

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Importance of Information

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is requesting a 3-year generic clearance to continue its efforts to develop, test, and improve its survey design and data collection instruments (e.g., questionnaires and paper and online surveys) and methodologies for new and ongoing projects. BJS will use different procedures to complete various statistical design and developmental activities, including (but not limited to): pretesting of different types of survey and data collection methodologies; focus groups; cognitive laboratory activities; pilot testing; field testing; exploratory interviews; experiments with questionnaire design; and usability testing of electronic data collection instruments. BJS requests this clearance to conduct statistical activities associated with various projects, which are listed and described in Question #2.

BJS collects self-reported data directly from respondents through paper and online surveys, via phone, and through in-person interviews and focus groups. BJS respondents include individuals, agencies, and other establishments operating in the law enforcement, courts, corrections (including community corrections), and victimization fields. BJS also acquires and uses administrative records that are maintained by criminal justice agencies as a routine part of their operations.

BJS initiated its first generic clearance in 2013 to support its statistical work and received subsequent approvals from OMB in 2016 and 2019 to continue using the clearance to complete developmental activities associated with evaluating and improving its survey design and data collection instruments and methodologies. Prior to using a generic clearance, BJS relied on convenience samples of 9 or fewer persons to provide input and feedback on survey design and data collection methodologies, or requested full OMB clearance for such methodological work. BJS determined that these approaches resulted in untimely and lengthy delays to the data collection implementation and involved duplicative or additional resources, e.g., staff time and project costs. Additionally, convenience samples do not provide a sufficient basis for conducting any type of test and do not provide reliable generalizability. The information collected via these

methods, while helpful, are inadequate in many situations and limited in their ability to detect and diagnose problems with the instruments and the procedures being tested. This lack of rigor, low reliability, and minimal generalizability would be unacceptable for a federal statistical agency.

The generic clearance is a more effective approach that will continue allowing BJS to take advantage of a variety of statistical methods that have been proven useful and effective for identifying data collection and procedural problems, informing solutions, improving the quality of BJS's data collection instruments and methodologies, and measuring the usability and reliability of the survey design. Additionally, pretesting enables BJS to assess respondent burden and identify how and where it can be reduced through improved data collection procedures and survey design. This clearance is similar to the testing clearances held by other federal statistical agencies, including the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics.

BJS will use various means to collect information to complete a range of statistical activities and methods to support the projects included in this generic clearance. These activities include, but are not limited to –

- Behavior coding – involves applying a standardized coding scheme to the completion of an interview or questionnaire, either by a coder using a recording of the interview or by an in-person observer at the time of the interview. The coding scheme is designed to identify situations that occur during the interview that reflect problems with the questionnaire. For example, if respondents frequently interrupt the interviewer before the question is completed, the question may be too long. If respondents frequently give inadequate answers, this suggests there are some other problems with the question. Quantitative data derived from this type of standardized coding scheme can provide valuable information to identify problem areas in a questionnaire, and can be used as a substitute for or as a complement to the traditional interviewer debriefing.
- Cognitive and usability interviews – involve intensive, one-on-one interviews in which the respondent is typically asked to "think aloud" as he or she answers survey questions.

A number of different techniques may be involved, including asking respondents to paraphrase questions, probing questions asked to determine how respondents came up with their answers, and so on. The objective is to identify problems of ambiguity or misunderstanding, or other difficulties respondents have answering questions. This is frequently one of the early stages of revising a questionnaire.

- Exploratory interviews – may be conducted with individuals in the very early stages of survey development to better understand a topic area. These interviews may cover discussions related to administrative records (e.g., what types of records, where, and in what format), subject matter, definitions, etc. Exploratory interviews may also be used to investigate whether sufficient issues are present related to an existing data collection to consider a redesign.
- Focus groups – involve group sessions guided by a moderator, who follows a topical outline containing questions or topics focused on a particular issue, rather than adhering to a standardized questionnaire. Focus groups are useful for surfacing and exploring issues (e.g., confidentiality concerns) that people may feel some hesitation about discussing.
- Follow-up interviews or re-interviews – involve re-interviewing or re-assessing a sample of respondents after the completion of a survey or assessment. Responses given in the re-interview are compared with the respondents' initial responses for consistency between responses re-interviews provide data for studies of test–re-test reliability and other measures of data quality. In turn, this information aids in the development of improved, more reliable measures.
- Interviewer debriefings – employ the knowledge of the employees who have the closest contact with the respondents. BJS will use this method in conjunction with other methods in its field tests to collect information about how interviewers react to the survey instruments, as well as to explore problems and issues encountered by interviewers during the interview.
- Pilot testing – defined, for purposes of this clearance, as data collection efforts that are conducted among purposive or statistically representative samples for evaluative purposes. BJS conducts pilot testing to evaluate its data collection instruments and/or procedures. Pilot tests are an essential component of this clearance package because they

serve as the vehicle for investigating basic item properties for new or redesigned data collection efforts, such as reliability, validity, and difficulty. Pilot tests can also be used to assess the feasibility of methods for standardizing the administration of data collection instruments and to test procedures regarding data procurement as well as comparability of data across sites. BJS will use results from pilot tests to publish research and development (R&D) and methodological reports, but will not publish statistical reports or data sets based on the findings.

- Respondent debriefing questionnaires – are administered at the end of the data collection instrument to respondents who have participated in a field test. The debriefing form contains probing questions to determine how respondents interpret the questions and whether they have problems completing the data collection instrument. This structured approach to debriefing enables quantitative analysis of data from a representative sample of respondents, to learn whether respondents can answer the questions, and whether they interpret them in the manner intended by the questionnaire designers.
- Split-sample experiments – involve testing alternative versions of questionnaires, and other collection methods, at least some of which have been designed to address problems identified in draft questionnaires or questionnaires from previous surveys. The use of multiple questionnaires, randomly assigned to permit statistical comparisons, is the critical component here. Data collection can include mail, telephone, Internet, or personal visit interviews or group sessions at which self-administered questionnaires are completed. Comparison of revised questionnaires against a control version, preferably, or against each other, facilitates statistical evaluation of the performance of alternative versions of the questionnaire. Split-sample tests that incorporate questionnaire design experiments are likely to have a larger maximum sample size than field tests using other methodologies. Larger sample sizes will enable the detection of statistically significant differences and facilitate methodological experiments that can extend questionnaire design knowledge more generally for use in a variety of BJS data collection instruments.

Procedures for Clearance

Prior to initiating any methodological testing described in this clearance, BJS will provide individual clearance packages for each project to OMB that describe the planned work and statistical activities that will be conducted. The package will include a project description, methodological overview, project timeline, the number of anticipated respondents and burden, and cost estimates in addition to copies of the data collection instruments and debriefing materials. These materials may include a set of prototype items showing each item type to be used; the range of topics to be covered by the data collection instrument; and an interview script. BJS will also provide other relevant documentation to support or describe the proposed statistical activities, e.g., different versions of the data collection instrument that will be used for split-sample experiments (either for small group sessions or as part of a field test) or the description and rationale for procedures when conducting a test of alternative procedures.

BJS requests that OMB provide and return to BJS written comments on substantive issues within 10 working days of receipt to allow BJS to respond in a timely manner and avoid delays to its data collections schedules.

2. Needs and Uses

BJS anticipates conducting data collection design and methodological work under this generic clearance to support various BJS projects. The projects listed below are those BJS is considering conducting, but it is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all the projects (grouped by major topic area) that may be conducted during the active period of the collection:

BJS Corrections data

- Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI) - BJS will pursue development work for the upcoming SPI study in order to test the survey administration prior to seeking full OMB clearance. A memorandum detailing the testing activities will be submitted to OMB for approval. BJS will pilot test the SPI instrument to ensure the questions and response options do not cause any significant comprehension or recall problems for respondents, as well as to test the mode of survey administration (i.e., CAPI with potential virtual interviewing options to comply with COVID-19 protocols) to: ensure the instrument is performing appropriately and the skip

logic is programmed accurately; test the length of the survey to ensure it is running within specific time constraints; and test sampling and interviewing protocols to ensure the procedures developed do not cause a significant burden to the facilities or staff. The goal of the pretest is to test the functionality of the Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) instrument prior to fielding it on a national scale. The pretest will include one state and one federal correctional facility providing a roster of inmates at 0.5 hours per facility for a total of 1 hour; prison staff escorting 60 inmates to and from interview sites at 0.5 hours per inmate for a total of 30 hours; and 60 inmates responding to the questionnaire at 1.00 hours per interview for a total of 60 hours. The pretest will result in a total expected burden of approximately 91 hours.

- Annual Survey of Probation (ASP) – BJS is planning to replace the current questionnaire soon and would like to interview respondents after the first year of collection about the new survey. BJS will sample 75 respondents to ask about changes to reporting, effectiveness of survey materials, time to report, and availability of data to report. BJS anticipates a maximum of two hours of additional burden per surveyed respondent. BJS will use this information to make any necessary adjustments to the form and supporting documents for clarity as well as inform the current collection schedule for timeliness of collection and reporting. The total burden hours for this task is 150 hours.
- Census of Jails – BJS would like to test the relevance of a Maternal Health addendum for the 2024 Census of Jails using 30 jail administrators from a variety of facilities: single-county, regional, multijurisdictional, and private. BJS’s data collection agent will contact the respondents for a telephone debriefing after the initial data provision, so the burden for each respondent is estimated at two hours, or 60 hours total.
- National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP) – BJS plans to conduct interviews with each of the 50 state departments of correction and the BOP to better understand capabilities in reporting for the NCRP. Currently, states vary widely in what data they can provide in the NCRP and how quickly they can get the data to the current data collection agent. BJS will use the information to inform plans on improving speed of data reporting and creating consistency in reporting across states. BJS is projecting two hours for each interview for a total of 102 burden hours.

- National Prisoner Statistics program (NPS-1B) – BJS plans to conduct cognitive testing in several areas, including new survey questions. For example, BJS anticipates that it will need to test several new questions on the NPS-1B form during the next three years, including adding questions on the departments of corrections testing and treatment of Hepatitis C, maternal health practices and policies, and restrictive housing practices and policies. To address this, BJS plans to conduct cognitive interviews of new questions. These hour-long cognitive tests would involve all 51 departments of corrections, for a total of 153 burden hours.
- National Prisoner Statistics – Reports of Inmates Under Sentence of Death (NPS-8: Capital Punishment) – During the most recent OMB review period for this collection, BJS received comments regarding the utility of education and marital status variables and suggesting including in the collection information on aggravating and mitigating circumstances present during the capital offense and prior convictions for non-homicide offenses. BJS will conduct brief interviews with the 33 current respondents to NPS-8/8A to obtain information about the demographic, offense and criminal history data they are currently able to provide and what data elements they could potentially provide in the future. BJS will use this information to improve item response on currently collected data and to determine the feasibility of collecting more detailed information on the capital offense and criminal history. BJS estimates that each interview will take about 1.5 hours, for a total estimated respondent burden of 49.5 hours.
- Enhanced use of technology to acquire administrative records - BJS plans to conduct interviews with each of the 50 state departments of correction and the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to explore more efficient methods of collecting administrative data at shorter intervals. BJS will use the information acquired to develop plans on improving the efficiency and accuracy of data reporting. This work may be in coordination with the planned NCRP data collection interviews outlined above but if conducted independently BJS will budget two hours for each interview for a total of 102 burden hours.
- Survey of Inmates in Local Jails (SILJ) – In 2022, BJS anticipates pilot testing new survey questions and inmate consent in different sites in two rounds.
 - BJS plans to field the national SILJ collection in 2023, after a redesign of the instrument used in the most recent survey in 2002. New questions will include asking inmates

in greater depth about opioid use and mental health issues. In addition, BJS will test a consent form similar to that used in the 2016 Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI) that would ask inmates for permission to (a) link their survey data to criminal history data obtained by the FBI (RAP sheets); (b) link their survey data to other government administrative records on employment, income, housing, health care, etc. that are housed at the Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications (CARRA) at the U.S. Census Bureau; (c) link to both sets of records; or (d) refuse permission to do any linkage with external records.

- o In round one, BJS contractor staff will recruit 36 adult male and female inmates from one jail to participate in the pilot test; and administer the consent form and the full survey instrument using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). This round of the pilot test will focus on identifying any issues with the skip logic or length of the instrument that would need to be addressed before continuing with the pilot test.
- o In round two, BJS contractor staff will administer the consent form and the full instrument to 324 inmates in nine jails. The second round of the SILJ pilot test will help BJS measure the average timing of the survey and identify potential issues with question wording of the informed consent script and the survey instrument. BJS will also field the pilot test in local jails where there is a reasonable expectation of sampling inmates who need to take the Spanish version of the instrument, in order to test the translation.
- o BJS estimates the total respondent burden to be 587 hours. Based on BJS's experience with other inmate surveys, such as the National Inmate Survey (NIS), it is estimated that it will take approximately 0.5 hours for a staff member from each facility to provide a roster of inmates incarcerated in their jail. This includes working with BJS contractor staff to provide the roster of inmates on the first day of data collection. Since the sample of inmates will be selected by the BJS contractor, the completion of these procedures will not put additional burden on the facility staff. Additionally, facility staff will spend 0.5 hours per inmate to escort them to and from the interviewing room. For the inmate interviews, BJS contractor staff will reach out to 500 inmates with the goal of recruiting 360 respondents. The pilot test will be administered to 360 inmates from the pool of 500 with an average interview time of 60 minutes.

BJS Law Enforcement data

- Census of Publicly Funded Forensic Crime Laboratories (CPFFCL) – BJS has conducted the CPFFCL approximately every 5 years since 2002. The most recent CPFFCL was administered in 2020, and BJS intends to field the CPFFCL in 2025. The CPFFCL is designed to capture information on laboratories’ staffing, budgets, caseload, procedures, and policies regarding evidence analysis and record retention. Historically, the CPFFCL included only publicly funded laboratories that employed one or more full-time scientists with degrees in the natural sciences. For the 2025 CPFFCL, BJS intends to expand the frame and questionnaire to include publicly funded laboratories that process only digital evidence. This will require BJS to conduct a larger frame verification effort to ensure that all eligible labs are included as well as to substantially revise the survey instrument to address the work of digital evidence labs. This revised instrument along with the original instrument will need to be cognitively tested to ensure its relevance, validity, and answerability. The burden estimate for the frame development work is 125 hours, and for the cognitive testing it is 60 hours, for a total estimated burden of 185 hours.
- Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) – The LEMAS core survey is presently the most systematic and comprehensive source of national data on law enforcement personnel, expenditures and pay, operations, equipment, computers and information systems, and policies and procedures. The LEMAS core survey provides national estimates for all state and local general purpose law enforcement agencies based on a nationally representative sample of agencies. LEMAS surveys have been conducted periodically since 1987, and data collected through the surveys have provided information on current issues and trends in law enforcement practices in the United States. The next LEMAS will be administered in 2024 using an updated data collection instrument and will be tested with an anticipated 50 agencies. The burden estimate to conduct cognitive testing of the new instrumentation is 75 hours.
- BJS is developing a supplement to the LEMAS survey that focuses on in-service training offered by law enforcement agencies. The goal of the survey is to develop national estimates on the type of training offered, the mode of training, the backgrounds of instructors, and how training effectiveness is assessed. The supplement is scheduled to be administered in 2023. Prior to its administration, BJS anticipates two rounds of cognitive interviews, each with 50

agencies, for a total burden of 150 hours.

- Census of Medical Examiners and Coroners Offices (CMEC) – CMEC, last conducted in 2018, will be conducted again in 2023. BJS anticipates contacting about 500 offices to verify operational status and contact information, for a total burden of 125 hours.

BJS Courts Data

- Census of State Courts (CSC) – The series collects information on the overall number of courts and judges in the nation's state courts; the selection and service requirements of judges; the governance, funding and administration of the judicial branch; the jurisdiction, staffing, and procedures associated with the nation's appellate courts; the administration, procedures, and specialized jurisdiction of state trial courts; the composition and workings of state juries; the sentencing context; and the overall structure of appellate and trial courts in each state. BJS plans updates to its data collection methodology and instrument and cognitive testing of those updates, to total 50 hours.
- Census of Problem-Solving Courts (CPSC) – The opioid crisis is a pressing issue, and the role of problem-solving courts is vital to addressing the intersection of drugs and crime. While there is anecdotal evidence that most crime handled in state courts includes some tie to drugs, there is little ability to examine this in state court data (e.g., a person steals a television to pawn to support a drug habit; the person is charged with theft or burglary, not a drug crime). One of the easiest targets to examine the intersection of drugs and crime is drug courts. The Census of Problem-Solving Courts in 2012 was a complete enumeration of all types of problem-solving courts: drug, mental health, DWI, juvenile, veterans, and domestic violence courts, among others. The next survey will focus on the problem-solving courts most likely to address the opioid epidemic, such as drug and veterans courts, and take a deeper look at the types of cases admitted to problem-solving courts, the progress of defendants through those courts, and the success rates for one particular year of those courts. BJS will use a generic clearance to complete frame development, to confirm the number of eligible courts with state and county problem-solving court coordinators. BJS also plans a cognitive test of the survey instrument with at least 30 state- or county problem-solving court coordinators. The total anticipated number of respondents is 66 and the total burden estimate to update the frame and to conduct the cognitive testing is 66 hours.

- Census of Public Defender Offices (CPDO) – CPDO involves the collection of data from all state- and county-funded public defender offices across the country, including offices that are publicly funded but privately operated and offices that handle capital cases only. A variety of data elements are collected in this census, including office expenditures, number and types of cases handled, staffing, funding sources, use of technology, training opportunities, and the adherence to standards and guidelines by the offices. BJS will need to test an updated instrument and update frame information, requiring about 300 hours of burden to do both tasks.

BJS Law Enforcement Incident-Based Reporting data

- National Law Enforcement Calls For Service (CFS) – BJS anticipates pursuing work to address the dearth of empirical information about CFS to law enforcement and what proportion of those CFS are recorded by police as crime incidents. The lack of quantifiable information about CFS results in an inability to accurately describe the workload of police officers, how that workload varies by place over time, and how much of that workload is related specifically to criminal offenses. Development work is needed to (1) identify the proportion of law enforcement agencies that receive CFS through some type of computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system, (2) determine if data from CAD systems can be used to develop an estimate of CFS for the nation, and (3) determine if data from CAD systems can be used to develop a national estimate of how many CFS are subsequently recorded by police as crime incidents. To accomplish these goals, preliminary work under the generic clearance is needed to survey a sample of about 50 law enforcement agencies, stratified by type and size, to understand the various ways agencies receive and record details about CFS, and to request CAD (or equivalent) technical specifications from a subset of agencies to evaluate methods for collecting CFS data from a nationally-representative sample of law enforcement agencies. The estimated maximum burden hours for 50 respondents to respond to a survey about their CFS and CAD systems and to provide technical specifications for CAD is approximately 200 hours.

BJS Victimization data

- NCVS Instrument Redesign – BJS is expecting to conduct a systems pilot test of the new NCVS instrument. The purpose of this systems pilot test is to ensure all system dependencies

and interfaces work in the production environment. Additionally, it will allow the team to test new operational procedures, field representative training, and implement preliminary data processing on pilot output files. The systems pilot test will not be used to produce estimates with the new instrument. BJS estimates this pilot will target 5,000 completed interviews, focused in two to three regional offices. Additionally, BJS expects to conduct two rounds of cognitive testing for a Spanish translation of the new instrument.

BJS will request full clearance for the split-sample implementation of the new instrument. During this time, BJS plans to implement a split sample design, such that half of respondents receive each version of the instrument. This period will allow BJS to report estimates on both instrument versions and develop a method for bridging estimates from the current instrument to the new instrument, mitigating risk of a break in series.

The total anticipated number of respondents for the systems pilot test is 5,000 amounting to approximately 890 burden hours. The total anticipated number of respondents for the Spanish language cognitive interviews is 100 amounting to approximately 100 burden hours.

National Census of Victim Service Providers – BJS plans to pursue development work for the next NCVSP survey. After finalizing a draft instrument, BJS will conduct cognitive testing and usability testing with a small number of victim service providers. After testing is complete, BJS will request full clearance for administration to all victim service providers. The total anticipated number of respondents for cognitive and usability testing is 25 amounting to approximately 20 burden hours.

BJS Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA) data

- National Inmate Survey, Jails (NIS-4 Jails) – BJS plans to pursue development work and outreach for the next NIS survey for jails, as mandated by the PREA. Development work and outreach for the NIS-4 Jails survey is needed under the generic clearance in order to conduct a field pretest of the Audio Computer-Assisted Self Interviewing (ACASI) instrumentation and survey collection protocols at 4 facilities to a) test procedures for obtaining informed consent from inmates, b) gauge the length of time to administer the

ACASI instrument, c) receive feedback on the instruments via debriefing questions, d) test procedures for the provision of counseling to inmates when requested, e) test procedures to minimize disruption to facility operations . In addition, BJS anticipates the need to test a facility-characteristics form through email distribution and conduct outreach to sampled jail jurisdictions and facilities to introduce the survey, and begin survey administration planning. Outreach activities will include a mailing of introductory letters and brochures, holding webinars for participants, and obtaining initial contact information. The estimated burden hours are 50 hours for the field pretest, 6 hours for testing the facility questionnaire, and 362.5 hours for outreach to sampled jurisdictions and facilities. The total burden estimate is 418.5 hours. In most cases, data collection activities included in this clearance will be conducted under BJS's authorizing legislation, 34 U.S.C. § 10131. BJS may also collect relevant data mandated by the PREA (P.L. 108-79). BJS will identify in each individual clearance package submitted to OMB and in materials that are provided to respondents the authorizing statutes associated with the specific project(s).

Consistent with 34 U.S.C. § 10134, BJS will only use data collected in conjunction with projects that are covered under this generic to inform its statistical methodological and design work and will not use individual-level information for enforcement or compliance efforts or to make determinations about benefits. BJS will follow the applicable laws, regulations, policies, and other authorities that govern BJS data, which are summarized in the BJS Data Protection Guidelines (see https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/bjs_data_protection_guidelines.pdf).

Because the data collection instruments being tested under this clearance are still in the process of development, the data that result from these collections are not considered official BJS or other federal statistics. The data will not be made public and will be used only to inform statistical activities and data quality improvement efforts. The data may also be prepared for presentations related to survey methodology at professional meetings or publications in professional journals. BJS will not disclose individual-level information that could result in the

identification of a specific respondent, or use the information for compliance, benefits determinations, or enforcement purposes.

3. Use of Information Technology

When the data collection tools being tested employ automated methods for its data collection, the research conducted under this submission will also use automated data collection techniques.

This clearance offers BJS the opportunity to test innovative technologies that may reduce respondent burden, achieve cost efficiencies, improve data quality and reliability, and increase the use of information technology.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

This research does not duplicate any other survey design or methodological work being done by BJS or other federal agencies. The purpose of this clearance is to enable and encourage additional research, which would not be done under other circumstances due to time and other resource constraints. This research will involve collaboration with staff from other agencies that are sponsoring surveys conducted by BJS, when applicable. The research may also involve joint efforts with staff from federal laboratory facilities. All efforts will be collaborative in nature, and no duplication in this area is anticipated.

To the maximum extent possible, BJS will make use of existing information and review results of prior evaluations of survey data before revising any data collection instruments. However, this information will provide limited utility and will not be sufficient by itself to refine BJS's data collection instruments without the benefits associated with conducting additional pretesting and research activities covered under this generic clearance.

5. Minimizing Burden

This research will be designed as relatively small-scale data collection efforts to minimize the amount of burden required to improve data collection instruments and procedures, test new

ideas, and refine or improve data collection methodologies. The results of the research conducted under this clearance are expected to improve the methods and instruments utilized in full scale studies and thereby improve information quality while minimizing burden to respondents and costs to the federal government.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This clearance involves data collection research, design, and development activities for each survey or data collection named in the submission. BJS may add, change, or replace projects during the clearance period, but all subsequent activities would comport and comply with the terms of this generic clearance. Absent the ability to complete these statistical activities, BJS would not be able to complete the activities in a timely manner and the quality of the methodological design and data collected in conjunction with the projects would potentially decline. In addition, BJS would not have a reliable way to assess and calculate the precise burden hours and costs associated with its survey and data collection efforts.

7. Special Circumstances

All the guidelines listed in the OMB guidelines are met. BJS does not anticipate any special circumstances.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

The 60-day Federal Register notice was published on December 22, 2021 (86 FR, No. 243, p. 72630). The 30-day Federal Register notice was published on February 23, 2022 (87 FR No. 36, p. 10242). No public comments have been received.

Consultation with staff from other federal agencies that sponsor surveys conducted by BJS will occur in conjunction with the testing program for the individual survey. BJS may also consult staff from federal laboratory facilities as part of joint research efforts. These consultations would include discussions concerning statistical topics such as potential response problems, clarity of

questions and instructions, and other aspects of respondent burden. Additional efforts to consult with potential respondents to obtain their views on the availability of data, clarity of instructions, burden, etc., may be undertaken as part of the testing that is conducted under this clearance.

9. Paying Respondents

While none of the currently proposed projects involve the use of incentives, BJS may develop other projects where incentives could be used, in accordance with OMB guidelines. BJS may offer up to \$75 for cognitive labs and focus group participation. BJS may also propose incentive experiments in limited cases.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Consistent with the confidentiality provisions of 34 U.S.C. § 10231 and 28 C.F.R. Part 22, BJS will only use the information gathered under this clearance for statistical or research purposes, and shall collect and report it in a manner that precludes their use for law enforcement or any purpose relating to a particular individual other than statistical or research purposes. All respondents who participate in research under this clearance will be informed that the information they provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form. The respondents will also be advised whether their participation is voluntary or mandatory, and BJS will inform respondents that an OMB number is required on the data collection instrument. BJS will communicate this information orally during in-person and telephone interviews and focus groups, in writing on recruitment and survey notification materials and data collection tool(s), and on web forms in a format that allows a respondent to print and retain a copy. All participants involved in cognitive research will be required to sign a statement affirming their understanding of the voluntary and confidential nature of their participation.

BJS will include either a confidentiality assurance (for collections involving identifiable information) or data use assurance (for collections that do not involve identifiable information)

in written correspondence that is sent to data providers and respondents. Program-specific details will be customized, as needed in the assurance.

Confidentiality assurance for BJS collections that involve information identifiable to a private person:

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is authorized to conduct this data collection under 34 U.S.C. § 10132 <or other authority, as applicable>. BJS, its employees, and its data collection agents will use the information you provide for only statistical or research purposes pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 10134. BJS will protect and maintain the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person to the fullest extent under federal law (34 U.S.C. § 10231 and 28 C.F.R. 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 (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 will use and protect your information, go to

https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/bjs_data_protection_guidelines.pdf.

Data use assurance for BJS data collections that do not obtain information identifiable to a private person:

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is authorized to conduct this data collection under 34 U.S.C. § 10132 <or other authority, as applicable>. BJS, its employees, and its data collection agents will only use the information you provide for statistical or research purposes pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 10134, and will protect it to the fullest extent under federal law. For more information on how BJS will use and protect your information, go to

https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/bjs_data_protection_guidelines.pdf.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

It is possible that some potentially sensitive questions may be included in data collection instruments that are tested under this clearance. The testing is designed to identify questions that respondents consider to be sensitive, determine the potential sources of sensitivity, and address concerns related to those questions, to the extent possible, before the survey design is finalized and the actual data collection instrument is administered. BJS will include in individual project clearance submissions the justification for any sensitive questions included in a project covered by this generic clearance.

12. Estimate of Hour Burden

BJS estimates that the estimated number of people involved in the exploratory, field test, pilot, cognitive, and focus group work covered by this generic clearance is about 30,000 respondents over the 3-year period, with a total estimated respondent burden of approximately 15,000 hours.

BJS will use a variety of data collection instruments and methods to complete the statistical activities covered under this clearance. The exact number of respondents and the different instruments and their length are not known at this time. BJS will include specific details and burden estimates in its clearance submissions for individual projects.

13. Estimate of Cost Burden

There is typically no cost to respondents for participating in the research being conducted under this clearance, except for a respondent's time associated with completing the questionnaire or participating in an interview or focus group.

14. Cost to Federal Government

Due to the nature of the generic clearance terms and structure, BJS cannot precisely estimate the actual number of respondents, length of interview(s), and/or mode(s) of data collection for the work to be conducted under this clearance over the entire 3-year clearance period. Without that information, it is not possible to estimate in advance the cost to the federal government. Costs

associated with each individual project will be covered by the statistical unit conducting the research and will be supported with BJS program funding for statistical and research work. BJS will include cost-related information and estimates in the individual project clearance submissions.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

There is no change in burden proposed from the previously approved clearance.

16. Project Schedule

Due to the nature of this generic clearance, no single project timeline or schedule can be reported at this point. Major activities associated with the scope of work included in this clearance include data collection and methodological design efforts, data analysis and tabulation, and evaluative efforts. BJS will use the project findings to inform its statistical work. The information will not be the subject of estimates or other statistics in BJS reports, though it may be published (at the aggregate level) in research and development reports or be included as a methodological appendix or footnote in a report containing data from a larger data collection effort. The results of this research may also be prepared for presentation at professional meetings or publication in professional journals. BJS anticipates that project schedules will vary and that work will be conducted more or less continuously throughout the duration of the clearance.

17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

No exemption is requested.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification.