



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Bureau of Justice Statistics

Washington, D.C. 20531

MEMORANDUM

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DATE: January 8, 2024

SUBJECT: BJS request to conduct frame verification outreach for the 2024 Census of Jails (COJ), under the OMB generic clearance agreement (OMB Number 1121-0339).

Introduction

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is planning to conduct the 2024 Census of Jails (COJ, OMB Control Number 1121-0010) starting July 1, 2024. The COJ is BJS's primary administrative data collection dedicated to the study of local jails. Since 1970, BJS has conducted the COJ every 5-6 years to collect data on jail facilities and the inmate populations

they supervise. The COJ provides state-level and national statistics on the number of inmates confined in jails, characteristics of the jail population, counts of admissions and releases, and jail facility characteristics.

Administered to about 2,900 local jails nationwide and 12 Federal Bureau Prisons (BOP) detention facilities that function as jails, the COJ generates a complete enumeration of all local jails and serves as the sampling frame for BJS's jail surveys such as the National Inmate Survey (NIS, OMB Control Number 1121-0311) and the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails (SILJ, OMB Control Number 1121-0098).

Local jails are confinement facilities that operate under the authority of a sheriff, police chief, or city or county administrator. While the majority of local jails are publicly operated, a small number are privately run. These facilities include jails, detention centers, city or county correctional centers, as well as specialized jail facilities such as medical or treatment centers and pre-release centers. Additionally, temporary holding or lockup facilities, which are part of the jail's combined function, fall under this category.

Inmates sentenced to jail facilities typically receive sentences of one year or less. Typically, local jails have the authority to detain inmates for periods exceeding 72 hours and beyond arraignment. Exclusive temporary holding facilities, such as sobering centers and police lockups, which do not hold individuals after arraignment, are not classified as local jails for the purposes of the COJ data collection. While local jails are primarily designed for adults, they may also temporarily house juveniles before or after their cases are adjudicated.

The universe of the COJ consists of all local jail jurisdictions (including county, city, regional, and privately operated jail facilities) and BOP detention facilities that function as jails. Combined jail and prison systems in Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont are excluded. These combined systems are operated by state departments of corrections and are included in the BJS National Prisoner Statistics program. However, 15 independently operated jails in Alaska are included in the universe of the COJ.

Current Request

BJS requests to conduct frame verification outreach for the 2024 Census of Jails (COJ) under the OMB generic clearance agreement (OMB Number 1121-0339). BJS plans to submit a separate OMB clearance application under OMB Number 1121-0100 for the collection of the 2024 COJ data.

Under this clearance request, BJS and its data collection agent, RTI International, propose to conduct outreach to update and supplement the existing roster of local jails maintained by BJS. Through this outreach, the project team aims to verify or update the following:

- Agency name, phone number, email, and mailing address
- Contact information of the agency head: name, title, work phone number, email, and mailing address
- Contact information of the agency's designated respondent for the COJ: name, title, work phone number, email, and mailing address
- Jail operator type (county, municipal, state, regional, or private)

- Names and addresses of facilities operated by the agency since July 1, 2023
- Whether the facilities hold juveniles exclusively
- Whether the facilities hold inmates for periods exceeding 72 hours and beyond arraignment

The frame verification will be conducted through a web portal, email, and/or phone. The 2024 COJ website is currently being developed and the verification module will look similar to that on the 2023 Annual Survey of Jails (ASJ, OMB Control Number 1121-0094) website (see **Attachment 1** for sample website screenshots). The COJ website will be located on a secure server hosted by RTI International. Each jail will be provided a unique username and a password to enter the web portal. To reduce respondent burden, the verification module will be prepopulated with information from the existing jail roster; respondents only need to provide updated information as needed.

As summarized in table 1, the verification outreach commences on March 18, 2024 with an email to every jail (see **Attachment 2**). This email serves to announce the forthcoming 2024 COJ data collection in July and directs jails to update their facility eligibility and point of contact (POC) information on the COJ web portal. A preview of the 2024 COJ form will also be included so jails can begin preparing for the full collection (**Attachment 3**).

For jails without an email on file, corresponding physical letters containing the same information will be sent. Agencies will also be contacted by phone to verify information (**Attachment 4**). In instances where an email bounces back, the project team will research alternate contacts, phone numbers, and email. Nonresponsive agencies will be contacted through both phone and email (**Attachments 4-6**).

Approximate Dates	Contact	Attachments	Description	Est. # of Jails Contacted
March 18, 2024	Pre-notification and verification request email w/ 2024 COJ form preview	2, 3	Announces forthcoming 2024 COJ and directs jails to complete verification module online	2,900
March 18 - April 1, 2024	Verification calls	4	Call script to jails with bounced email and nonresponsive jails to update POC	2,030
April 8, 2024	Reminder Email 1	5	Reminder to complete verification online	1,450
April 29, 2024	Reminder Email 2	6	Reminder to complete verification online	870

BJS aims to update jail eligibility and contact information for 90% of the jails by June 1, 2024. Follow-up with nonrespondents will continue through July 1, 2024, the 2024 COJ launch date. Subsequently, verification outreach will be folded into COJ data collection nonresponse follow-

up.

Burden Hours

The research team estimates that it will take about an average of 10 minutes per jail to update contact information and verify jail eligibility status for the 2024 COJ (see table 2). The total burden is 483.3 hours for 2,900 jails.

Task	Task Description	Number of respondents	Estimated burden (in minutes)	Total burden (in hours)
Verification	Outreach to local jails to update contact information and verify jail eligibility status for the forthcoming COJ. Jails will update their information through an online portal, by phone, or by email.	2,900	10	$2900 * 10 / 60 = 483.3$
	Total burden			483.3 hours

Cost to the Federal Government

The estimated cost to the Federal government is \$88,008 for the RTI portion of the work and an estimated \$4,872 for 60 hours of the GS-13 project manager’s work for a total of \$92,880.

Data Security and Confidentiality

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under 34 U.S.C. § 10132. BJS may only use the information it collects for statistical or research purposes, consistent with 34 U.S.C. § 10134.

BJS is required to protect information identifiable to a private person from unauthorized disclosure and may not publicly release data in a way that could reasonably identify a specific private person [34 U.S.C. § 10231 and 28 CFR Part 22]. 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, federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data.

The BJS [Data Protection Guidelines](#) provide more detailed information on how BJS and its data collection agents will use and protect data collected under BJS’s authority.

Protection of Human Subjects

This collection elicits information about jail facilities. The only personally identifiable information to be collected will be the names and contact information of the agency personnel responsible for completing the 2024 COJ. RTI’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the project per 28 CFR 46 and determined that all aspects of the project do not meet the definition of human subjects research (**Attachment 7**). Nevertheless, all information obtained during the

survey will be maintained on secure servers at BJS and RTI and will not be shared with third parties.

Contact Information

Questions regarding any aspect of this project can be directed to:

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Attachments

- Attachment 1: Sample website screenshots
- Attachment 2: Pre-notification and verification request email
- Attachment 3: 2024 Census of Jails form
- Attachment 4: Verification call script
- Attachment 5: Reminder email 1
- Attachment 6: Reminder email 2
- Attachment 7: RTI IRB determination