

## **B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

### **1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

The NPS covers the entire universe of state and federal prisons, as well as prisons in U.S. territories. A form is sent to the research section of each state department of corrections and the Federal BOP and is usually completed by a statistician or research analyst. NPS does not include questions on individual private prisons or local jails, but we do collect aggregate counts of any state or federal prisoners held in these facilities (NPS-1B questions 3-5).

### **2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

Data collection mode is both a paper form sent directly to all state Departments of Correction and the Bureau of Prisons and a web option that resembles the form. Each jurisdiction has an individual password to enter the website and can view its own data, but no one else's. The website will be hosted by Abt Associates, our data collection agent, and is located on a secure server. In 2016, seven jurisdictions FAXed their completed data forms to BJS' data collection agent. The remaining jurisdictions submitted their data via the secure website.

The NPS-1B or NPS-1B(T) forms for collection of data in 2017, 2018, and 2019 will be sent out on December 15th of the reference year to the 56 jurisdictions, along with a cover letter from BJS explaining the importance of the survey (Appendices 2, 3, 7). Respondents will be asked to submit the data by the due date on the form (the last business day of February) via the secure online website (screenshots from the 2016 collection in Appendix 4), FAX, or mail. BJS's data collection agent (Abt Associates) will receive and check the submitted survey data. If data are not received by the due date, Abt Associates will send a reminder email asking jurisdictions to submit their data as soon as possible (Appendix 5).

Jurisdictions are contacted via email approximately 10 weeks prior to publication of the annual report with eight BJS tabulations of the NPS data (Appendix 6). Jurisdictions are asked to verify only their own statistics, and never asked to provide additional information or make any calculations. The purpose of this verification is simply to allow jurisdictions to understand how their data will be presented to the public, and to communicate with BJS regarding any concerns they may have.

### **3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates**

During the past three years of NPS data collection, BJS has had difficulty with several jurisdictions responding to NPS and other Corrections Unit surveys, including the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP; OMB #1121-0065) and Capital Punishment (OMB #1121-0030). Despite repeated requests for data from the NPS

program manager and the acting director of BJS, Nevada did not submit data for calendar years 2013 or 2015. Alaska did not provide data for calendar year 2014, and Oregon refused participation in 2015. BJS used official department of corrections (DOC) reports to impute sex-specific prison custody and jurisdiction population counts, as well as numbers of admissions and releases for these years. The current acting director of BJS has written letters to the DOC directors in these states to encourage participation for calendar year 2016. Alaska and Nevada have submitted data for the 2016 collection, although Oregon has not to date.

4. Final Testing of Procedures

There are two changes to the NPS-1B questions at this time: disaggregating the counts of non-citizen prisoners by sentence length, and measuring the source of these data. Specifically, BJS proposes to ask the following questions:

1. On December 31, 2017, how many inmates in your custody who were not citizens of the United States (Include inmates held in private facilities)-----

	Males	Females
Had a sentence of more than 1 year		
Had a sentence of 1 year or less		
Were unsentenced		
TOTAL		

2. How do you obtain data on inmates who are not citizens of the United States (please check all that apply):
  - Inmate self-report
  - Law enforcement or court documents accompanying inmate upon admission to prison
  - Verification of citizenship status using an external data source

Early stage scoping interviews conducted with 18 states under BJS's generic clearance (OMB #0607-0725) for BJS' prison facility census collection included questions on whether they obtained citizenship status for inmates, and the source of these data. All 18 confirmed that they had a citizenship indicator on their offender management software for each prisoner, although the majority said that the information was based on self-report at admission to prison, and there was no subsequent verification with external sources. Informal discussions with 6 current NPS data providers indicated that all would be able to provide the disaggregation of non-citizen prisoners by sentence length, and that doing so would require an additional 30 minutes of burden during the first year of data collection (2017 data, collected during 2018) to alter their data extraction programs.

In addition, BJS has reworded instructions to three questions to provide respondents with more clarification on how to report data. No changes have been made to the NPS-1B(T) form. The following table summarizes the instructional changes on the NPS-1B form:

Table 1. Changes to NPS-1B form for collection of 2017-2019 data

<b>NPS-1B question associated with change</b>	<b>Type of change</b>	<b>Old wording</b>	<b>Proposed new wording</b>
7	Wording of question	<b>Between January 1, 201Y and December 31, 201Y, how many sentenced inmates under your jurisdiction were admitted as ---</b>	<b>Between January 1, 201Y and December 31, 201Y, how many inmates sentenced to more than 1 year under your jurisdiction were admitted as ---</b>
7a	Wording of instruction	<b>New court commitments</b> (Include probation violators entering prison on the probated sentence)	<b>New court commitments</b> (Include probation violators entering prison on probated sentence, split sentences, and shock probation)
7c	Wording of instruction	<b>Other conditional release violators</b> (Include returns from mandatory release other than parole and shock probation)	<b>Other conditional release violators</b> (Include returns from mandatory release other than parole)
8	Wording of question	<b>Between January 1, 201Y and December 31, 201Y, how many sentenced inmates released from your jurisdiction were----</b>	<b>Between January 1, 201Y and December 31, 201Y, how many inmates sentenced to more than 1 year under your jurisdiction were released as ----</b>
10	Addition of instruction	<b>On December 31, 2016, what was the capacity of your prison system?</b>	<b>On December 31, 2017, what was the capacity of your prison system?</b> (Exclude capacity of private facilities)
11	Addition of	<b>On December 31, 201Y,</b>	<b>On December 31, 201Y,</b>

	instruction	<b>how many inmates in your custody were under age 18?</b>	<b>how many inmates in your custody were under age 18? (Include inmates held in private facilities)</b>
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BJS and its data collection agent will test the web instrument extensively prior to each data collection year to ensure ease of use.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

The Correction Statistics Unit at BJS is responsible for the overall design and management of the activities described in this submission, including fielding of the survey, data cleaning, and data analysis. BJS contacts include:

Elizabeth Ann Carson  
 Corrections Statistics Unit  
 Bureau of Justice Statistics  
 U.S. Department of Justice  
 810 Seventh St, NW  
 Washington, DC 20531  
 (202) 616-3496

Gerard Ramker  
 Deputy Director  
 Bureau of Justice Statistics  
 U.S. Department of Justice  
 810 Seventh St, NW  
 Washington, DC 20531  
 (202) 307-0765