

YEAR 4  
2020–2021

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*IMPLEMENTING THE PRISON  
RAPE ELIMINATION ACT  
(PREA) OF 2003  
NATIONAL INMATE  
SURVEY (NIS)  
FOR PRISONS*

Under the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003, Congress mandated that the National Inmate Survey (NIS) be conducted each year. RTI International (RTI) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) successfully completed the NIS in 147 prisons in Year 1 (2007), 166 prisons in Year 2 (2008–2009) and 233 prisons in Year 3 (2011–2012). BJS and RTI are now conducting Year 4 of the NIS for Prisons.

**NATIONAL INMATE SURVEY  
FOR PRISONS**

**How do I get more information?**

*For more information about Year 4 of the NIS for Prisons, please contact:*

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**NATIONAL  
INMATE  
SURVEY  
FOR PRISONS**

**NIS**

CONDUCTED BY  
THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS  
AND RTI INTERNATIONAL



### What is PREA?

PREA (Public Law 108-79) is authorized under Title 42 of the U.S. Code, Section 3732, and serves the following purposes:

- Establishes zero tolerance for sexual victimization within correctional facilities
- Makes prevention of sexual victimization a top priority for correctional systems nationwide
- Develops and implements national standards for detection, prevention, and reduction of sexual victimization in correctional facilities and for enforcement of PREA
- Increases available data, thereby improving management of correctional facilities
- Increases efficiency and effectiveness of federal expenditures

### What does PREA require in terms of data collection?

PREA requires that BJS:

- “carry out, for each calendar year, a comprehensive statistical report and analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape”;
- use “surveys and other statistical studies of current and former inmates”;

- produce a report to Congress that includes “a listing of those institutions... ranked according to the incidence of prison rape in each institution” and a “listing of any prisons... that did not cooperate with the survey”; and
- produce data that can help facilities prevent, detect, and respond to instances of sexual victimization.

### What are the key elements of Year 4 of the NIS for Prisons?

- We will randomly select approximately 245 adult prisons, with at least one prison in each state.
- Within each facility, we will select a random sample of inmates who are 16 years old or older.
- Informed consent will be obtained from all inmates who have been randomly selected to participate in the NIS for Prisons.
- To measure sexual victimization within each facility, we will interview inmates using audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (ACASI) technology, which uses a laptop computer to allow inmates to see the questions on the screen, hear the questions being read through headphones, and answer the questions in complete privacy by touching the computer screen in the appropriate place. Each interview lasts an average of 35 minutes.

- Inmates will be randomly assigned to receive questions about either their experiences with sexual victimization, or their childhood and their activities while incarcerated.
- If approved by the correctional facility, a small snack item (which will need to be consumed during the interview) or a state Department of Corrections (DOC) or Bureau of Prison (BOP) metered envelope will be offered to inmates as an incentive for participation.
- For the first time, the NIS for Prisons will include a short questionnaire to be completed by a representative of each state DOC, BOP or facility personnel.

### What is the next step for the NIS for Prisons?

Well in advance of data collection, RTI staff will begin working with each DOC, the BOP and sampled prisons to schedule and coordinate all activities, as well as minimize the burden of the NIS for Prisons on individual correctional facilities.

### When will the NIS for Prisons occur?

Data collection for Year 4 of the NIS for Prisons will begin in Fall 2020 and will continue into early 2021.