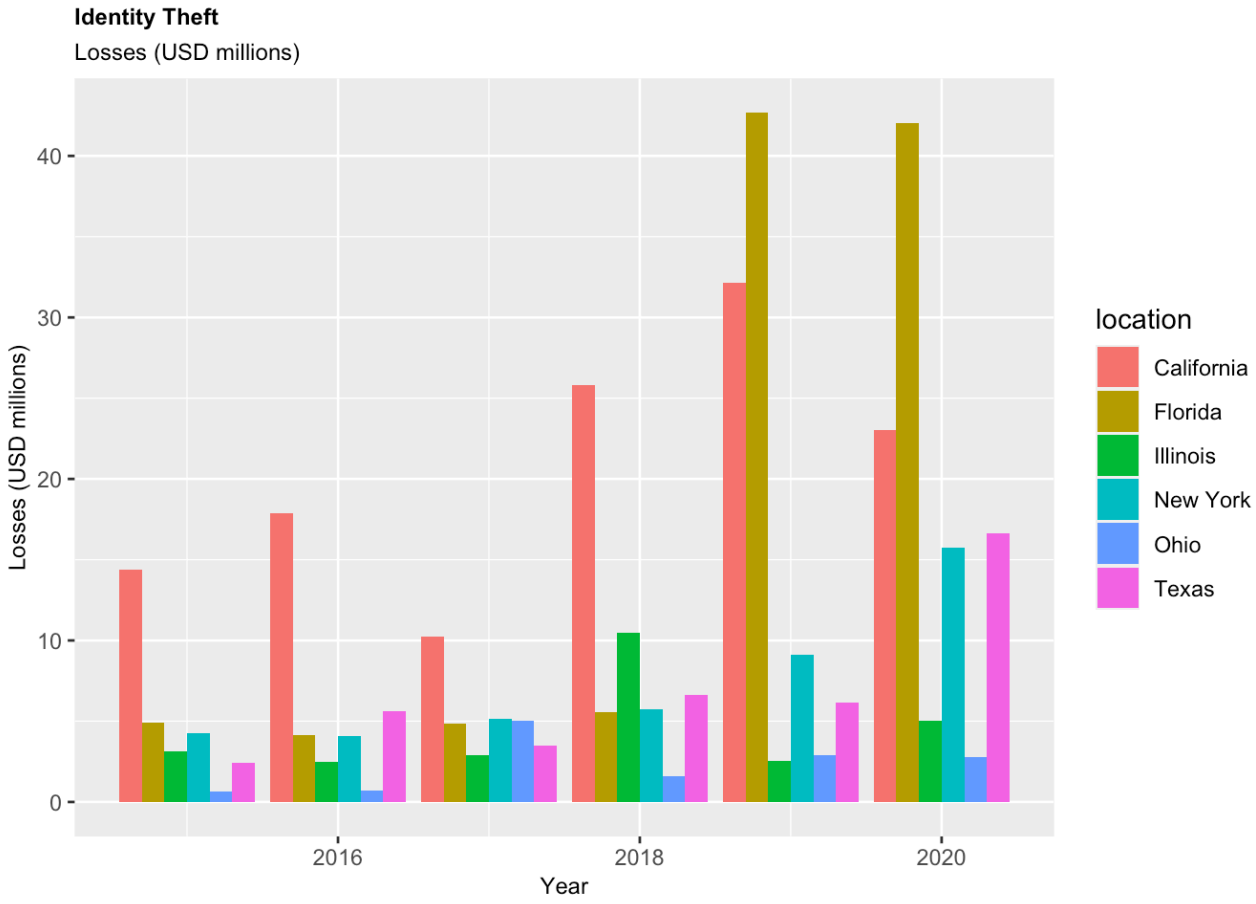

Confidence Fraud/Romance
Victim Rate per 1 Million Population
80
60
40
20
0
Victim Rate
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

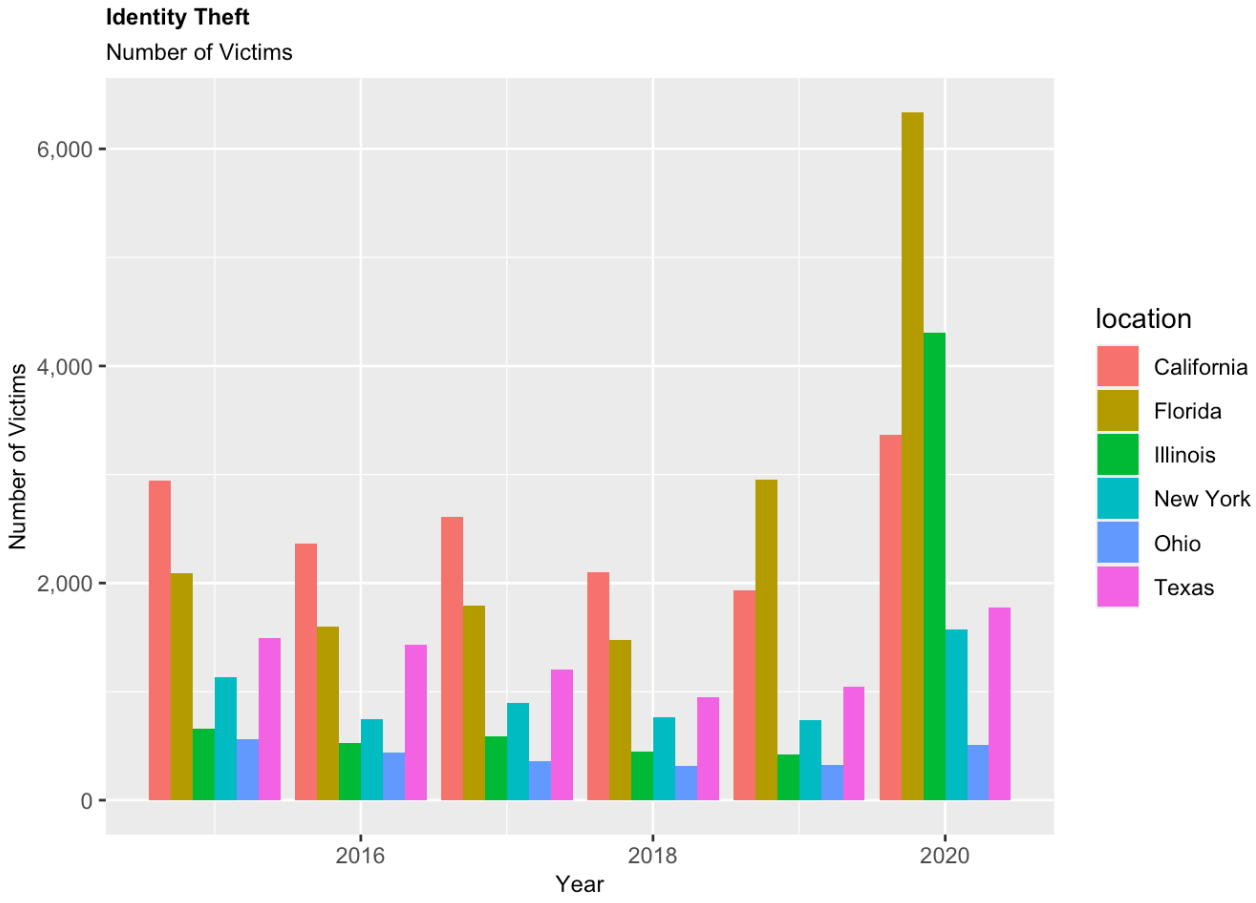
In summary, Confidence Fraud/Romance schemes continued to grow in the US and especially in five of the six top states. The exception was Florida, which experienced a decline in losses. Yet, the number of victims increased in all six states.

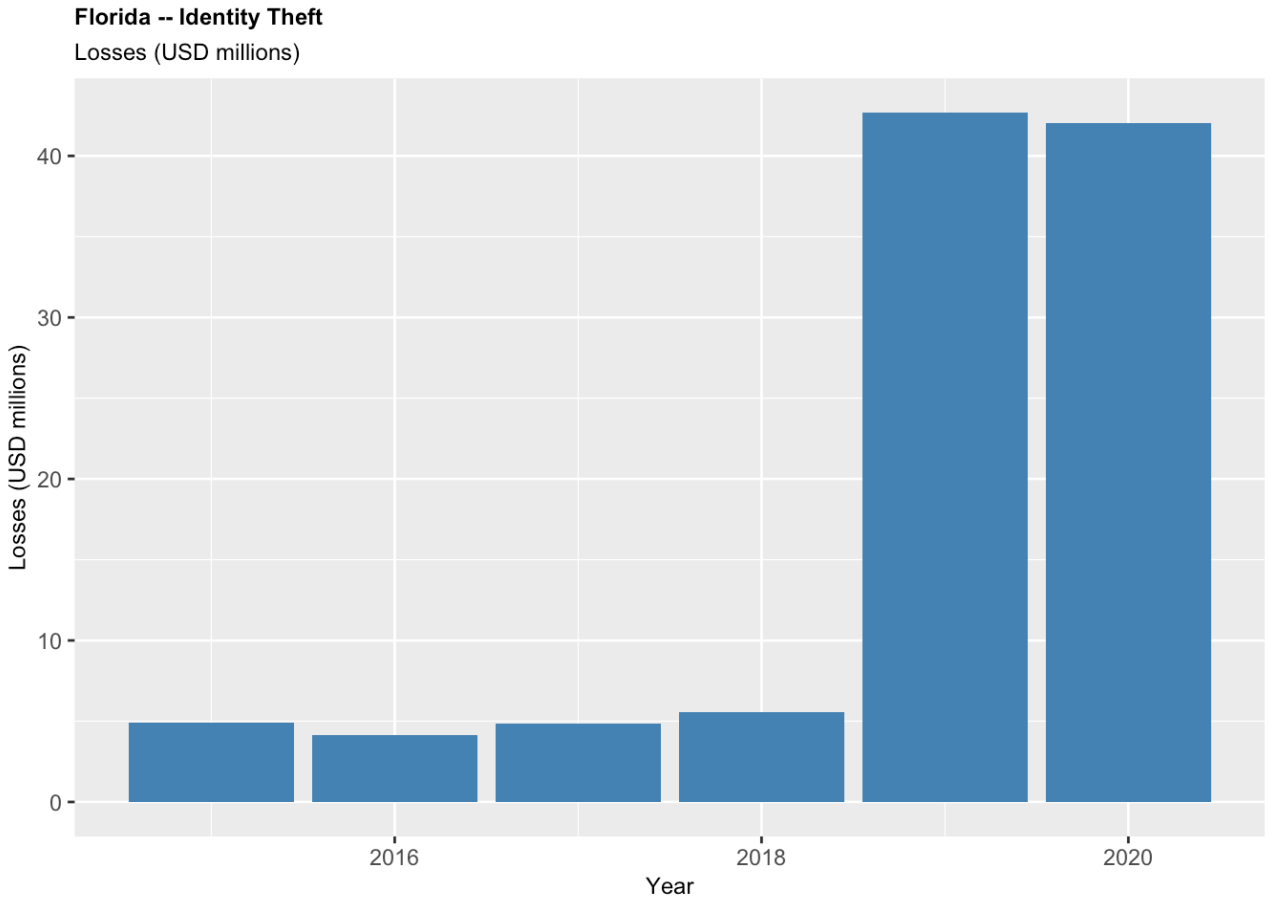
Identity Theft

Identity Theft occurs when a scammer obtains a victim's personal identifying information such as their Social Security Number or Medicare number without the victim's permission, to commit fraud or another kind of crime on the victim or another person/organization. Electronic records and the internet have made online identity theft relatively common. The year 2020 was characterized by a large increase in the number of victims of this online crime across the top states.

Among the six top states, California had the highest amount of victim losses from online Identity Theft from 2015 through 2018. But in 2019, Florida surged past California in victim losses and continued into 2020 with the highest losses among the six top states.


Identity Theft
Losses (USD millions)
Losses (USD millions)
40
30
20
10
0
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas


Identity Theft
Number of Victims
Number of Victims
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas



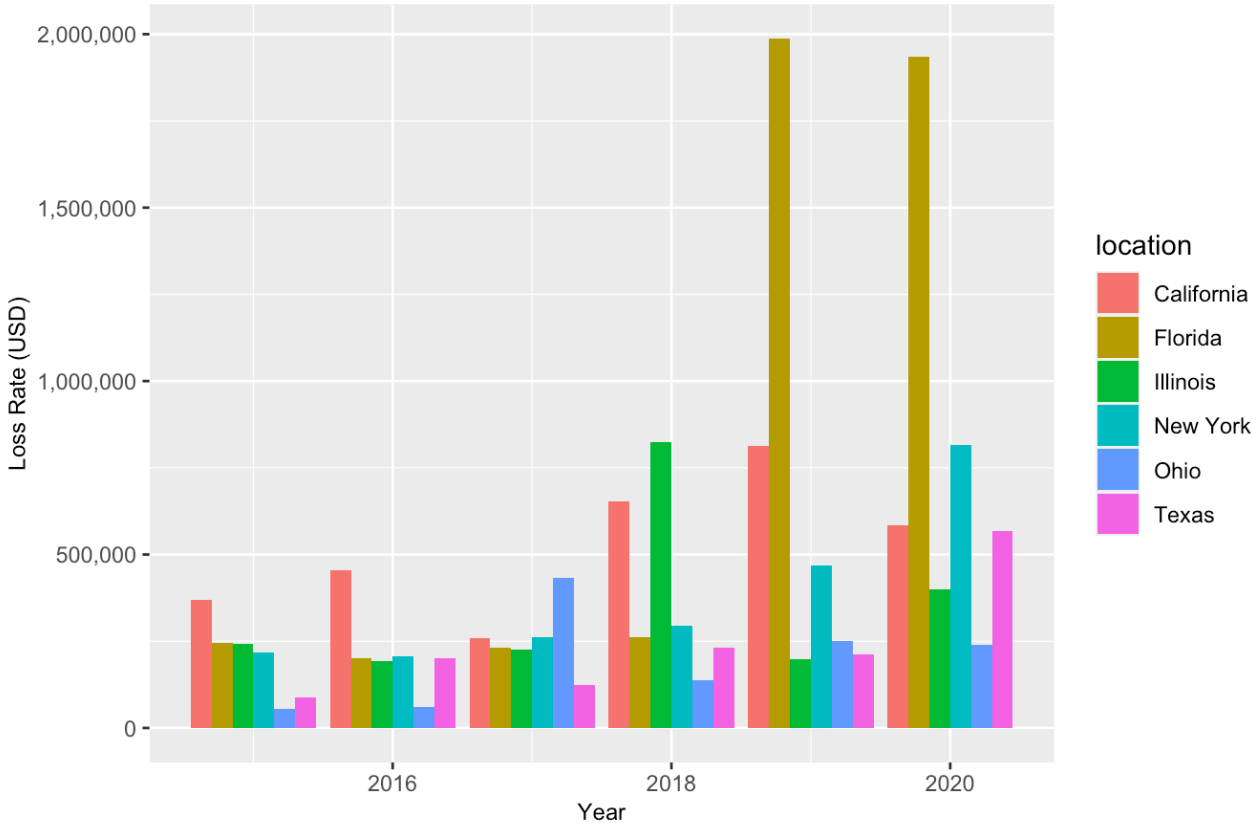
Victim losses of Floridians to this online crime in 2020 were $42.0 million compared to $42.7 million the previous year. In 2020, 14% of total losses from all online crime in Florida came from Identity Theft, similar to 2019. In addition, the number of victims in Florida jumped 115% in 2020 compared to the previous year. Florida's number of victims continued to be the highest across the top states increasing from 2,953 in 2019 to 6,334 in 2020.

Other top states experienced increases in losses and the number of victims during 2020. Texas had a 171% increase in victim losses, Illinois 100%, and New York 73%. Texas victim losses increased from $6.1 million in 2019 to $16.6 million in 2020 and it had a 63% increase in the number of victims. Illinois losses increased from $2.5 million in 2019 to $5.0 million and had a striking increase of 927% in the number of victims. New York losses increased from $9.1 million in 2019 to $15.8 million in 2020 and a 112% increase in the number of victims.

In 2020, California, with the second-highest victim loss level among the top states, losses declined from $32.1 million in 2019 to $23.0 million. Yet, the number of victims increased by 74% from 1,937 to 3,370. Further, Ohio experienced a small decrease in losses from $2.9 million in 2019 to $2.8 million in 2020 and an increase in the number of victims of 58%.

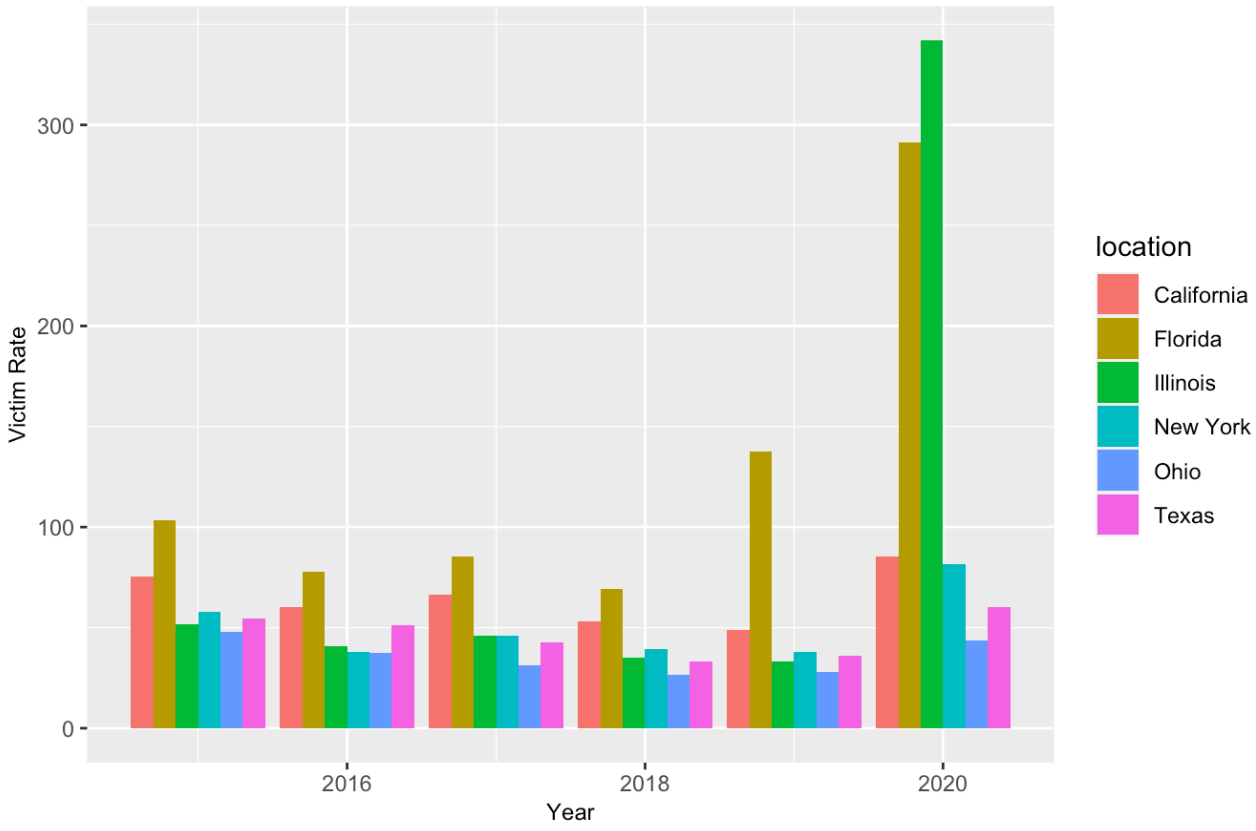
Identity Theft

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Identity Theft

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



In terms of population-adjusted victim rates, Illinois had the highest rate in 2020 of 341.9 victims per one million in population followed by Florida with 291.4 per million. Although 2020 victim rates increased in all top states, they increased most in Illinois and Florida.

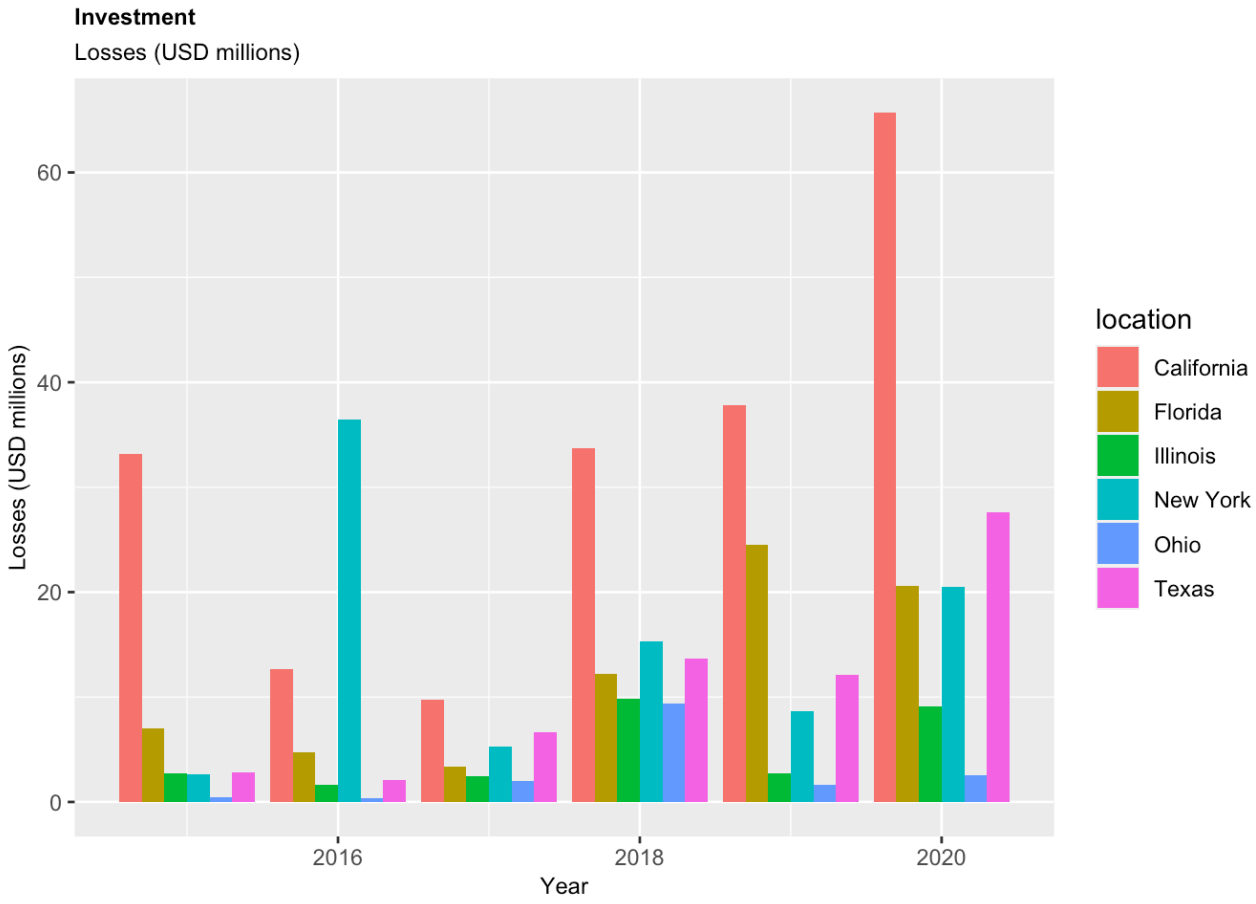
For population-adjusted victim losses, Florida had a 2020 loss rate that was much higher than the other top states. Florida's 2020 loss rate of $1.9 million per one million in population, was much higher than second-place New York with $815,000 per million. California had the third-highest loss rate of $585,000 followed by Texas of $567,000, and Illinois and Ohio, with loss rates of $400,000 and $239,000, respectively.

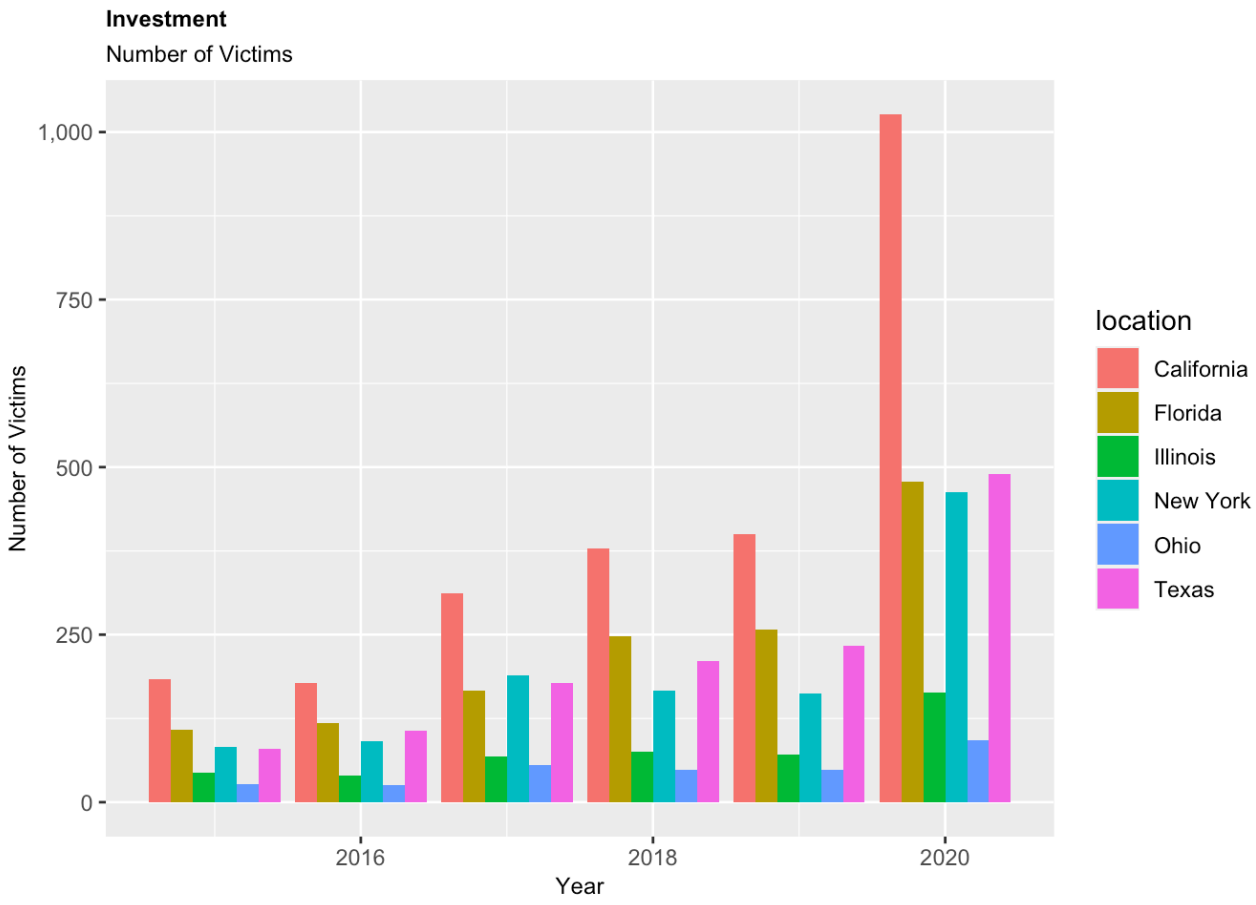
Overall, victim losses from online Identity Theft during 2020 increased in three of the six top states. While Florida had a small decline in losses, Floridians on average suffered much larger losses in absolute terms among the top states. Further, the number of victims increased in all states during 2020 and they jumped sharply in Florida and Illinois.

Investment fraud

Investment fraud is a white-collar crime where fraudsters lure investors, many times seniors, offering high returns if they make an investment. Online Investment fraud does not have a large number of victims but the average loss per victim can be very high. For instance, in Texas, 489 total victims lost $27.6 million in 2020. Investment fraud was the third-largest online crime after BEC/EAC and Confidence Fraud/Romance with $336.4 million in victim losses.[6]

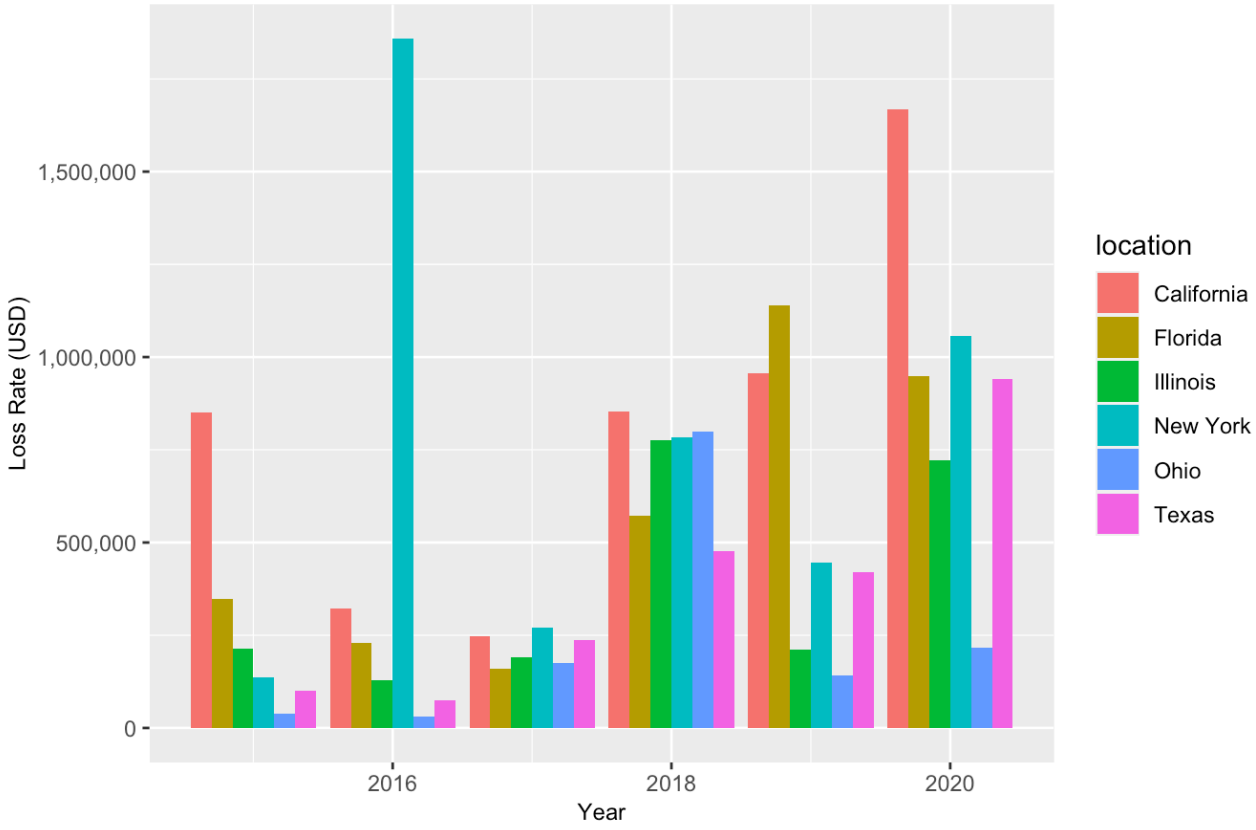
In 2020, the ratio of losses from online Investment fraud to all online crimes increased in five of the six top states. The three highest states were California, Texas, and Illinois. California's ratio grew from 7% in 2019 to 11%, Texas' from 6% to 9%, and Illinois' from 3% to 6%. Florida, in contrast, had a small decline from 8% to 7%.


Investment
Losses (USD millions)
60
40
20
0
Losses (USD millions)
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas


Investment
Number of Victims
1,000
750
500
250
0
Number of Victims
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

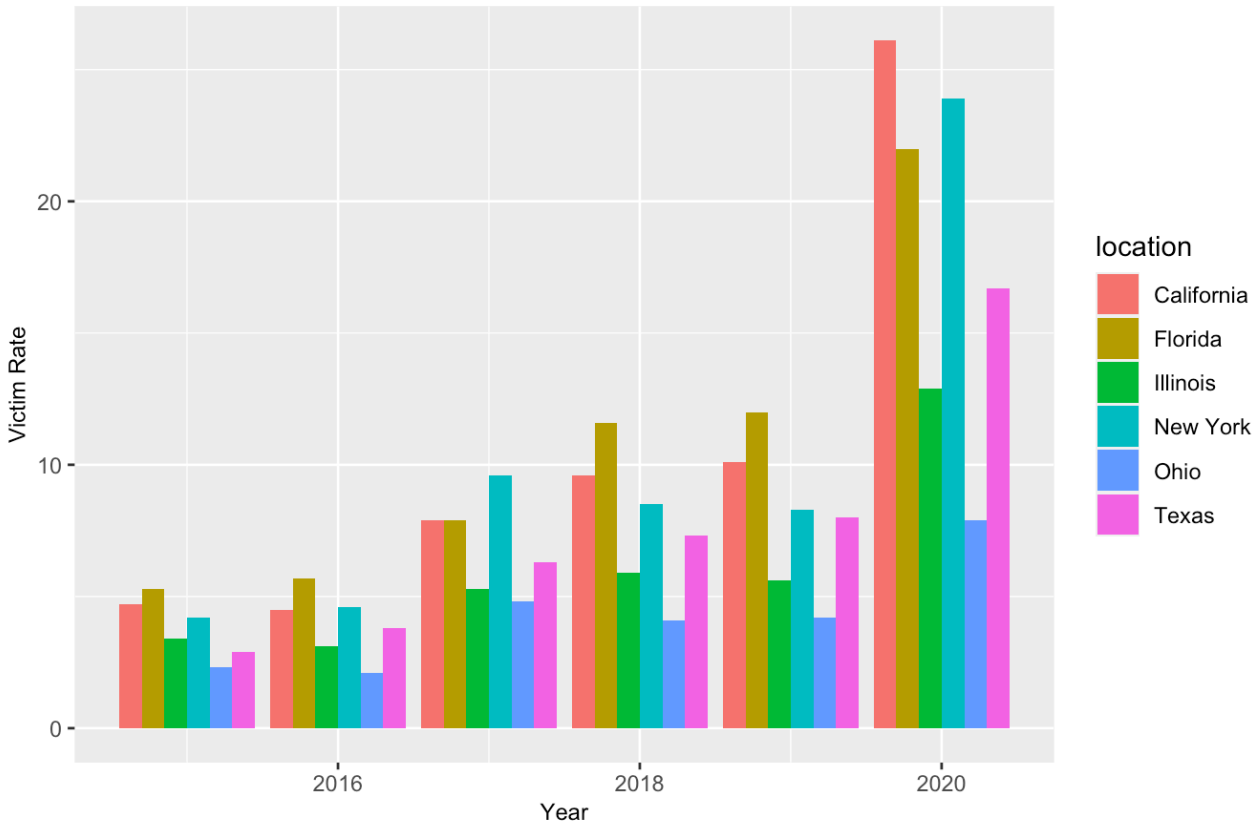
Investment

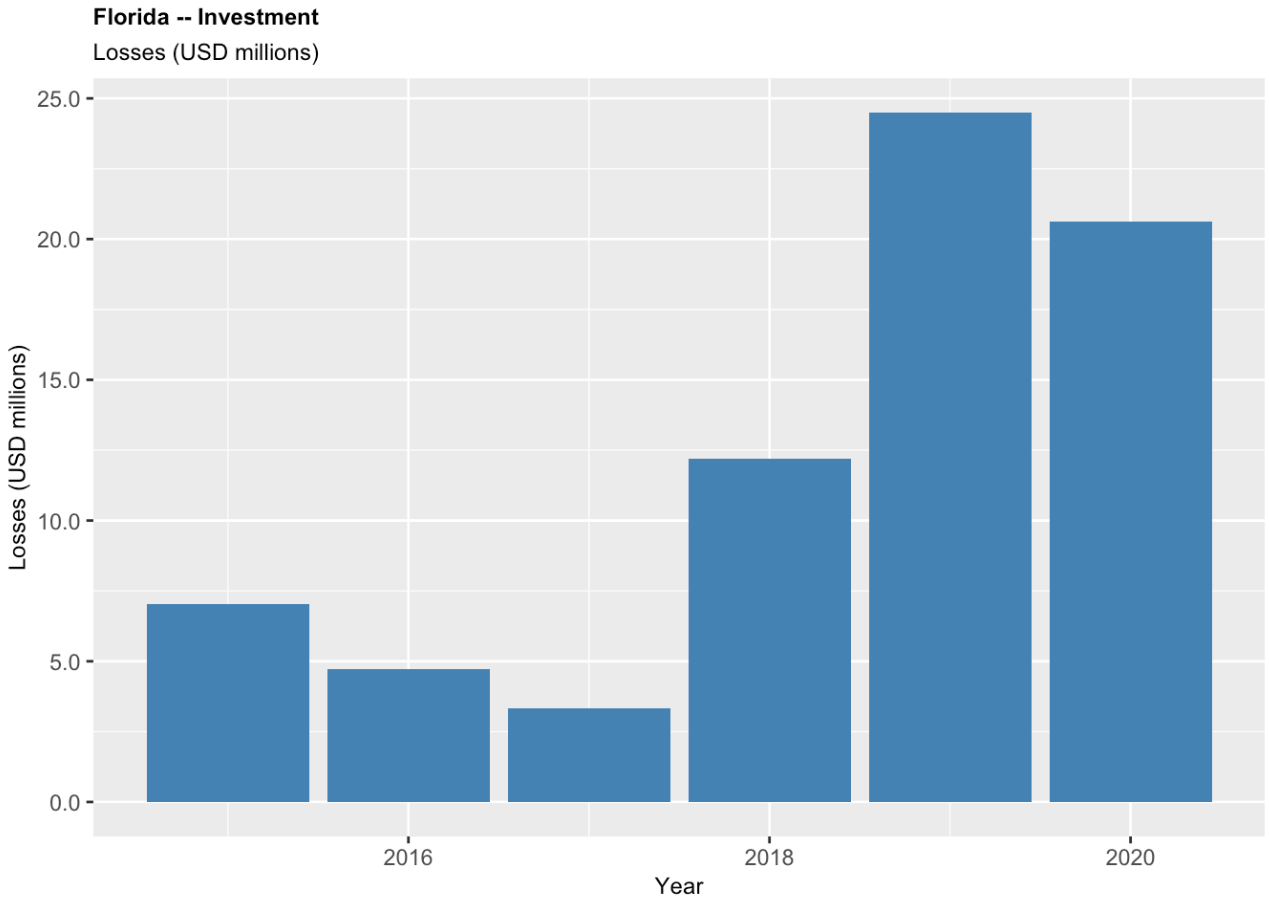
Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Investment

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population





California had the highest amount of victim losses and number of victims in 2020. Its victim losses increased significantly by 74% from $37.8 million in 2019 to $65.7 million. Although victim losses in New York and Texas during 2020, in absolute numbers, were not as high as in California, the two states had higher rates of growth of 135% and 127%, respectively. New York's losses jumped from $8.7 million in 2019 to $20.5 million in 2020, and Texas from $12.1 million to $27.6 million. Yet, the highest relative increase during 2020 was in Illinois where victim losses grew from $2.7 million in 2019 to $9.1 million in 2020, a 239% increase.

Ohio had the lowest increase in victim losses among the five top states having growth with an increase of 51%, from $1.7 million to $2.5 million. In contrast, Florida experienced a decline in victim losses to online Investment fraud of 16%, falling from $24.5 million in 2019 to $20.6 million in 2020.

All of the top states experienced very large increases of the number of victims from online Investment fraud during 2020. Most significantly, the number of victims in four of the six top states increased by more than 100% compared to the previous year, while the other two states grew by more than 85%. New York had the highest growth of 185%, increasing from 162 victims in 2019 to 462 in 2020; in California, having the second-highest growth of 157%, experienced an increase from 400 victims to 1,026. Illinois had the third-highest growth in 2020 of 130% followed by Texas with a 110% increase. Ohio's number of victims increased by 88%, and Florida grew by 86% even as its monetary victim losses declined.

Population-adjusted loss and victim rates for 2020 show that California still had the highest losses per capita across the top states of $1.7 million of victim losses per one million in population and a victim rate of 26.1 per million. New York, the second-highest of the top states, had a loss rate of $1.1 million and victim rate of 23.9. Even though loss rates show Florida as the third-highest state, with $949,000 per million and a victim rate of 22.0 per million, its loss rate declined compared to the previous year.

Texas followed Florida's rates similarly in 2020 with a $940,000 loss rate and victim rate of 16.7. Illinois experienced a loss rate of $723,000 and victim rate of 12.9. Ohio, with the lowest loss and victim rates across the top states, experienced losses of $215,000 per million and 7.9 per million.

Overall, Investment fraud is an online crime with a disproportionate average loss per victim while the number of victims is relatively low. The year 2020 was characterized by a large increase in victim losses in five of the six top states. The exception was Florida with a decline. Further, the number of victims in all top states increased by more than 80% from the previous year.

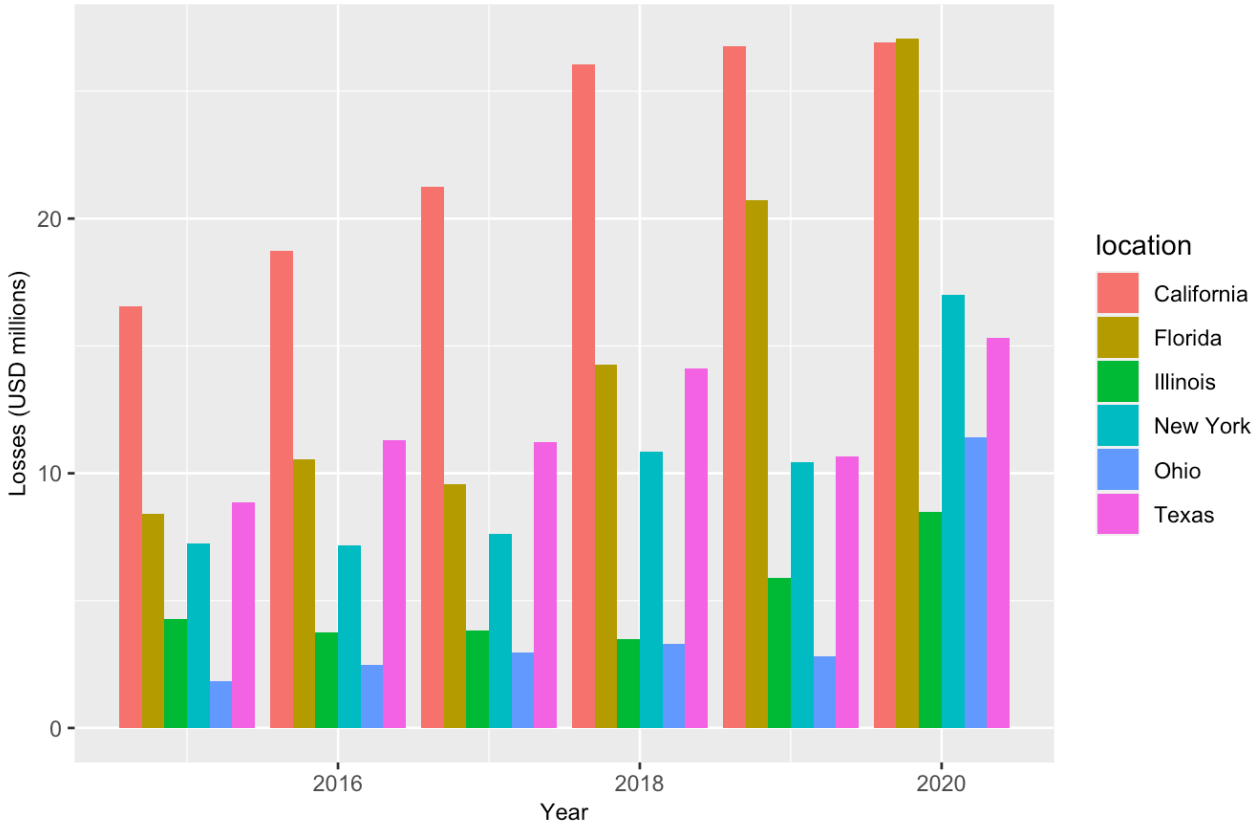
Non-Payment/Non-Delivery

Non-payment/Non-delivery scams can take place either when goods or services are paid online but are not sent, or when payment is not received but goods are delivered. In 2020, the number of victims increased sharply in all top states, possibly due in large part to the Covid-19 pandemic forcing people to do more online buying of goods through Amazon, Walmart, and so on.

During 2020, this scheme made a large impact in Ohio. The ratio of losses from this crime to all online losses increased in Ohio from 1% to 7%. In the other five states, the ratio changed relatively little.

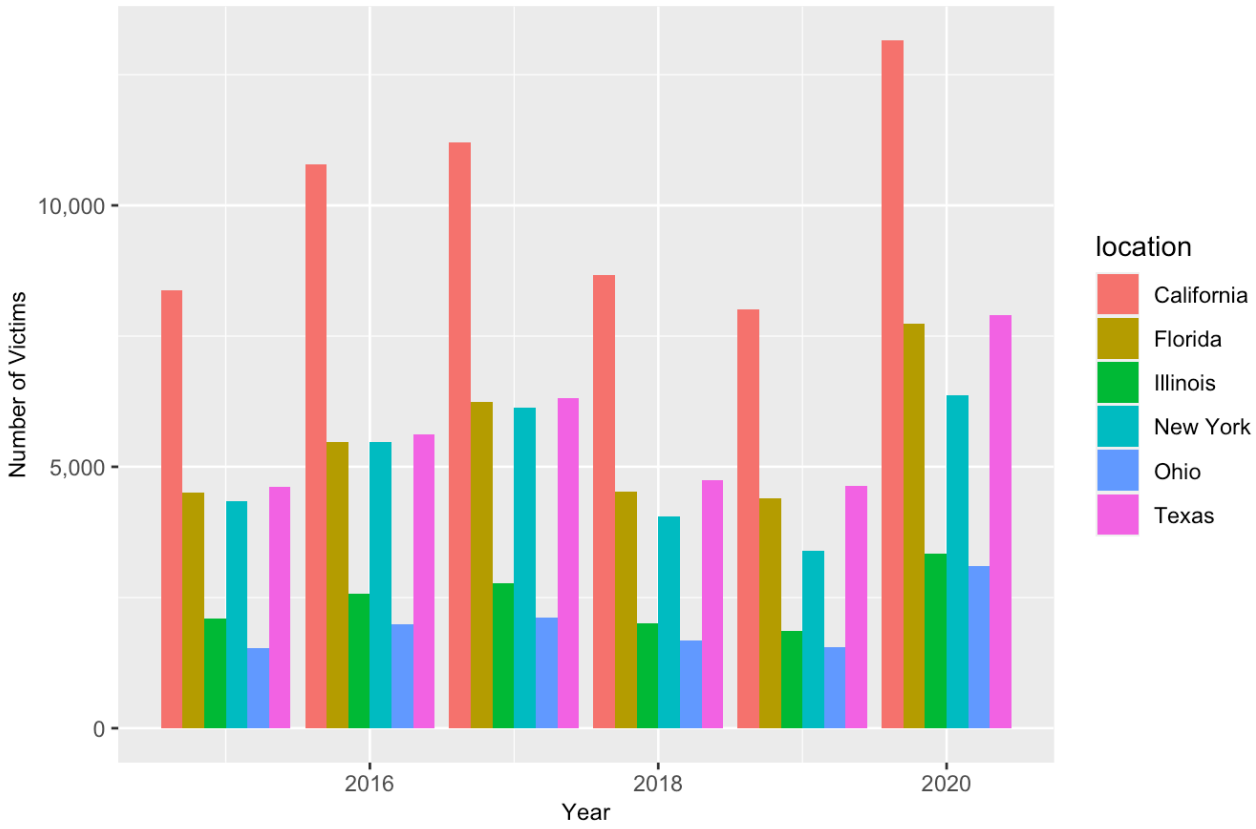
Non-Payment/Non Delivery

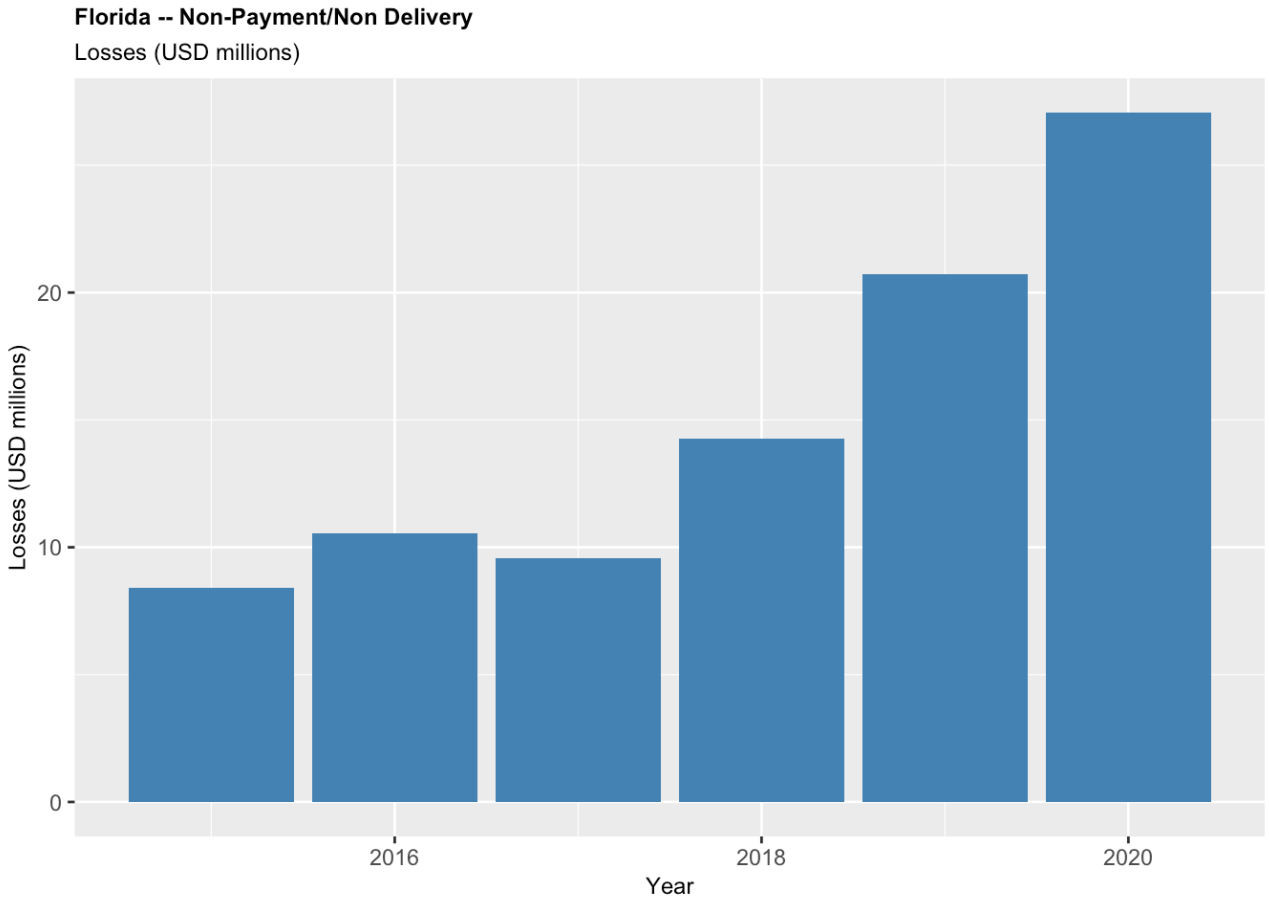
Losses (USD millions)



Non-Payment/Non Delivery

Number of Victims

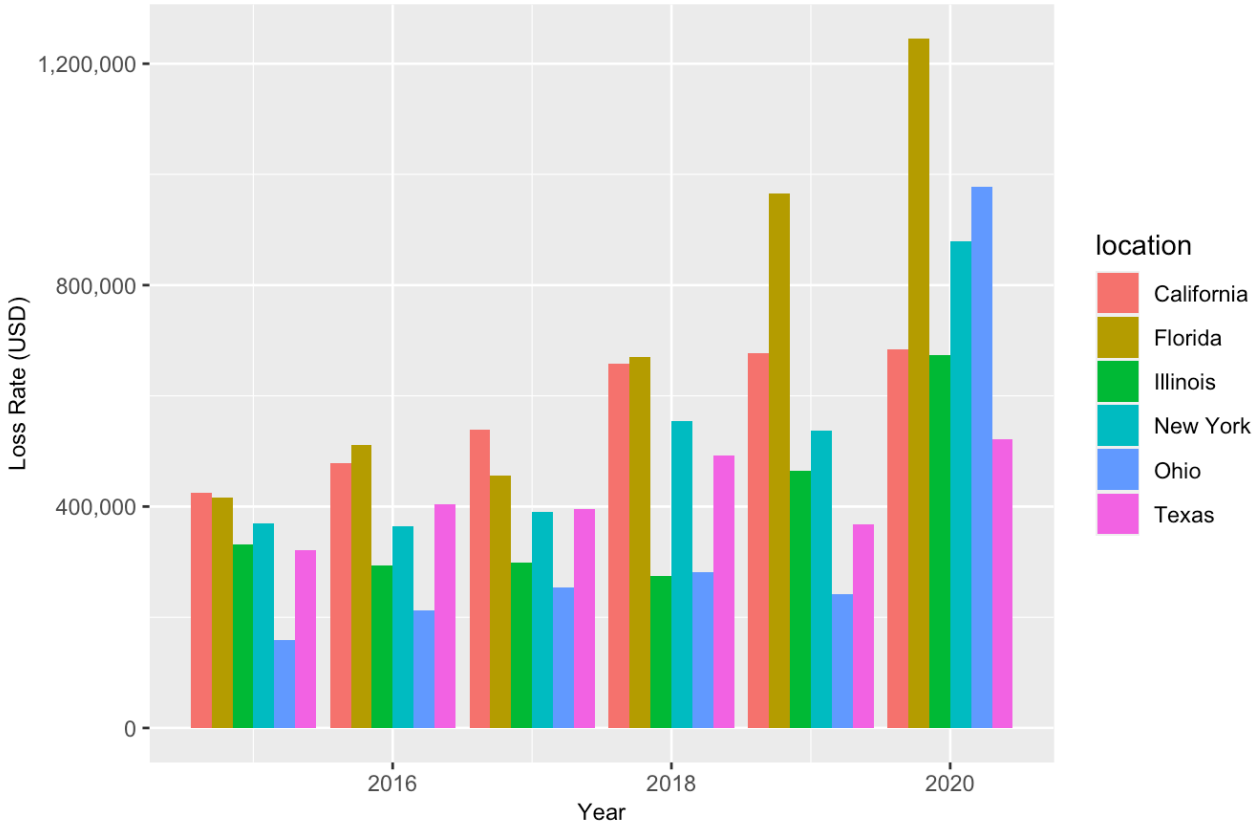




In 2020, Florida became the state with the highest victim losses to online Non-Payment/Non-Delivery crime. Florida's losses increased from $20.7 million in 2019 to $27.1 million in 2020, growing 31%. Additionally, the number of victims in Florida increased 76%, from 4,392 to 7,742.

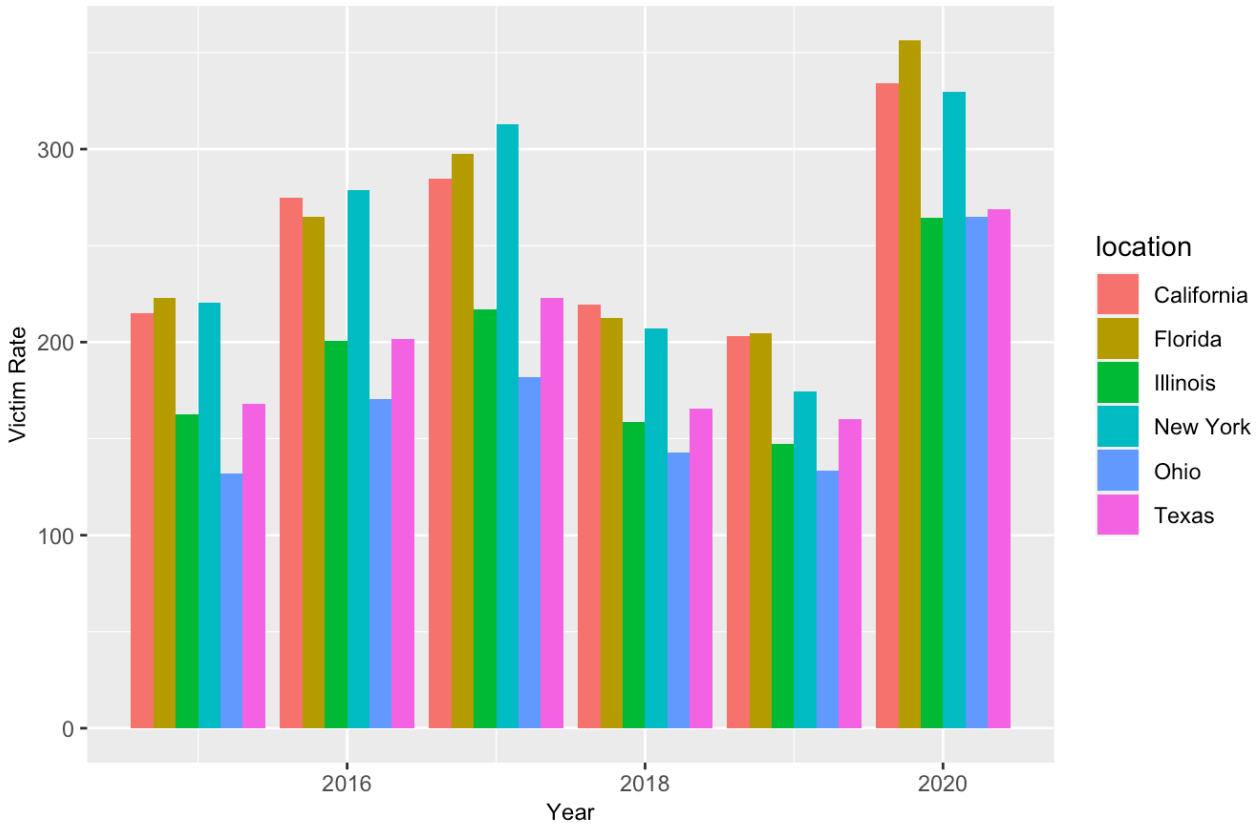
Non-Payment/Non Delivery

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Non-Payment/Non Delivery

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



Population-adjusted loss rates and victim rates show Florida with the highest per capita losses and highest per capita number of victims from online Non-Payment/Non-Delivery crime in 2020. Florida had a loss rate of $1.2 million per one million in population and a victim rate of 356.2 per million for 2020. Ohio follows Florida with a $977,000 per million loss rate and 265.0 per million victim rate. New York is next among the top states with $879,000 per million and 329.5 per million.

In Ohio, the growth rate of Non-Payment/Non-Delivery victim losses was highest among the top states, from $2.8 million of losses in 2019 to $11.4 million in 2020, increasing 305%. The growth rate in the number of victims was also the highest in Ohio, increasing from 1,557 victims in 2019 to 3,099 in 2020, an increase of 99%. New York also experienced significant growth in Non-Payment/Non-Delivery crime in both victim losses and the number of victims from 2019 through 2020. New York's victim losses increased 63%, from $10.4 million to $17.0 million, and 88% growth in the number of victims from 3,395 to 6,372.

Illinois and Texas had increases in losses from 2019 through 2020 similar to each other, of 44% and 43%, respectively. In absolute numbers, Texas victim losses increased from $10.7 million to $15.3 million, while Illinois grew from $5.9 million to $8.5 million. Moreover, the number of victims in Illinois increased 79% from 1,863 in 2019 to 3,331 in 2020 and in Texas 70% from 4,643 to 7,893.

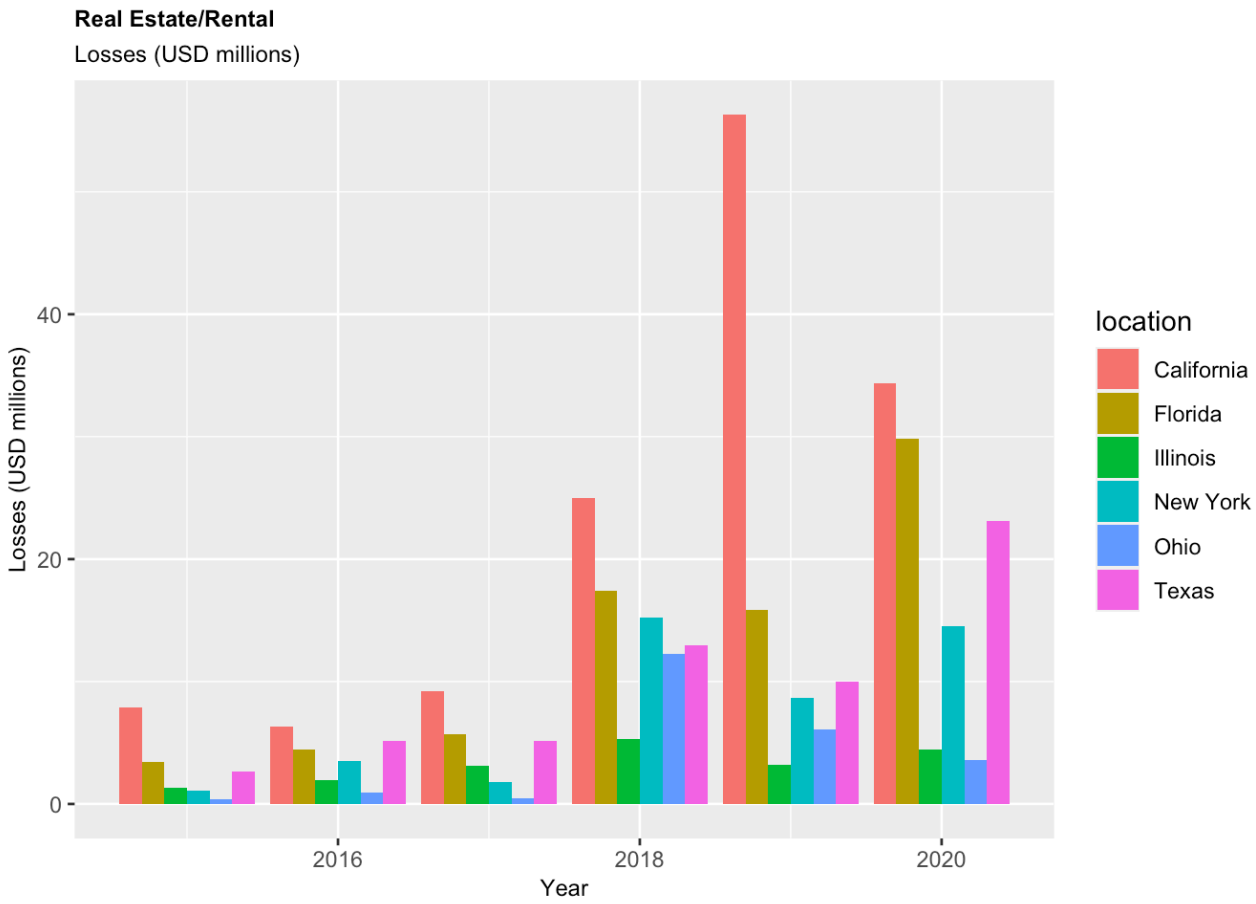
California was the only state to not have strong growth in victim losses during 2020. Losses grew marginally from $26.8 million in 2019 to $26.9 million in 2020. California's loss rate for 2020 was $684,000 per one million in population. Moreover, California's number of victims increased 64% during 2020, from 8,018 in 2019 to 13,151 in 2020, and its victim rate, second-highest after Florida, was with 334.1 victims per one million in population.

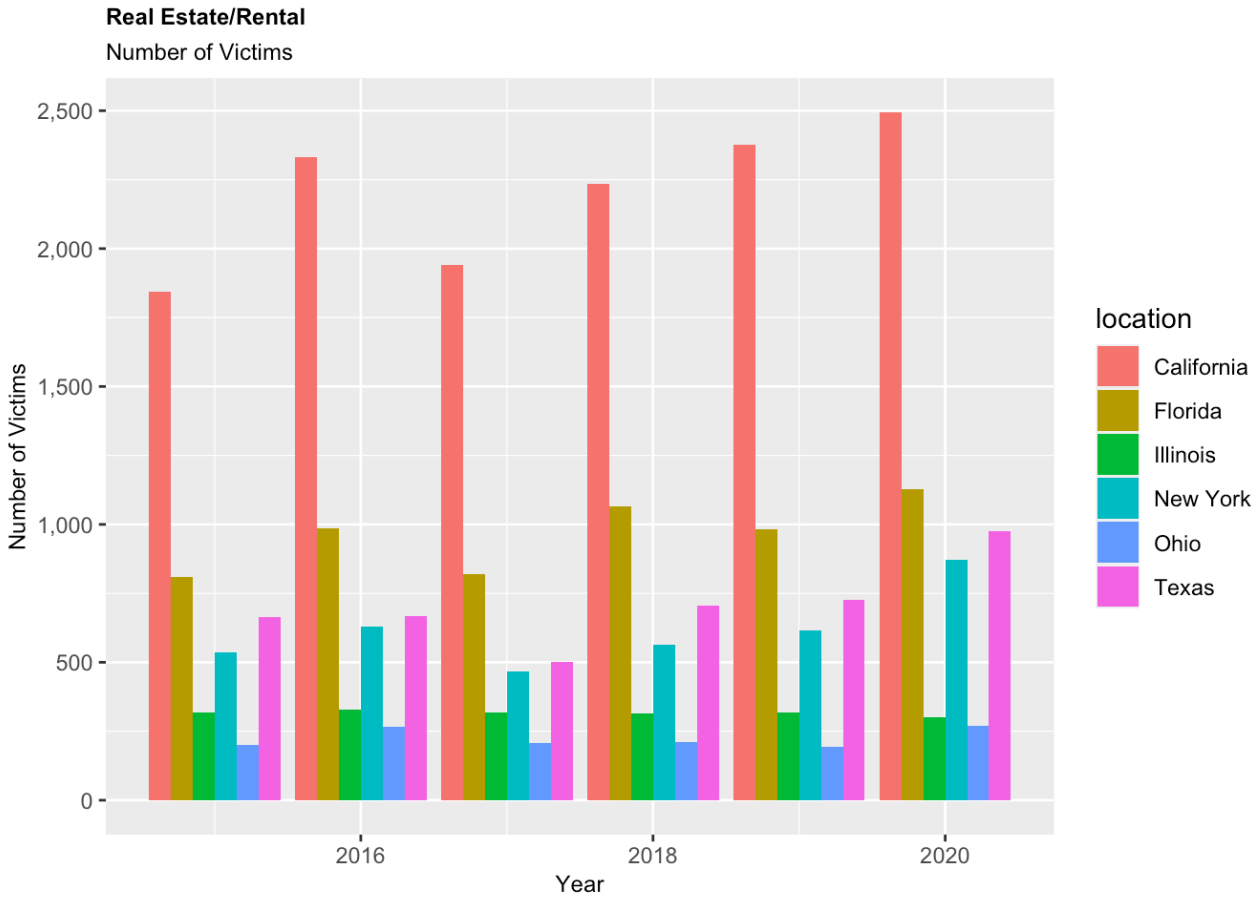
Overall, losses to online Non-Payment/Non-Delivery crime had been relatively stable for many years but in 2020 this internet crime became the fourth largest online crime, globally, after BEC/EAC, Confidence Fraud/Romance, and Investment fraud. The high growth in total victim losses was likely linked to higher online shopping activity for goods during the Covid-19 pandemic. All top states had increases in victim losses and especially in the number of victims during 2020. Florida had the highest victim losses and victim rate among the top states; Ohio had the highest growth in victim losses.

Real Estate/Rental

Real Estate/Rental Internet fraud includes online real estate, rental, and timeshare scams. This Internet crime continued to be common in 2020, especially in Texas and Florida where victim losses jumped 131% and 88%, respectively, from 2019. In Texas, victim losses grew from $10.0 million in 2019 to $23.1 million in 2020 and the number of victims grew 34% to 975.

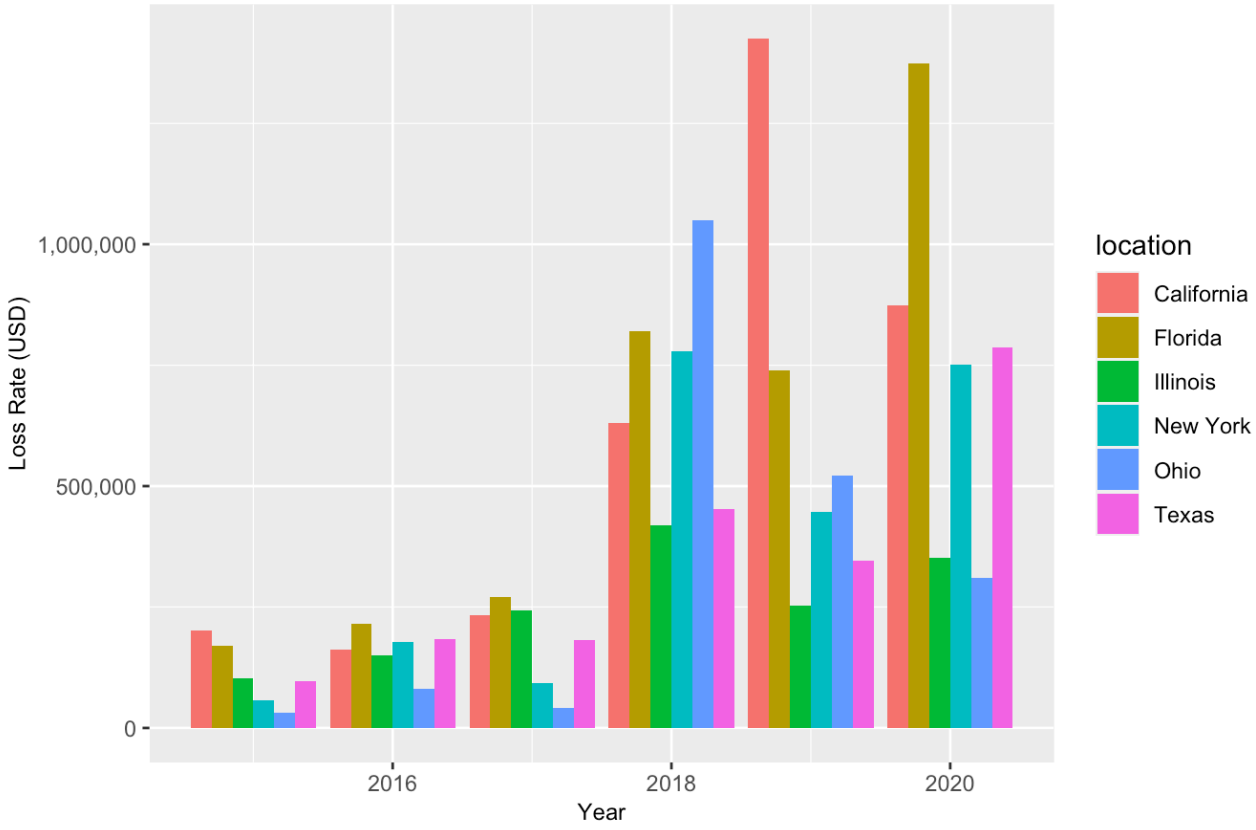
Florida, the state with the second-highest victim losses in 2020, also experienced significant growth in losses during the year, up from $15.9 million in 2019 to $29.9 million, and an increase in the number of victims of 15% to 1,129. Florida also has the second-highest number of victims across the top states for 2020.


Real Estate/Rental
Losses (USD millions)
Losses (USD millions)
40
20
0
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas


Real Estate/Rental
Number of Victims
Number of Victims
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
0
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

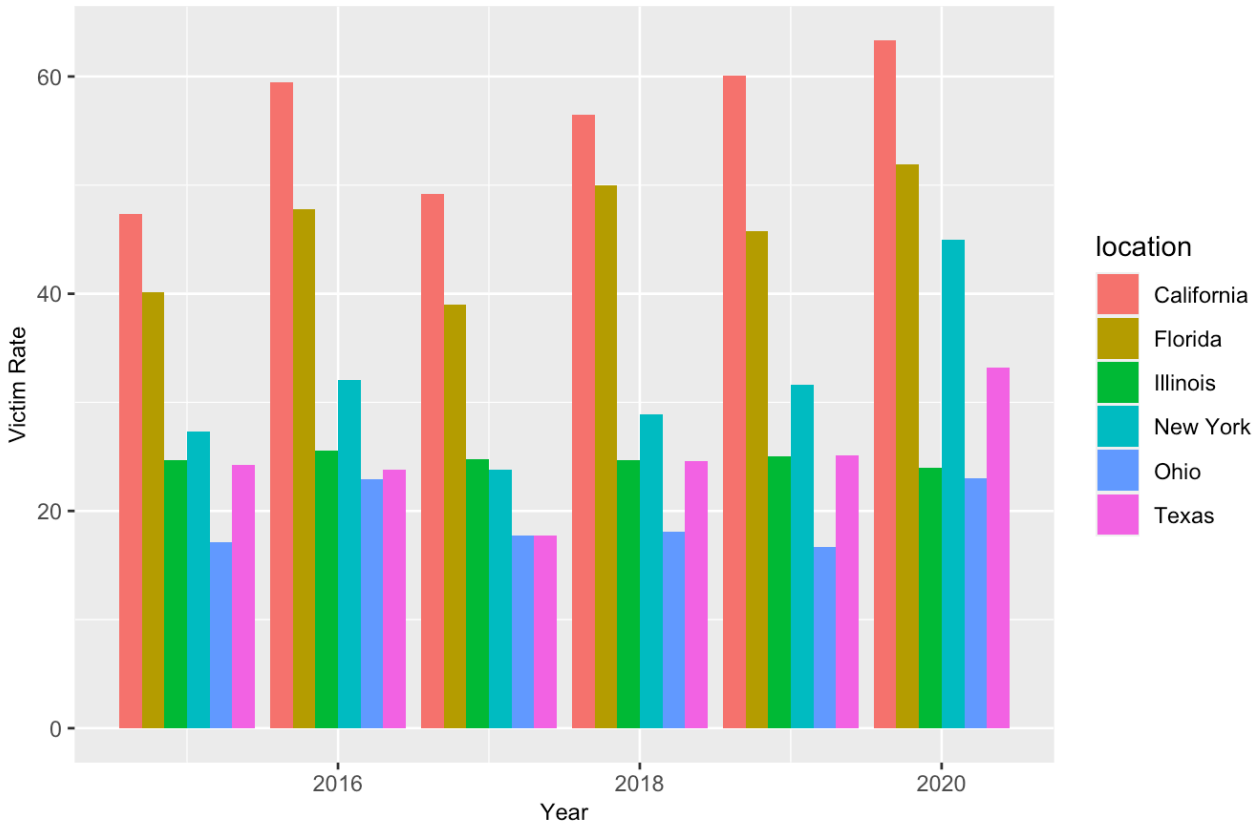
Real Estate/Rental

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Real Estate/Rental

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



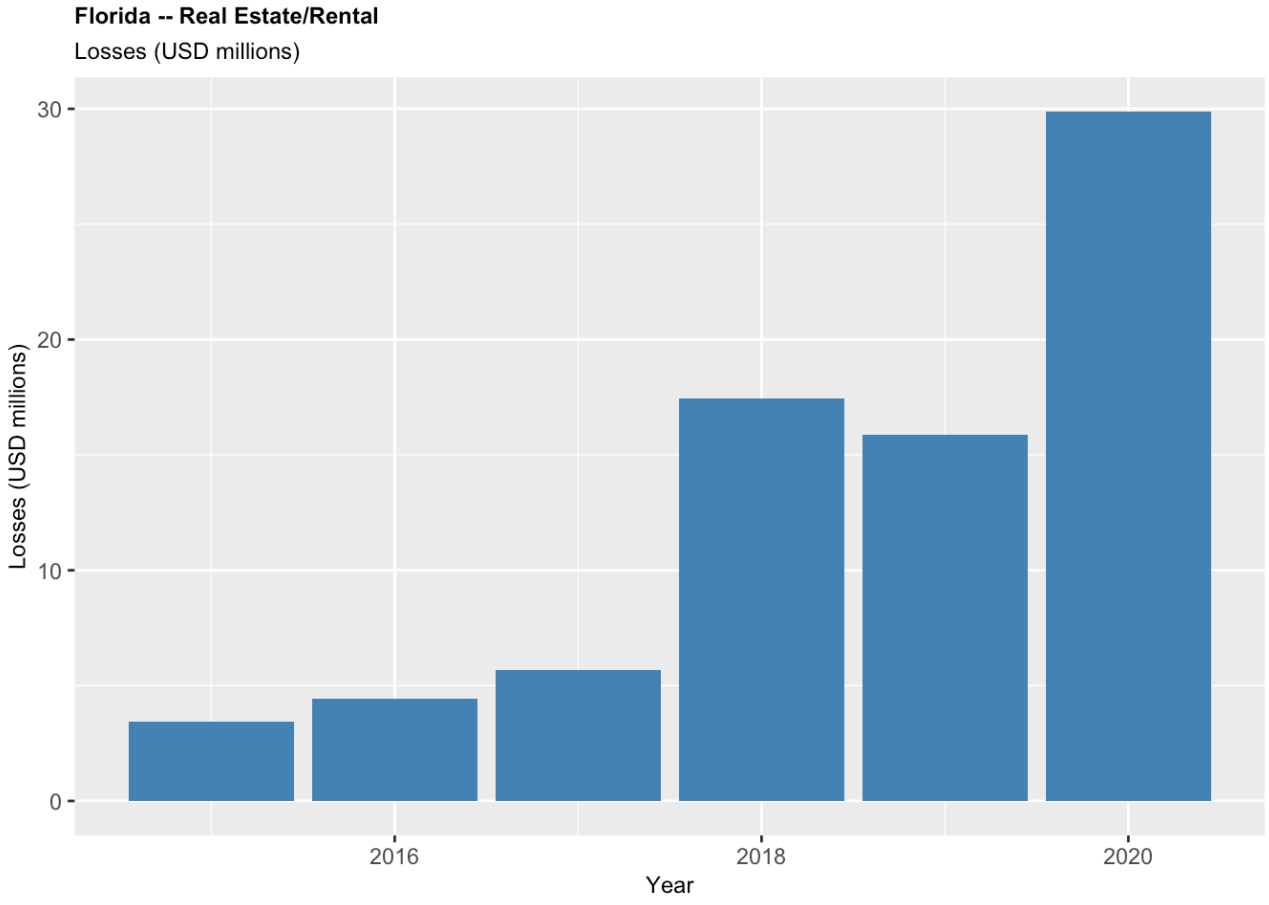
New York had the third-highest growth in victim losses across the top states in 2020, and the highest growth in the number of victims. Victim losses increased 67% from $8.7 million in 2019 to $14.5 million in 2020, New York had the highest growth in the number of victims of 42% to 870 during 2020.

Although the amount of victim losses was relatively high in California during 2020, losses declined from the prior year. Yet, California continued to have the highest victim losses across the top states, even as its losses fell by 39%, from $56.3 million in 2019 to $34.4 million in 2020. Further, the number of victims in California continued to be the highest among the top states growing by 5% to 2,493 during 2020.

In Ohio, losses from this online scam fell 41%, from $6.1 million in 2019 to $3.6 million in 2020. The number of victims, however, increased by 38% to 269, the second-highest victim growth rate after New York.

Illinois was the only state to have a decline in the number of victims across the top states. Its victim numbers fell 5% during 2020 to 269. Victim losses in Ohio, however, grew 38%, from $3.2 million in 2019 to $4.4 million in 2020.

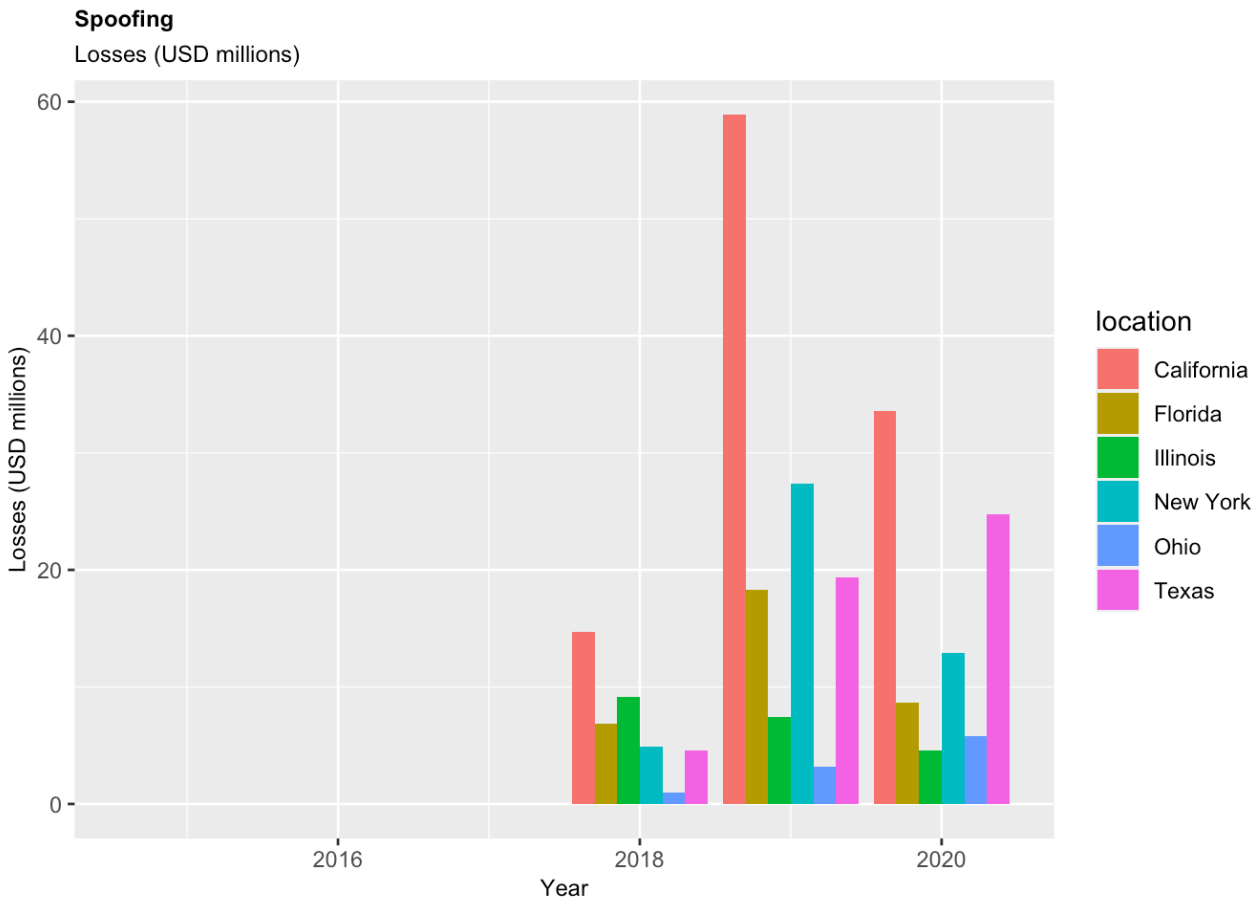
In terms of population-adjusted loss rates, Florida had the highest rate of $1.4 million of victim losses per one million in population. California, Texas, and New York followed Florida with $873,000, $786,000, and $752,000, respectively.

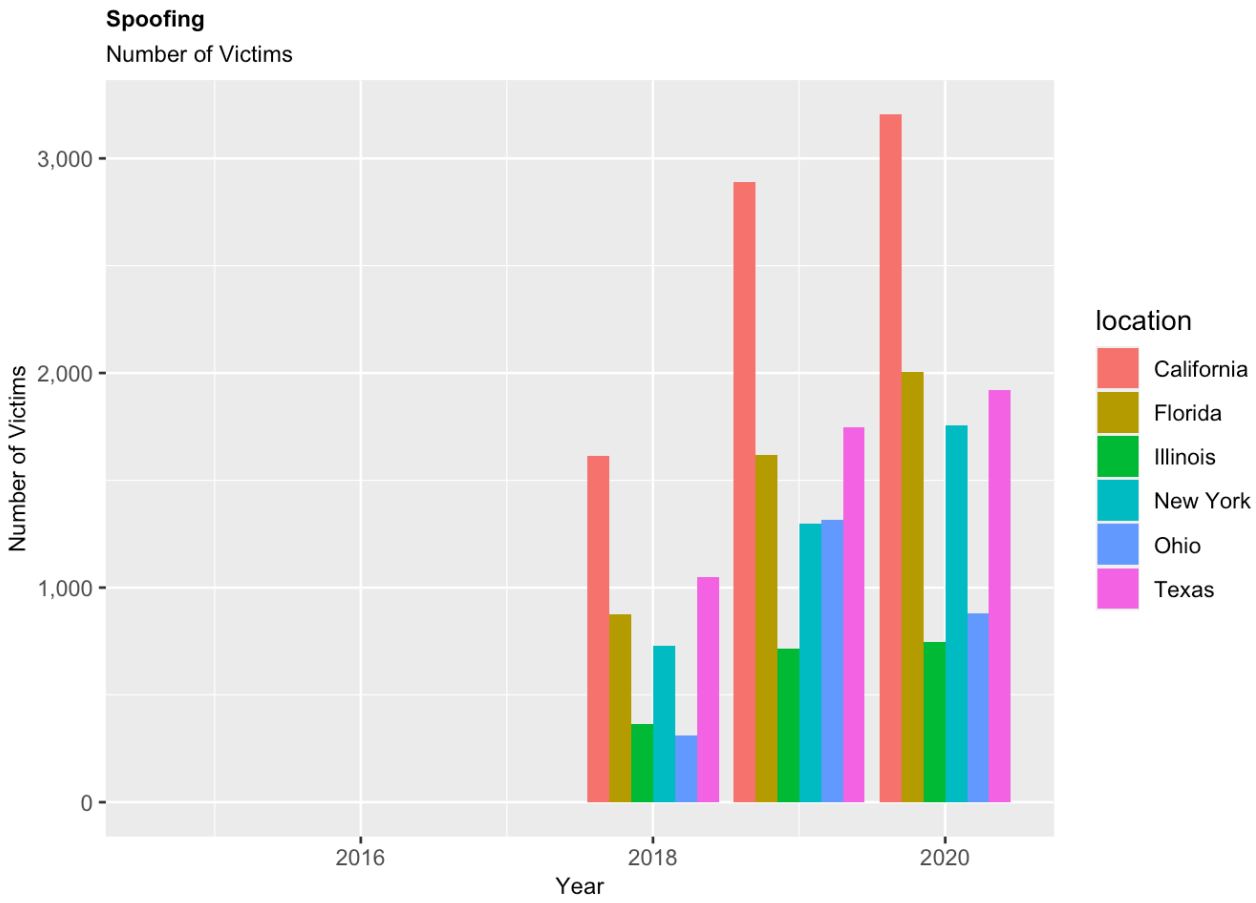


Overall, victim losses from Real Estate/Rental online crime grew most in Texas and Florida during 2020 across the top states while the number of victims in these states grew at much slower rates implying scammers were getting more from each victim on average. Although California continued to have the highest level of monetary losses in 2020, Florida's losses per capita were the highest among the top states.

Spoofing

Spoofing is an online crime used as a tool to commit other kinds of online crimes. Generally, spoofing is done by falsifying email contact information making an email message appear to have been sent by a trustworthy source to fraudulently cause the victim to provide sensitive information. FBI started classifying Spoofing as a separate category in 2018. No previous data are found in earlier FBI reports. Spoofing had the largest percentage increase in victim losses in the top states during 2019 but dropped to fifth in 2020.


Spoofing
Losses (USD millions)
60
40
20
0
Losses (USD millions)
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas


Spoofing
Number of Victims
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
Number of Victims
2016
2018
2020
Year
location
California
Florida
Illinois
New York
Ohio
Texas

Unlike 2019, 2020 victim losses to Spoofing declined in California, Florida, Illinois, and New York. Although California continued to have the highest losses to Spoofing in 2020 across the top states, its losses declined from the previous year by 43% from $58.9 million in 2019 to $33.6 million in 2020. In New York and Florida, Spoofing losses declined 53% each during 2020, from $27.3 million to $12.9 million, and $18.3 million to $8.7 million, respectively. Additionally, Illinois victim losses fell 38% from $7.4 million in 2019 to $4.6 million in 2020.

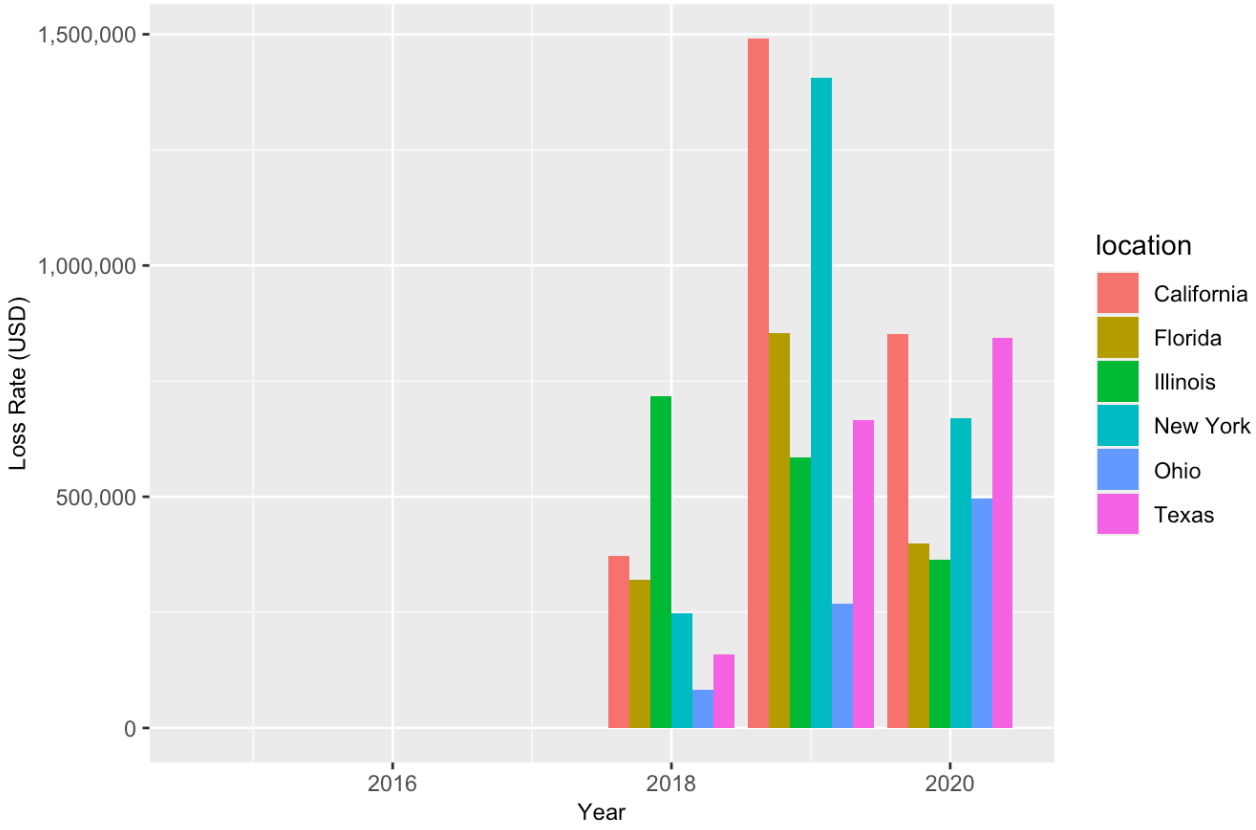
In Ohio, victim losses jumped 84% from $3.2 million in 2019 to $5.8 million in 2020. Its ratio of victim losses from this crime to all online losses, although small, tripled from 1% to 3%. In Texas, losses increased from $19.3 million to $24.8 million but its ratio of losses from this crime to all online crime fell slightly from 9% in 2019 to 8%.

Similarly, California experienced a decline in its ratio of losses from Spoofing to its total losses in 2020, from 10% in 2019 to 5%. In Florida, the ratio also declined during 2020, from 6% to 3%, and in New York from 14% to 3%.

In 2020, California (3,204 victims), Florida (2,003), Texas (1,921), and New York (1,756) had the highest number of victims across the top states. In terms of growth in the number of victims from 2019 to 2020, New York had the highest growth rate of 35%, up from 1,299 victims in 2019 to 1,756, and Florida, the second highest, with an 24% increase from 1,619 to 2,003.

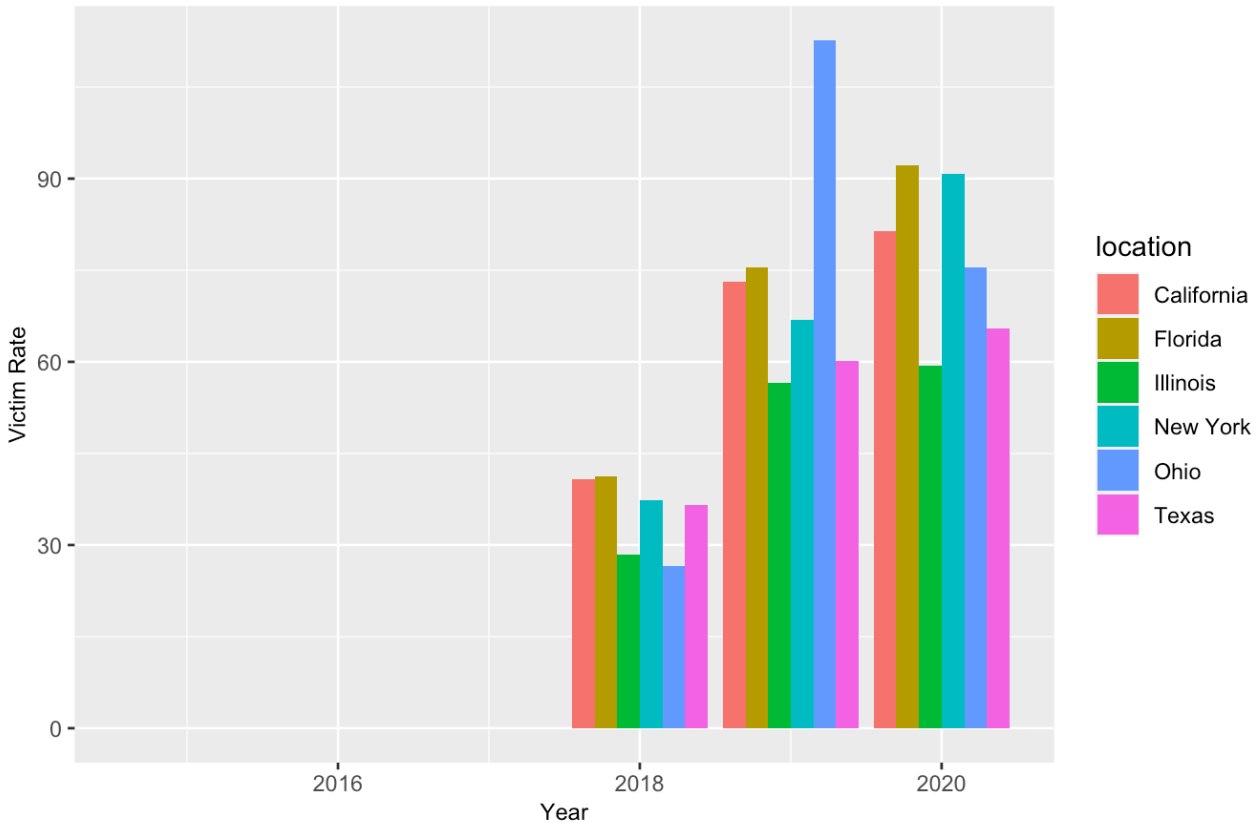
Spoofing

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Spoofing

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



In terms of victim losses adjusted for population, California, Texas, and New York had the highest victim loss rates among the six top states in 2020. California had a loss rate of $852,000 per one million in population, the highest among the six top states in 2020 and yet a large decline from 2019 that had $1.5 million in losses. Texas followed closely with a 2020 loss rate of $844,000 per one million in population increasing from $666,000 in 2019. Ohio had the highest growth in the loss rate of all the six top states during 2020 with $497,000 per one million in population, up from $270,000 in 2019.

In New York, the 2020 loss rate declined from $1.4 million per one million in population in 2019 to $659,000 per million in 2020. Despite the decrease in 2020, New York still had the third highest loss rate among the top states. Florida and Illinois also had declines in their 2020 loss rates compared to the previous year, with Florida having the largest decline of 53% from $854,000 per million in 2019 to $400,000 in 2020.

Victim rates for 2020 ranged from 59 to 92 victims per one million in population among the top states. Five of the six top states had increases of victim rates in 2020 while the rate for Ohio declined. Florida and New York had the highest 2020 victim rates of 92 and 91 per million, respectively. California had the next highest rate of 81 and Illinois the lowest victim rate of 59.

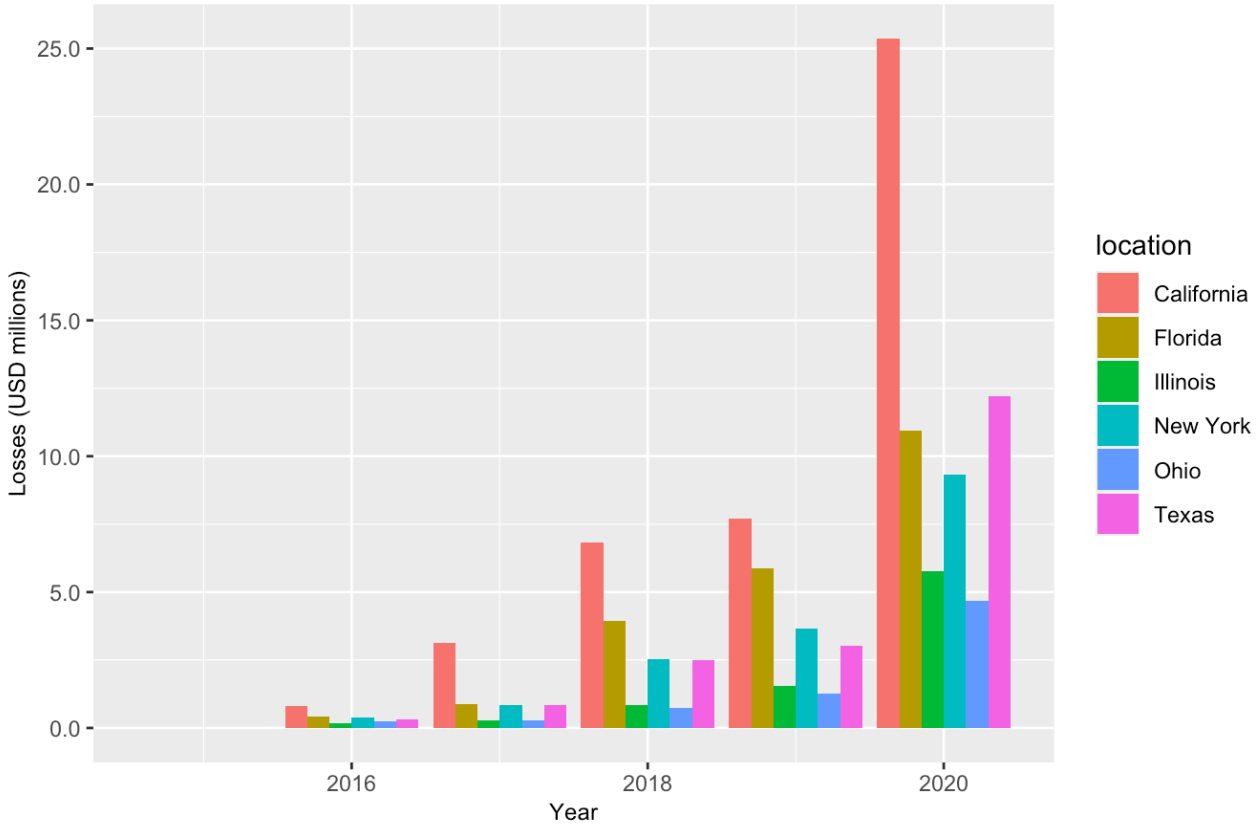
Overall, victim losses from Spoofing decreased significantly in four of the six states in 2020, especially in Florida and New York, and higher losses occurred in Ohio and Texas. In contrast, the number of victims increased in five of the six top states, implying overall that Spoofing is more common but the average victim loss per person is falling.

Tech Support fraud

Tech Support fraud takes place when a fraudster pretends to be an organization's representative offering customer, technical, or security support to defraud an online victim. Usually, the fraudster will require the victim to pay for services or software needed to resolve a technical issue but then fail to deliver as promised. In 2020, losses to this scheme increased globally, making this crime one of the ten top crimes according to the FBI.[7]

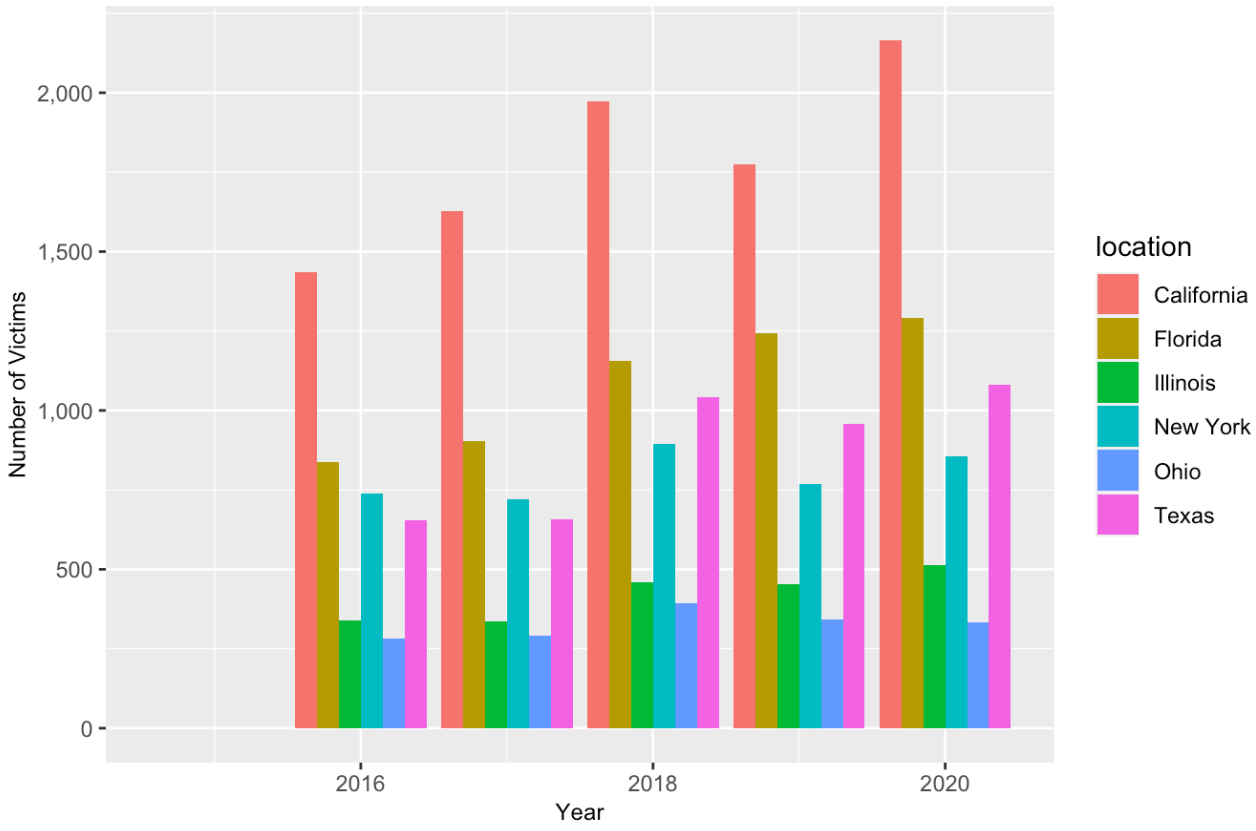
Tech Support

Losses (USD millions)



Tech Support

Number of Victims



The ratio of victim losses from Tech Support fraud to all online crime losses increased in all six top states in 2020 compared to the previous year. For 2020, the ratio ranged between 2% and 4% across the top states.

Losses to Tech Support scams increased significantly in the top states during 2020, with Texas having the highest growth (303%) and Florida the lowest (86%). California had the highest amount of victim losses and the highest number of victims among the top states. Losses increased in California 229% from $7.7 million in 2019 to $25.4 million in 2020, while the number of victims increased by 22% to 2,164.

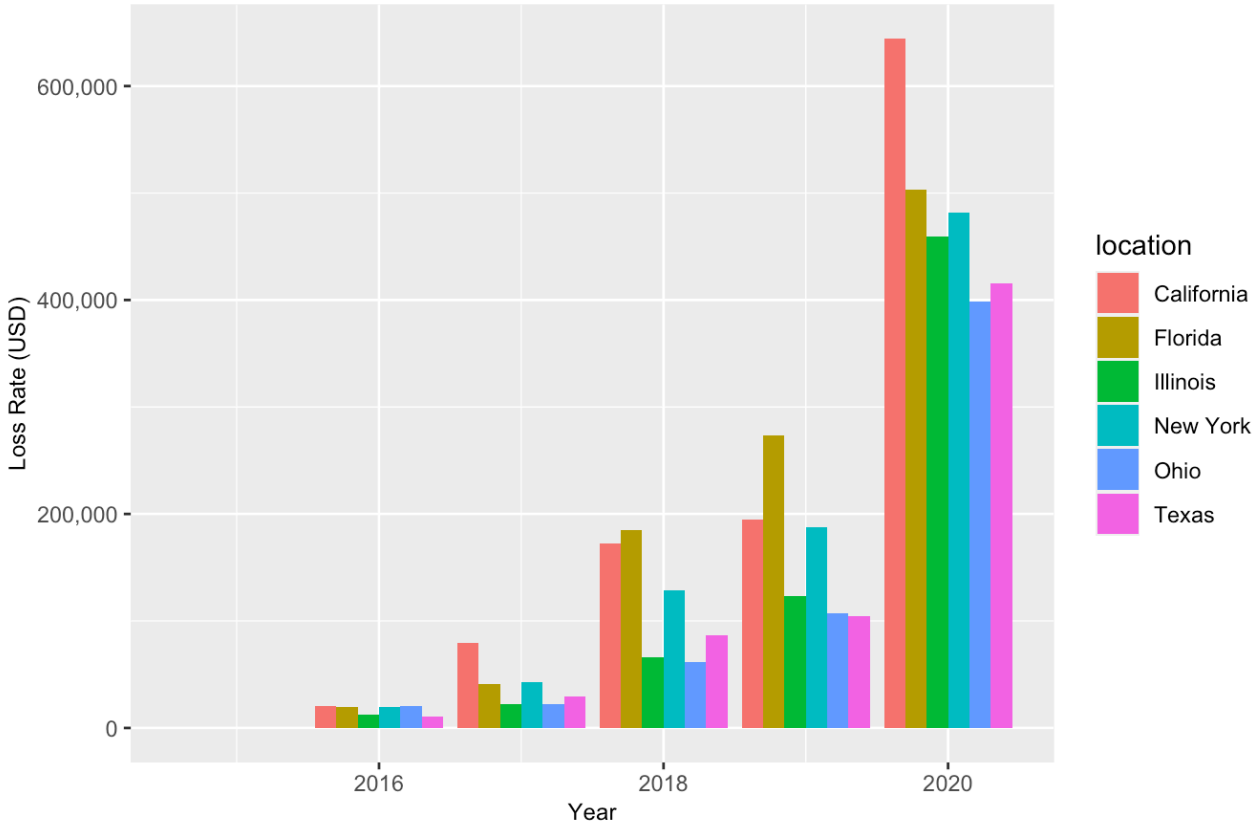
In contrast to California, Florida had the lowest 2020 growth in losses and second lowest growth of the number of victims. Victim losses, however, increased 86%, from $5.9 million to $10.9 million. Florida was third highest among the top states for the amount of victim losses in 2020 after California and Texas. Moreover, Florida had the second-highest number of victims after California.

Texas had the highest growth rate of losses during 2020, increasing 303% from $3.0 million in 2019 to $12.2 million. The number of victims in Texas increased by 13% as it did in Illinois. Illinois, also had a high growth rate for losses during 2020, increasing 271% from $1.6 million to $5.8 million.

Ohio had the second-highest growth rate of victim losses during 2020 of 273%, increasing from $1.2 million in 2019 to $4.7 million. Yet, Ohio was the only top state with a decline in the number of victims of 2% to 334. Moreover, New York experienced a large increase in losses of 156% from $3.6 million to $9.3 million, and an increase in the number of victims of 12% to 856.

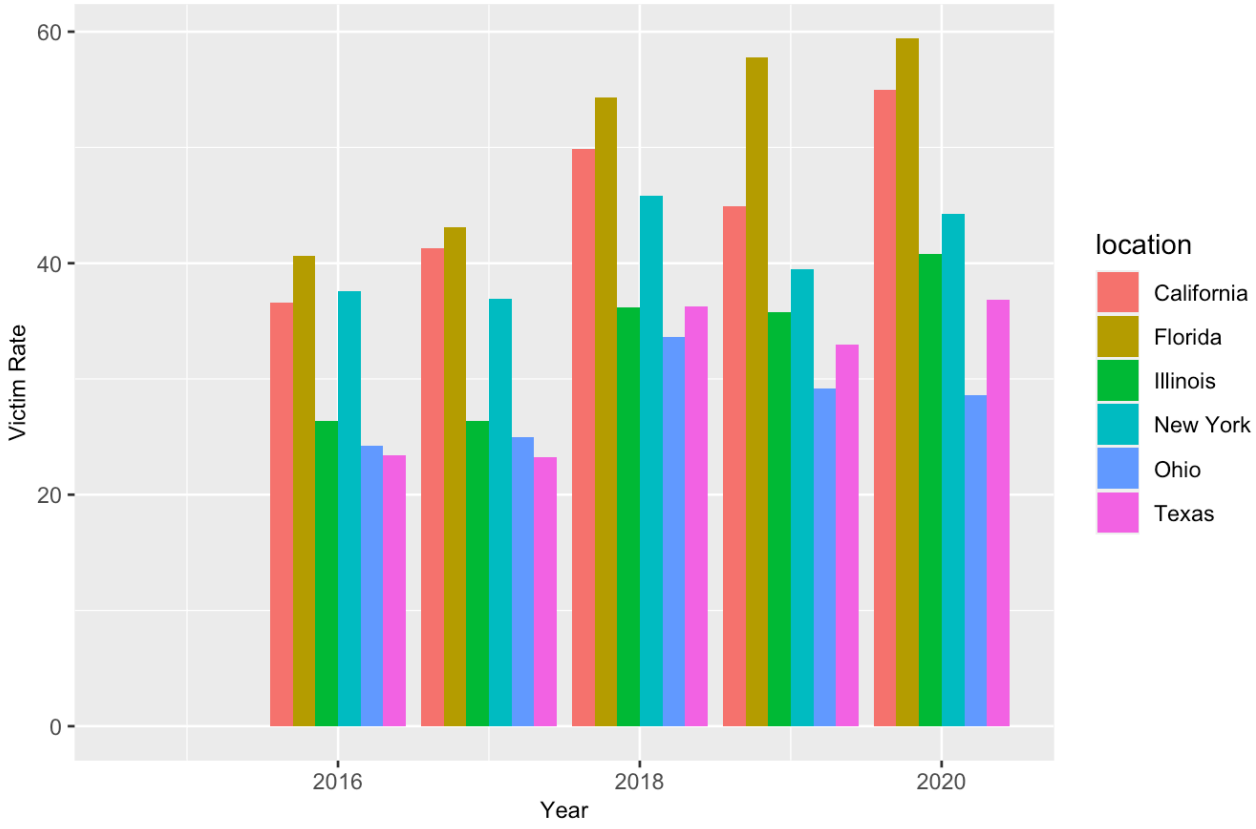
Tech Support

Loss Rate (USD) per 1 Million Population



Tech Support

Victim Rate per 1 Million Population



Population-adjusted loss rates and victim rates show California had the highest victim losses per capita among the top states of $644,000 per one million in population and the second-highest victim rate of 55.0. Florida, the second-highest in per capita losses, had a loss rate of $503,000 and it had the highest victim rate of 59.4.

New York and Illinois, experienced loss rates of $482,000 and $459,000, respectively, similar to Florida. Their victim rates were 44.3 and 40.8, respectively. The loss rate for Texas was $415,000 and its victim rate was 36.8 per million. Further, Ohio had the lowest loss rate and victim rate among the top states of $399,000 and 28.6 per million.

Overall, online Tech Support fraud increased significantly on average during 2020 possibly due to the Covid-19 pandemic with higher online activity from home. Fraudsters might have taken advantage of victims with technical problems on their computers at home. Among the top states, California had the highest victim losses per capita while Florida had the highest number of victims per capita. California, Illinois, Ohio, and Texas experienced growth in victim losses of over 200% each during 2020, while Florida had a relatively low growth rate of 86%.

Conclusion

This report is based on FBI internet crime data from 2015 through 2020. FBI collects data from victims reporting alleged internet crimes. Almost certainly, actual internet crime is larger than what is reported to the FBI.

Although we analyze data from 2015 through 2020, we emphasize 2019 to 2020 changes. Moreover, we discuss crimes in six top states. This year we identify California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, and Texas. These states had the largest 2020 online fraud victim losses or number of victims.

In 2020, California still had the largest online fraud victim losses and number of victims. For victim losses, New York, Texas, Florida, Ohio, and Illinois followed in order. After California, Florida, Texas, New York , Illinois, and Ohio followed in order for the number of victims. During 2020, victim losses continued to grow overall compared to the previous year while the number of victims increased sharply. Victim losses adjusted for population show that New York had the highest per capita victim losses than the other five states. Florida had the largest population-adjusted victim rate.

Overall, although growth in total BEC/EAC victim losses slowed from $1.8 billion in 2019 to $1.9 billion in 2020, this scam continued to be the top internet crime in 2020. Following BEC/EAC were Confidence Fraud/Romance ($600 million) and Investment fraud ($336 million). BEC/EAC losses declined in California (-17%) and Ohio (-$46%) while increasing in Florida (20%), Illinois (36%), Texas (10%), and, especially, in New York (139%).

Among the six top states, BEC/EAC accounted for about one-third to three-quarters of all victim losses in 2020 and was the top online crime in all these states. Confidence Fraud/Romance was the second-largest online crime during 2020 in California, Illinois, New York, and Texas. In Florida and Ohio, it was third-highest after Identity Theft in Florida and Non-Payment/Non-Delivery in Ohio. In California, Illinois, New York, and Texas, the third-largest victim losses for 2020 arose from Investment scams in California, Illinois, and New York, and Personal Data Breach in Texas.

Since 2015, the overall trend in the six top states was rapid growth in victim losses. For instance, New York experienced growth since 2015 of 616% and, in Ohio, victim losses grew 1,014%. Florida experienced an increase of 212%. Further, the number of victims since 2015 also grew in all the top states but at a slower pace.

Information in this report should be useful to the public, law enforcement agencies, other government agencies, and policymakers. Increasing public awareness may be the most effective way of mitigating online crime since much most likely originates outside the United States, beyond the reach of U.S. law enforcement. Foreign sources of internet crimes on U.S. residents and businesses make it challenging whether internet crime levels can be reduced as the public becomes more connected and dependent on the internet.

Appendix

Descriptions of Internet Crime Types

The glossary terms herein are taken from FBI's 2020 Internet Crime Report.

Advanced Fee: An individual pays money to someone in anticipation of receiving something of greater value in return, but instead, receives significantly less than expected or nothing.

Business Email Compromise/Email Account Compromise: BEC is a scam targeting businesses (not individuals) working with foreign suppliers and/or businesses regularly performing wire transfer payments. EAC is a similar scam which targets individuals. These sophisticated scams are carried out by fraudsters compromising email accounts through social engineering or computer intrusion techniques to conduct unauthorized transfer of funds.

Charity: Perpetrators set up false charities, usually following natural disasters, and profit from individuals who believe they are making donations to legitimate charitable organizations.

Civil Matter: Civil litigation generally includes all disputes formally submitted to a court, about any subject in which one party is claimed to have committed a wrong but not a crime. In general, this is the legal process most people think of when the word "lawsuit" is used.

Confidence/Romance Fraud: An individual believes they are in a relationship (family, friendly, or romantic) and are tricked into sending money, personal and financial information, or items of value to the perpetrator or to launder money or items to assist the perpetrator. This includes the Grandparent's Scheme and any scheme in which the perpetrator preys on the complainant's "heartstrings".

Corporate Data Breach: A leak or spill of business data that is released from a secure location to an untrusted environment. It may also refer to a data breach within a corporation or business where sensitive, protected, or confidential data is copied, transmitted, viewed, stolen, or used by an individual unauthorized to do so.

Credit Card Fraud: Credit card fraud is a wide-ranging term for theft and fraud committed using a credit card or any similar payment mechanism (ACH. EFT, recurring charge, etc.) as a fraudulent source of funds in a transaction.

Crimes Against Children: Anything related to the exploitation of children, including child abuse.

Denial of Service/TDoS: A Denial of Service (DoS) attack floods a network/system, or a Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) floods a voice service with multiple requests, slowing down or interrupting service.

Employment: An individual believes they are legitimately employed and loses money, or launders money/items during the course of their employment.

Extortion: Unlawful extraction of money or property through intimidation or undue exercise of authority. It may include threats of physical harm, criminal prosecution, or public exposure.

Gambling: Online gambling, also known as Internet gambling and iGambling, is a general term for gambling using the Internet.

Government Impersonation: A government official is impersonated in an attempt to collect money.

Hacktivist: A computer hacker whose activity is aimed at promoting a social or political cause.

Harassment/Threats of Violence: Harassment occurs when a perpetrator uses false accusations or statements of fact to intimidate a victim. Threats of Violence refers to an expression of an intention to inflict pain, injury, or punishment, which does not refer to the requirement of payment.

Health Care Related: A scheme attempting to defraud private or government health care programs which usually involving health care providers, companies, or individuals. Schemes may include offers for fake insurance cards, health insurance marketplace assistance, stolen health information, or various other scams and/or any scheme involving medications, supplements, weight loss products, or diversion/pill mill practices. These scams are often initiated through spam email, Internet advertisements, links in forums/social media, and fraudulent websites.

IPR/Copyright and Counterfeit: The illegal theft and use of others' ideas, inventions, and creative expressions – what is called intellectual property – everything from trade secrets and proprietary products and parts to movies, music, and software.

Identity Theft: Someone steals and uses personal identifying information, like a name or Social Security number, without permission to commit fraud or other crimes and/or (Account Takeover) a fraudster obtains account information to perpetrate fraud on existing accounts.

Investment: Deceptive practice that induces investors to make purchases on the basis of false information. These scams usually offer the victims large returns with minimal risk. (Retirement, 401K, Ponzi, Pyramid, etc.). Lottery/Sweepstakes/Inheritance: An Individual is contacted about winning a lottery or sweepstakes they never entered, or to collect on an inheritance from an unknown relative.

Malware/Scareware/Virus: Software or code intended to damage, disable, or capable of copying itself onto a computer and/or computer systems to have a detrimental effect or destroy data.

Misrepresentation: Merchandise or services were purchased or contracted by individuals online for which the purchasers provided payment. The goods or services received were of a measurably lesser quality or quantity than was described by the seller.

Non-Payment/Non-Delivery: In non-payment situations, goods and services are shipped, but payment is never rendered. In non-delivery situations, payment is sent, but goods and services are never received.

Overpayment: An individual is sent a payment/commission and is instructed to keep a portion of the payment and send the remainder to another individual or business.

Personal Data Breach: A leak/spill of personal data which is released from a secure location to an untrusted environment. Also, a security incident in which an individual's sensitive, protected, or confidential data is copied, transmitted, viewed, stolen, or used by an unauthorized individual.

Phishing/Vishing/Smishing/Pharming: The use of unsolicited email, text messages, and telephone calls purportedly from a legitimate company requesting personal, financial, and/or login credentials.

Ransomware: A type of malicious software designed to block access to a computer system until money is paid. Re-shipping: Individuals receive packages at their residence and subsequently repackage the merchandise for shipment, usually abroad.

Real Estate/Rental: Loss of funds from a real estate investment or fraud involving rental or timeshare property. Spoofing: Contact information (phone number, email, and website) is deliberately falsified to mislead and appear to be from a legitimate source. For example, spoofed phone numbers making mass robocalls; spoofed emails sending mass spam; forged websites used to mislead and gather personal information. Often used in connection with other crime types.

Social Media: A complaint alleging the use of social networking or social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, chat rooms, etc.) as a vector for fraud. Social Media does not include dating sites.

Tech Support: Subject posing as technical or customer support/service.

Terrorism: Violent acts intended to create fear that are perpetrated for a religious, political, or ideological goal and deliberately target or disregard the safety of non-combatants.

Virtual Currency: A complaint mentioning a form of virtual cryptocurrency, such as Bitcoin, Litecoin, or Potcoin.

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