



Appendix C: Recruitment Letter from Director of BJS

U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Washington, D.C. 20531

<Date>

<Full name><Title>

<POC address>

Dear <Title><Last Name>,

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) would like to conduct a pretest of the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails (SILJ) at the <Facility> in the spring of 2020. This pretest will evaluate the survey instrument and procedures for the national survey, which we will conduct in 2022. The SILJ is the only national source of detailed information on the characteristics of jail inmates, including special populations such as drug and alcohol users, mentally ill inmates, parents of minor children, and inmates at different stages of the criminal justice process.

The corrections community, the public, and all levels of government use these critical data to analyze the jail population and to inform policies and practices. The SILJ has been conducted six times since 1972, most recently in 2002. For the 2002 survey and our resulting reports, please visit <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=274>.

We will need your approval to conduct the pretest at your facility. Abt Associates will conduct the pretest on behalf of BJS. Your approval will involve Abt field representatives selecting a sample of 36 inmates and interviewing each of them, using a tablet computer in a secure and private location on-site, over a three-day period. You will be asked to provide a roster of inmates housed in your jail at the time of the data collection to support inmate selection. Staff from BJS and the U.S. Census Bureau may be on-site to observe the interviews and to document any problems with the survey instrument or the process. The U.S. Census Bureau will be the data collection agent for the national survey in 2022.

Each interview will take approximately 60 minutes and will collect information on the inmate's individual characteristics, current offense, detention status, criminal history, family background, prior drug and alcohol use and treatment, medical and mental health history and treatment, and participation in vocational programs and other services provided to inmates while in jail.

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under 34 U.S.C. § 10132. BJS will protect and maintain the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information (PII) it collects to the fullest extent under federal law. BJS, its employees, and its data collection agents will only use the information it collects for statistical or research purposes pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 10134. All PII collected under BJS's authority is protected under the confidentiality provisions of 34 U.S.C. § 10231. Any person who violates these provisions may be punished by a fine up to \$10,000, in

addition to any other penalties imposed by law. Further, per the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015 (6 U.S.C. § 151), federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data. For more information on how BJS and its data collection agents will use and protect the information collected for this study, go to https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/BJS_Data_Protection_Guidelines.pdf.

Before the interview, inmates will be read an informed consent statement specifying that participation in the pretest is voluntary, that respondents may decline to answer any and all questions, and that they may stop their participation at any time. The information collected will be used only to inform revisions to the SILJ instrument and to the informed consent statement. BJS will not publish or release any of the information collected in any statistical reports or data sets.

Next week, we will contact you to confirm participation and to provide additional information. We appreciate your time and continued support on BJS data collections. If you have any questions, please contact Todd Minton of my staff at Todd.Minton@usdoj.gov or (202) 305-9630, or Meg Chapman, Abt Associates Project Director at Meg_Chapman@abtassoc.com or (301) 634-1740.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey H. Anderson
Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics