

## B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

### 1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country (SJIC) will be administered to all Indian country confinement facilities, detention centers, and other correctional facilities operated by tribal authorities or the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the U.S. Department of the Interior. BJS has conducted the SJIC annually since 1998, excluding 2005 and 2006. Newly constructed jails are identified through internet searches, Google alerts, and word-of-mouth from established respondents.

As of 2024, BJS's roster of Indian country jails consisted of 77 operating facilities, up from 68 in 2004. During this period, the universe changed due to facility closures, new construction, facility mergers, and changes in facility operational status. In 2024, BJS received responses from 76 facility administrators for a 99% response rate. See the [Jails in Indian Country](#) report series for year-to-year comparisons of the SJIC universe.

Sampling from this universe would be impractical given the small total number of jails and the variety of purposes for which these facilities hold persons, which range from short-term holding to the longer incarceration of persons convicted of misdemeanors with sentences usually of a year or less. Additionally, producing a representative sample would be impractical considering jails in Indian country may be unique to tribal criminal codes and traditions, and many jails in Indian country are not operated based on county location, but by tribal affiliation. For example, the Navajo Nation operates multiple facilities located in Arizona and New Mexico. Given the high response rate for the SJIC, it is most practical to continue to collect SJIC as a census.

### 2. Procedures for Collecting Information

#### Data Collection Procedures

Prior to receiving the web-based survey form (**Attachment 1** for Form CJ-5B and **Attachment 2** for screenshot of web interface), respondents will be sent a postcard with a QR code by the BJS SJIC data collection agent to verify facility operational status and point-of-contact (**Attachment 3** for Contact Verification Postcard and **Attachment 4** for landing page for postcard QR code). Annually the data collection agent will begin the verification of facility information in June of the data collection year. If facilities do not respond to the postcard in a timely manner, the BJS SJIC data collection agent will call the nonresponsive facilities (**Attachment 5**). In mid-July, the data collection agent will email the jail point of contact with instructions on how to complete the web-based survey (**Attachment 6**) that will also include an attached invitation letter from the BJS Acting Director explaining the survey collection and thanking them for their commitment to the survey (**Attachment 7**). Respondents will be asked to complete the survey within 30 days after receipt of the survey instrument. One week after the invitation is sent out, BJS's data collection agent will begin an intensive effort to encourage response, including emails (**Attachment 8**) and telephone calls (**Attachment 9**) to nonresponding facilities. Emails will include a link to the web-based survey and contact information for them to call the SJIC hotline to complete the survey over the phone, if preferred. Comparisons of response times in previous collection years indicate that emails were far more effective at receiving quick responses than telephone contacts. Nonresponse follow-up will continue through September. The active data

collection slows in the first week of October but BJS continues to accept data until delivery of the final dataset in January of the following year.

## **Data Processing Procedures**

Between August and December of each data collection year, the data collection agent will conduct data quality validation. Upon receipt of a survey, data will be reviewed and edited, and if needed, the respondent will be contacted to clarify answers or provide missing information. Respondents who submit via web will be prompted with real-time validation checks when submitting missing or inconsistent data. Any unresolved items that remain after the respondent submits will result in recontact by the data collection agent to the respondent to attempt to resolve these issues.

Around mid-November a preliminary dataset will be delivered for BJS's review. In December, the data collection agent will conduct final validation based on BJS's review of the preliminary file. By January of the following year, the data collection agent will deliver a final dataset and documentation to BJS. The *Jails in Indian Country* report is issued annually in the spring or summer of the following year.

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

BJS has consistently maintained high rates of response to the SJIC, typically between 90% and 100% survey response and item response rates. It should be noted that the SJIC is a voluntary collection, and BJS believes that efforts to minimize the reporting burden have been integral to achieving the high rates of response. For this clearance request, BJS has kept the survey consistent and not added any questions in the effort to minimize burden and leverage familiarity with the survey.

The SJIC data collection plan allows for the jail respondents to submit data via web as primary collection mode. Paper and fillable PDF options will be available to respondents upon request. The postcard, follow-up telephone calls, and emails to non-respondents are planned to encourage a 100% response rate in the next three years. The response rate for the SJIC in 2023 was 91% and 99% in 2024.

## **Nonresponse Adjustments**

Typically, the unit and item response rates for the survey are between 90% and 100%. In the event of unit or item non-response, data will be imputed to calculate aggregate national Indian county jail population counts. Typically, for facilities that did not respond to the survey or reported incomplete data, BJS uses the most recent prior year's data to impute the midyear and peak population in June, average daily population (ADP) in June, admissions in June, staffing on the last weekday in June, and rated capacity on the last weekday in June. Estimates for demographics, criminal justice characteristics, and staff data vary between using prior year data and ratio adjustments.

Prior to the *Jails in Indian Country, 2014* report, data on inmate demographic characteristics, conviction status and offense, and facility staff characteristics were not estimated for non-

response but were analyzed based only on reported data. Starting in 2014, BJS estimated data for these populations and produced aggregated national estimates for previous years. Estimation procedures were based on the most recent reported data, or the ratio of the total number of inmates in the jail at midyear to the most recent reported number of inmates by the inmate/staff demographic or characteristic. For further information, detailed estimation procedures by year will be available in appendix tables 3 through 6 in *Jails in Indian Country, 2024*.

#### **4. Test of Procedures or Methods**

To address interests in expanding the content of the SJIC, BJS modified the 2023-2025 survey instrument to include new permanent questions on offense severity, monthly jail populations for a year, and facility staffing by employee sex. BJS met with stakeholders in 2022 to develop and enhance questionnaire items. In 2023, BJS pretested the new and enhanced questions for clarity and burden, and conducted a post pretest cognitive interview. The survey has been successfully administered and completed without significant difficulty. The 2026-2028 CJ-5B form (**Attachment 1**) will be the same questionnaire as 2023-2025. No changes were made to the survey instrument to minimize burden and continue in BJS' efforts to increase instrument familiarity.

#### **5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

The Jails and Community Corrections Statistics Unit of BJS takes responsibility for the overall design and management of the activities described in this submission, including data collection procedures, development of the questionnaires, and analysis of the data.

BJS contacts for the Survey of Jails in Indian Country:

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