

Appendix C: Respondent Communication Materials

C1. Initial introduction email (Sent from BJS)

Dear [POC name],

I am writing to invite you to participate in the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Jail Survey Cognitive Test. BJS, with assistance from our data collection partner RTI International, is testing six new survey questions for its jail data collections. Your participation is completely voluntary; however, your feedback is important to BJS and will greatly help us improve the 2019 Census of Jails and future Annual Survey of Jails.

The cognitive test consists of two activities. The first is to take a short online survey with the new items. The second is to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with RTI staff to discuss your responses and experience taking the survey. The call will last about 60 minutes and can be scheduled at a time and date that works best for you. The survey and follow-up interview will help BJS identify wording issues or technical difficulties with the new questions.

BJS will not release information collected from the cognitive test. The results will be used solely to identify potential issues with question wording.

If you are willing to participate, please contact Elizabeth Smith at RTI by email (esmith@rti.org) or telephone (919-541-5984) to set up an interview. I have copied her on this message. Elizabeth will follow up with you if we have not heard from you in a few days.

For questions and concerns, please contact our task leader at RTI, Amanda Smith, at acsmith@rti.org or 919-541-6249 or me directly at zhen.zeng@usdoj.gov or 202-598-9955.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Zhen Zeng
Statistician, Bureau of Justice Statistics
Project Manager of Annual Survey of Jails and 2019 Census of Jails

C2. Recruitment follow-up email (Sent from RTI 5 days after initial lead email from BJS)

Dear [POC Name],

Recently, you received an e-mail from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) inviting you to participate in a cognitive test of new survey questions for its jail data collections. I'm following up today to request your participation. The feedback you provide will help make the 2019 Census of Jails and future Annual Survey of Jails more pertinent and easier to answer.

The cognitive test consists of two activities. The first is to take a short online survey that contains the new items. The second is to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with RTI staff to discuss your responses and experience taking the survey. The call will last about one hour and can be scheduled at a time and date that works best for you.

BJS will not publish or release individual jail responses collected for the cognitive test. The results will be used solely to identify potential issues with question wording.

If you are able to participate in this cognitive test, please contact me at esmith@rti.org or 919-541-5984 so I may send you the survey link and schedule a time/date for us to discuss your responses. If you would like to participate, but feel you are not the best person to complete the survey, please send me contact details for the person to contact at your agency. If you have any questions about the cognitive test, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Smith
BJS Jail Survey Cognitive Test Team
RTI International

C3: Interview scheduling call script

Hello, I'm [Name] calling from RTI on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Thank you for participating in the Bureau of Justice Statistics' Jail Survey Cognitive Test. We'd like to set up a time to talk to you about BJS's new jail survey questions. The goal is to better understand any issues with the questions so we can improve our surveys. We will first e-mail you a survey link. After you've completed the survey, we will call you back to ask questions about the difficulty of the questions and the terminology. We anticipate the conversation will last an hour. Is there a time next week that works for you?

[If participant does not answer, leave a voicemail with the information above]

C4. Confirmation e-mail with web link for the survey and instructions for completing form before interview (Sent from RTI no later than 1 day after scheduling interview)

Dear [Participant's name],

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Jail Survey Cognitive Test. We have scheduled your interview on **[MM/DD/YYYY at 00:00 am/pm]** with [INTERVIEWER NAME].

Please complete the survey at the website below by **[INSERT DATE 2 BUSINESS DAYS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED INTERVIEW]**:

[SURVEY LINK]

BJS will not publish or release any of the information collected from this cognitive test. The results will be used solely to identify potential issues with the new questions.

If you have any questions regarding the cognitive test or experience any technical difficulties when completing the form or generating a report of your responses, please contact me at esmith@rti.org or 919-541-5984.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Smith
BJS Jail Survey Cognitive Test Team
RTI International

C5. E-mail to remind respondents to fill out the cognitive test form (Sent from RTI 2 days before appointment, if form has not been completed)

Dear [Participant's name],

You are currently scheduled for an interview on **[MM/DD/YYYY at 00:00 am/pm]** for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Jail Survey Cognitive Test, but we have not yet received the survey form from you. The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete and needs to be completed as soon as possible so we can discuss your experience taking the survey at the scheduled interview.

Please complete the survey at the link below:

[SURVEY LINK]

BJS will not publish or release any of the information collected from this cognitive test. The results will be used solely to identify potential issues with question wording.

If you experience any technical difficulties on the survey website or would like to reschedule the interview, please contact me at esmith@rti.org or 919-541-5984.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Smith
BJS Jail Survey Cognitive Test Team
RTI International

C6. E-mail to remind respondents of the upcoming interview (Sent from RTI 24 hours before appointment)

Dear [Participant's name],

Thanks for completing the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Jail Survey Cognitive Test Form. We would like to remind you about your upcoming interview on **[MM/DD/YYYY at 00:00 am/pm]** with [INTERVIEWER]. We anticipate that the telephone interview will take about an hour.

Please make sure you have a copy of the completed form with you for reference during the interview. The interviewer will discuss some of the questions on the form with you. If you were unable to generate a report of your responses after taking the survey, please let us know so that we may provide a copy for you prior to your interview.

If you would like to reschedule the interview, please contact me at esmith@rti.org or 919-541-5984.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Smith
BJS Jail Survey Cognitive Test Team
RTI International

C7. Thank you e-mail (Sent from RTI no later than 1 day after completing interview)

Dear [Participant's name],

Thank you for participating in Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Jail Survey Cognitive Test. Your feedback is appreciated and will help improve BJS's 2019 Census of Jails and future Annual Survey of Jails.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at esmith@rti.org or 919-541-5984.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Smith
BJS Jail Survey Cognitive Test Team
RTI International

C8. For agencies that respond late to the recruitment request (i.e., e-mail notifying them that the data collection period is closed or the strata are full) (Sent from RTI as needed)

Dear [POC name],

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Bureau of Justice Statistics Jail Survey Cognitive Test. We appreciate your willingness to help us with this task. However, we have reached the sample size limit approved by the Office of Management and Budget, so we will not schedule your interview at this time. Should our needs change, we may be back in touch.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me directly at esmith@rti.org or 919-541-5984.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Smith
BJS Jail Survey Cognitive Test Team
RTI International