

Core Development Work Probation Respondent Discussion Guide

Thank you for taking time to speak with me today. During our call, I would like to learn about your experience completing the 2014 APS. The survey has been standardized because it is a national collection; so some of the content and terminology might not match your agency's definitions and practices. It is really helpful to hear how respondents interpret and apply the study definitions and instructions to their real-life situations. That way, we can better understand the answers we receive and identify ways to improve the survey.

There are a few specific sections of the survey that I would like to discuss with you. We can go through the questionnaire page by page, and I'll raise the issues that I have. Basically, I would like you to think back to when you were answering the questions and let me know how you interpreted the questions, any issues that came up as you tried to "fit" your data into the survey categories, whether you were able to answer questions based on your own knowledge or if you used data from a tracking system, etc. If you would like to talk about any issues that I don't raise, please let me know.

The first question that I have on my list is Question 3. Should we begin with that question or is there anything on the cover page or on the first two questions that you would like to talk about?

Q3. ...discharged from supervision for the following reasons –

a. Completions

- Can you tell me what types of populations – using the labels that your agency uses – you included in this category?
- Would you be able to sub-divide the number of completions into the two categories of early terminations (early positive discharge) and expirations? How would you define early terminations and expirations?
 - *CAPSA definition of "Early terminations" or "early positive discharge"- A discharge prior to the scheduled expiration of a sentence granted in response to the satisfaction of conditions or earned time credits.*
 - *Definition of "Expirations"- A discharge according to the scheduled expiration of a sentence granted in response to the satisfaction of conditions of supervision (possibly with some financial conditions remaining).*

b3. Incarcerated, to receive treatment [*consider eliminating from survey*]

- What types of cases did you include in the category: discharged by incarceration to receive treatment?

b4. Other

- Take a look at Question 3, item b4. There is an instruction to the right that refers to “probationers incarcerated pending a revocation, trial, sentencing, or others.” What types of cases are in this category? [*Shouldn't they only be discharged after actual revocation or sentencing?*]

c. Absconder

d. Warrant or detainer

- How did you come up with your answers to these items? What types of cases did you include in each category?
- How are discharges for being an absconder different from probationers discharged to a warrant or detainer?

e. Transferred to another probation agency

- Can you tell me more about the probationers in this category? [*How can a probationer be discharged by being transferred to another agency? Even with inter-state compact agreements, the case is still technically under the jurisdiction of the original court. It could be considered inactive by the originating jurisdiction but not discharged.*]

g. Other [*consider eliminating from survey*]

- What other types of discharges did you report? How did you decide whether to put them into: other completions, unsatisfactory, and other?

How confident are you that your answers included everyone that they were supposed to include? Exclude everyone who should not be counted? Tell me more about why you're that confident. What other populations are supervised by your agency? Did you include them in any survey category? Why not – what is different about them?

Next, let's look at Question 4.

Q4. On December 31st, what was your agency's adult probation population?

- What types of populations did you include in your agency's yearend count?
- Did you (would you) include juveniles sentenced in an adult court?
- When you reported the number of active and the number of inactive, how did you define those two groups? (Does "active" include absconders, low-risk, those in residential placements that are/are not still under their jurisdiction?) Did you wonder about if, or how, you should report on any individuals?
- How did you deal with persons not fully adjudicated (pretrial) and with those that are unsupervised? How would you define "unsupervised"?
- Did you report the number that are in your custody or the number that are supervised by your jurisdiction?
- Did you base your answers on information that you already had in your head or did you talk with others or refer to a tracking system?
- How confident are you that your answers included everyone that they were supposed to include? Exclude everyone who should not be counted? Tell me more about why you're that confident.
- What other populations are supervised by your agency? Did you include them in any survey category? Why not – what is different about them?
- If asked, could you break-out the yearend count by the following categories?
 - Active vs. inactive
 - Custody vs. jurisdiction
 - Felon vs. misdemeanor populations

If you were able to provide data for the yearend count on the number of POPULATION TYPE, would you be able to provide the data for the rest of the survey for just these POPULATION TYPE probationers?

Before we move on to the next page, are there any other issues that you would like to talk about on Question 1 through 4?

Q5. ...count of individuals or cases?

- When you answered this question on the survey, how did you define "cases"? Did you include instances where the person was under supervision for two or more distinct sentences? Under supervision for two or more offenses as part of the same sentence? Something else?
- You provide data at the case level. Can you explain why you report cases and not individuals? Could your agency provide data at the individual level?
- Can you agency provide an estimate of the number of people with multiple cases? Can you provide an estimate of the average number of cases per individual?

Unless you have comments on Questions 6 through 8, I'll move on to Question 9.

Q9. ...most serious offense –

In answering Question 9, how did you determine which offenses are more serious than others?
Can we obtain a copy of the hierarchy?

g. Other traffic offense [*consider eliminating from survey*]

- What types of traffic offenses, other than DWI or DUI, are considered the most serious offense that could lead to someone getting sentenced to community supervision?

If you're ready, I'd like to look at Question 14 next.

Q14. ...placed on probation through –

d. Suspended imposition of a sentence (persons not fully adjudicated, e.g., probation before verdict)

- What types of probationers did you include in this category? How did you define this group (e.g., persons on pretrial, probationers being supervised while on diversion)?
- Did you include these probationers in the yearend count?

Next, I'd like to talk about Question 15.

Q15. ...probationers supervised by your agency had a status of –

- a. Active
- d. Inactive

- How did you define an "active" probationer? How did you define an "inactive" probationer? What types of probationers are included or excluded?
- Would you be able to provide data on the number of individuals in the yearend count who are on "active" supervision status? Would you be able to provide data on the number of individuals in the yearend count who are on "inactive" supervision status?

- c. Only financial conditions remaining
 - Did these probationers get included in the yearend total? Why not?
 - Did these probationers get included in the number discharged by completion?
- e. Absconders
- f. Warrant status
 - How did you decide whether to report probationers as absconders or as discharged to a warrant or detainer? What is the difference from your agency's perspective?
 - Were these probationers included in the numbers reported as discharged for being an absconder or on warrant status? If not, would they still be included in the yearend population?
- g. Supervised out of jurisdiction
 - What types of probationers did you include in this category?
 - Did this category include interstate compact cases that were reported in Question 10?

Next, let's look at **Question 16**.

Q16. ...probationers who had their location tracked through a Global Positioning System (GPS)

- Did this category include defendants who had a suspended imposition of a sentence (pretrial)?
- Tell me more about the probationers you thought about or counted for this question.
- What other types of electronic monitoring does your agency use? Did you include any of those probationers in this question? Why/Why not?

Respondent comments: That was the last issue that I wanted to raise.

- Is there anything else that you've noted in the questionnaire that might affect how you categorized or reported on any population that you supervise?

