



**U.S. Department of Justice**

Office of Justice Programs

*Bureau of Justice Statistics*

*Washington, D.C. 20531*

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Robert G. Sivinski  
Office of Statistical and Science Policy  
Office of Management and Budget

**THROUGH:** Melody Braswell  
Department Clearance Officer  
Department of Justice

Jeffrey H. Anderson, Ph.D.  
Director  
Bureau of Justice Statistics

**FROM:** Lynn Langton, Ph.D.  
Chief, Victimization Unit  
Bureau of Justice Statistics

**SUBJECT:** Submission of substantive modification for the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (OMB# 1121-0111)

**DATE:** June 12, 2018

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This memo concerns a substantive modification to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Specifically, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is proposing to increase the minimum age at which respondents are administered questions on sexual orientation and gender identity from 16 to 18 years of age.

After several rounds of cognitive testing and consultation with external researchers from the UCLA Williams Institute and the California Health Interview Survey, as well as members of the OMB Federal Interagency Working Group on Measuring Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, the questions on sexual orientation and gender identity were added to the NCVS through a non-substantive modification request (approved by OMB on 2/26/16) in July of 2016. These measures have been identified in other research as correlates of victimization and identify subgroups of interest to key stakeholders. For example, sexual orientation and gender identity are

recognized in the 2013 reauthorized Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Additionally, the inclusion of these items allows researchers to better understand the relationships between these variables and experiences with criminal victimization. However, less research has specifically explored the relationships between victimization and sexual orientation and gender identity for adolescents or the reliability of these measures for adolescents.

Within six months of approval of the proposed modification, the Census Bureau will stop administering questions on sexual orientation and gender identity to persons ages 16 and 17. BJS is concerned about the sensitivities of asking adolescents about their sexual orientation and gender identity and concerned that reactions to these questions from parents and the adolescents could impact participation in later survey waves. While BJS is monitoring the performance of these items in the field, it is difficult to identify the direct cause of any declines in response rates.

### **Impact**

This proposed modification to the NCVS instrument is expected to have a negligible impact on burden, cost and on victimization estimates. There is no change to the administration of these questions for persons age 18 or older and the questions will continue to be monitored in the field to ensure that they are performing well among adults.

If there are any questions concerning this request, please contact Lynn Langton, Victimization Unit Chief, Bureau of Justice Statistics, at (202) 353-3328 or by email at [lynn.langton@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:lynn.langton@ojp.usdoj.gov).

- Attachment 1. Revised Part A NCVS supporting statement
- Attachment 2. Revised NCVS-1 instrument (OMB# 1121-0111)
- Attachment 3. Revised NCVS-521 (CAPI Self-Study)
- Attachment 4. Revised NCVS-522(I) (Initial Training Guide)
- Attachment 5. Revised NCVS-550 (NCVS Interviewing Manual for Field Representatives)
- Attachment 6. Public comments (FRN, Vol. 83, No. 70)
- Attachment 7. BJS response to public comments