

Table of Contents

Survey of Prison Inmates Research and Development Cognitive Testing under OMB generic clearance agreement 1121-0339:

- Appendix 1 – Cognitive Interview Protocol
- Appendix 2 – Initial Commissioner Contact Letter
- Appendix 3 – Sampled Facility Contact Letter
- Appendix 4 – Sampled Facility FAQs
- Appendix 5 – Inmate Roster Instructions
- Appendix 6 – Informed Consent
- Appendix 7 – IRB approval

SPI R&D Cognitive Testing Protocol

P number	
Interviewer	
Date	
Time	
Facility	
Virtual or in person	

Split Protocol Design

Protocol	Data Linkage Time Frame Consent	Medicare Questions	Innocence Questions
A	5 years	Original	Guilt
B	10 years	New	Guilt
C	5 years	Original	Innocence
D	10 years	New	Innocence

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this project. The interview today will take about an hour. In this interview, I'll ask questions that could be used on a survey of incarcerated people sometime in the future. The goal of this interview, and those that we'll do with other participants, is to find out if the questions make sense and if people are familiar with all the words we use. We're also interested in whether the questions mean the same thing to each person we talk to. So, after I read a question to you, I might ask a few follow-up questions, such as "tell me in your own words what this question is asking" or "how hard is it to come up with an answer?" This will help us know if we are asking the right questions.

Even though some of our questions might sound like we are giving you a test, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. We just want to make sure the questions are understandable. You can help us by pointing out any questions that are confusing or unclear. Then we can fix the questions before we use them in future interviews.

[To thank you for participating in the study, we can have these cookies to eat before you leave this room.]

Do you have any questions before we start? [ANSWER QUESTIONS AS NEEDED.]

Data Linkage in Consent – Split

PROTOCOL A & C – Five years

As I explained, today we are going to talk about some survey questions that might be asked in future surveys. In that future study, we'll ask people a lot more questions and we'll ask them to let us link their answers to those questions to information from other government agency records as well as any updates that are made to those records over the next five years. These records might include information about a) employment and income, b) criminal records, and c) benefits from government programs.

Today, I'm NOT asking to link your answers to other records. I just want to talk about how you would feel about it if I did want to link your answers to the records. If you were asked to participate in that study, would you allow us to link your survey answers to your records?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

PROBES

1. How did you decide on your answer?
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE WHO ANSWER NO, WE ARE LOOKING FOR DETAILS ON THE REASON WHY. COULD INCLUDE PRIVACY CONCERNS, PERCEIVED LACK OF AUTONOMY/CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN DATA, ETC. PROBE AS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND WHY SOMEONE SAYS NO.]
2. What questions do you have about allowing us to link your survey answers to other existing government records?
3. Today I asked whether you would let us link to existing records as well as any updates that are made to those records over the next FIVE years. How would you feel if we asked for updates over the next TEN years?
 - a. Would your answer be the same or different if we asked to allow updates for TEN years?

PROTOCOL B & D – Ten Years

As I explained, today we are going to talk about some survey questions that might be asked in future surveys. In that future study, we'll ask people a lot more questions and we'll ask them to let us link their answers to those questions to information from other government agency records as well as any updates that are made to those records over the next ten years. These records might include information about a) employment and income, b) criminal records, and c) benefits from government programs.

Today, I'm NOT asking to link your answers to other records. I just want to talk about how you would feel about it if I did want to link your answers to the records. If you were asked to participate in that study, would you allow us to link your survey answers to your records?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO

PROBES

2. How did you decide on your answer?
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE WHO ANSWER NO, WE ARE LOOKING FOR DETAILS ON THE REASON WHY. COULD INCLUDE PRIVACY CONCERNS, PERCEIVED LACK OF AUTONOMY/CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN DATA, ETC. PROBE AS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND WHY SOMEONE SAYS NO.]
3. What questions do you have about allowing us to link your survey answers to other existing government records?
4. Today I asked whether you would let us link to existing records as well as any updates that are made to those records over the next TEN years. How would you feel if we asked for updates over the next FIVE years?
 - a. Would your answer be the same or different if we asked to allow updates for FIVE years?

Personally Identifiable Data Protection and Confidentiality

Before we began, I shared information about the purpose of this interview and explained some of the risks, benefits, and assurances about keeping your information private. In the future study, we will share this same information others we invite to participate.

Now, I would like to read the information that we might use and ask you some questions about that explanation. This information does not apply to our conversation today, but I would like your feedback about it. I will read the information to you now.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics will use the information you provide for statistical purposes. We may share your information with another statistical agency for statistical work. There are laws that keep your personal information private and confidential. It is illegal for us to use your information in a way that breaks federal law. Your answers will be combined with responses from other inmates. They will be put in a dataset that will be used by other researchers. The dataset will not include your name and you won't be identified in it.

1. As a reminder there are no right or wrong answers. I just want to make sure that the terms we use make sense to everyone. What does "personal information" mean to you?
2. I stated that BJS will use your information for statistical purposes and may share that information with other statistical agencies.
 - a. What does "statistical purposes" mean to you?
 - b. What do you think of when you hear "another statistical agency"?
3. Another term that I used a couple times was "dataset."
 - a. What does "dataset" mean to you?
 - b. What questions or concerns do you have about a dataset that contains your answers being used by other researchers?

Race/Ethnicity

RACE1.

INTERVIEWER: PRESENT SHOWCARD 1 TO PARTICIPANT BEFORE ASKING.

What is your race and/or ethnicity? You may answer yes to one or more of these categories.

	Yes	No
White?	1	2
Black or African American?	1	2
Hispanic or Latino?	1	2
American Indian or Alaska Native?		
Asian?	1	2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander?	1	2
Middle Eastern or North African?	1	2

RACE2. Please provide additional details.

INTERVIEWER: ONLY ADMINISTER THE ITEMS TO THE PARTICIPANT THAT HAVE BEEN ENDORSED AS YES IN RACE1. SHOW THE SHOWCARD SPECIFIC TO EACH.]

ENDORSED IN RACE1	ADMINISTER RACE2
White	<p>[PRESENT SHOWCARD 2]</p> <p>Which of these describe your background? Please tell me all that apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Italian <input type="checkbox"/> German <input type="checkbox"/> Polish <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish <input type="checkbox"/> Something else _____ <p>[IF PARTICIPANT SELECTS "SOMETHING ELSE", PROBE: What else do you want to add?] [RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM:]</p>
Black or African American	<p>[PRESENT SHOWCARD 3]</p> <p>Which of these describe your background? Please tell me all that apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> African American

	<input type="checkbox"/> Nigerian <input type="checkbox"/> Jamaican <input type="checkbox"/> Ethiopian <input type="checkbox"/> Haitian <input type="checkbox"/> Somali <input type="checkbox"/> Something else _____ [IF PARTICIPANT SELECTS "SOMETHING ELSE", PROBE: What else do you want to add?] [RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM:]
Hispanic or Latino	[PRESENT SHOWCARD 4] Which of these describe your background? Please tell me all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Cuban <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Dominican <input type="checkbox"/> Salvadoran <input type="checkbox"/> Guatemalan <input type="checkbox"/> Something else _____ [IF PARTICIPANT SELECTS "SOMETHING ELSE", PROBE: What else do you want to add?] [RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM:]
American Indian or Alaska Native	Please provide additional detail about your answer of American Indian or Alaska Native, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, or something else. Please tell me all that apply. _____
Asian	[PRESENT SHOWCARD 5] Which of these describe your background? Please tell me all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Something else _____ [IF PARTICIPANT SELECTS "SOMETHING ELSE", PROBE: What else do you want to add?] [RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM:]
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	[PRESENT SHOWCARD 6] Which of these describe your background? Please tell me all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian

	<input type="checkbox"/> Tongan <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan <input type="checkbox"/> Fijian <input type="checkbox"/> Chamorro <input type="checkbox"/> Marshallese <input type="checkbox"/> Something else _____ [IF PARTICIPANT SELECTS "SOMETHING ELSE", PROBE: What else do you want to add?] [RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM:]
Middle Eastern or North African	[PRESENT SHOWCARD 7] Which of these describe your background? Please tell me all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese <input type="checkbox"/> Syrian <input type="checkbox"/> Iranian <input type="checkbox"/> Iraqi <input type="checkbox"/> Egyptian <input type="checkbox"/> Israeli <input type="checkbox"/> Something else _____ [IF PARTICIPANT SELECTS "SOMETHING ELSE", PROBE: What else do you want to add?] [RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM:]

PROBES

1. [IF VIRUTAL AND PRESENTING THE SHOWCARD WITH SCREENSHARE] How easy or difficult is it to see the information on the screen?
2. [IF IN PERSON AND PRESENTING PHYSICAL SHOWCARD] How easy or difficult is it to read the information on this page?
3. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW]
4. [FOR ANALYSIS: NOTE HOW LONG IN MINUTES AND SECONDS IT TOOK TO ADMINISTER THIS QUESTION.

MINUTES	
SECONDS	

Medicare – Split

PROTOCOL A & C - Original Question

SES19 During the 30 days before your arrest, were you covered by any of the following types of health insurance or health coverage plans?

	Yes	No
SES19a. Insurance through a current employer or union of yours or another family member?	1	2
SES19b. Insurance purchased directly from an insurance company by you or another family member?	1	2
SES19c. Medicare, for people 65 and older, or people with certain disabilities?	1	2
SES19d. Medicaid, Medical Assistance, or any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or a disability?	1	2
SES19e. TRICARE or other military health care?	1	2
SES19f. VA? Please answer yes if you have ever used or enrolled in VA healthcare.	1	2
SES19g. Indian Health Service?	1	2
SES19h. Any other type of health insurance or health coverage plan?	1	2

PROBES

1. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? Why?
2. As a reminder, I am not trying to test or quiz you. I'm just trying to see how different people understand these questions. We just talked about two types of health insurance or health coverage plans, Medicare and Medicaid. Do you think Medicare and Medicaid are the same thing or are they different? In your own words, what do you think the difference is between Medicare and Medicaid?
3. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW]

PROTOCOL B & D - New Question

HEALTHINS_NEW1 During the 30 days before your arrest, were you covered by any health insurance or health coverage plans?

1 YES → HEALTHINS_NEW2

2 NO → PROBES

DK/REF → PROBES

[IF PARTICIPANT ANSWERS YES, PROCEED TO SES19a]

[IF PARTICIPANT ANSWERS NO, PROBE PER INSTRUCTIONS BELOW]

PROBES IF HEALTHINS_NEW1 = NO

1. If you were sick or injured in the 30 days before your arrest, where would you have gone for care? How would you have paid for this care?
2. I'm going to read some options of health insurance or health coverage plans just to make sure none applied to you. It's okay if you change your answer after I read these, I just want to make sure we didn't miss anything that might apply to this question. For each of these, tell me if you had that type of health insurance or health coverage plan in the 30 days before your arrest.

	Yes	No
SES19a. Insurance through a current employer or union of yours or another family member?	1	2
SES19b. Insurance purchased directly from an insurance company by you or another family member?	1	2
SES19c. Medicare, for people 65 and older, or people with certain disabilities?	1	2
SES19d. Medicaid, Medical Assistance, or any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or a disability?	1	2
SES19e. TRICARE or other military health care?	1	2
SES19f. VA? Please answer yes if you have ever used or enrolled in VA healthcare.	1	2
SES19g. Indian Health Service?	1	2
SES19h. Any other type of health insurance or health coverage plan?	1	2

3. [IF PARTICIPANT ANSWERS YES TO ANY HEALTH INSURANCE ITEMS:] That is something we would want you to include when you answered our original question, which was

“During the 30 days before your arrest, were you covered by any health insurance or health coverage plans?” Do you have any guesses to why you forgot about it when you first answered?

4. As a reminder, I am not trying to test or quiz you. I’m just trying to see how different people understand these questions. We just talked about two types of health insurance or health coverage plans, Medicare and Medicaid. Do you think Medicare and Medicaid are the same thing or are they different? In your own words, what do you think the difference is between Medicare and Medicaid?

HEALTHINS_NEW2 [ASK IF HEALTHINS_NEW1 = YES]

Were you covered by...

	Yes	No
SES19a. Insurance through a current employer or union of yours or another family member?	1	2
SES19b. Insurance purchased directly from an insurance company by you or another family member?	1	2
SES19c. Medicare, for people 65 and older, or people with certain disabilities?	1	2
SES19d. Medicaid, Medical Assistance, or any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or a disability?	1	2
SES19e. TRICARE or other military health care?	1	2
SES19f. VA? Please answer yes if you have ever used or enrolled in VA healthcare.	1	2
SES19g. Indian Health Service?	1	2
SES19h. Any other type of health insurance or health coverage plan?	1	2

PROBES IF HEALTHINS_NEW1 = YES

1. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? Why?
2. As a reminder, I am not trying to test or quiz you. I’m just trying to see how different people understand these questions. We just talked about two types of health insurance or health coverage plans, Medicare and Medicaid. Do you think Medicare and Medicaid are the same thing or are they different? In your own words, what do you think the difference is between Medicare and Medicaid?
3. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW]

INTERVIEWER: PRESENT SHOWCARD 8 BEFORE ASKING

INNOCENCE1. I'm going to read these five statements to you. Please follow along as I read them and think about which statements are true for you.

1. You are serving a sentence for committing burglary
2. You have lived in the same state as this facility your entire life
3. You were admitted to this facility less than 1 year ago
4. You were under 18 years-old the first time you got arrested
5. You committed one or more of the crimes you are serving a sentence for

How many of these statements are true for you?

RECORD RESPONSE:

PROBES

1. [IF VIRUTAL AND PRESENTING THE SHOWCARD WITH SCREENSHARE] How easy or difficult is it to see the information on the screen?
2. [IF IN PERSON AND PRESENTING PHYSICAL SHOWCARD] How easy or difficult is it to read the information on this page?
3. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question?
 - a. [IF DIFFICULT:] What made the question difficult for you to answer?
4. We are going to ask this question to other incarcerated people in the future. Some people might answer this question honestly, while others will not answer honestly. How honestly do you think others might answer this question? Why is that?
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: WE DO NOT WANT THE RESPONDENT TO TELL US IF THEY ARE TELLING THE TRUTH OR NOT. FRAME ALL CONVERSATIONS AS TALKING ABOUT WHAT OTHER INCARCERATED PERSONS MAY DO.]
5. I want to talk more about each of these statements. As I mentioned earlier, I am not trying to quiz or test you. I want to make sure these statements mean the same thing to everyone. But you do not need to tell me whether each statement is true for you. Let's start with the first statement. In your own words, what do you think the first statement

means? [REREAD STATEMENT AS NEEDED FOR RESPONDENT]

[INTERVIEWER NOTES: PROBE AS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND CONFUSING TERMS AND WHAT WORDING MIGHT MAKE MORE SENSE FOR THE RESPONDENT.]

- a. What about the second statement?
 - b. What about the third statement?
 - c. What about the fourth statement?
 - d. And what about the last statement?
6. Right now, the last statement reads “You committed one or more of the crimes you are serving a sentence for.” We might instead use the statement “You did not commit any of the crimes you are serving a sentence for.” Do you prefer the statement we have now or this other option? Why?

[INTERVIEWER NOTES: PROBE AS NEEDED ABOUT COMPREHENSION OF THE ALTERNATIVE STATEMENT. WE ARE LOOKING TO SEE WHETHER THEY COMPREHEND THESE AS CONTRASTING STATEMENTS, I.E., THEY WOULD ANSWER YES TO ONLY ONE OF THE STATEMENTS. REMINDER THAT WE DO NOT WANT THEM TO VERBALIZE WHICH ONE THEY WOULD ANSWER “YES” TO.]

- a. [IF NEEDED]: Which statement is easier to understand or are they about the same? Why?
7. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW, ESPECIALLY CONFUSION OVER PROVIDING A TOTAL COUNT OF STATEMENTS THAT ARE TRUE.]

PROTOCOL C & D - Innocence

INTERVIEWER: PRESENT SHOWCARD 9 BEFORE ASKING

INNOCENCE2. I'm going to read these five statements to you. Please follow along as I read them and think about which statements are true for you.

1. You are serving a sentence for committing burglary
2. You have lived in the same state as this facility your entire life
3. You were admitted to this facility less than 1 year ago
4. You were under 18 years-old the first time you got arrested
5. You did not commit any of the crimes you are serving a sentence for

How many of these statements are true for you?

RECORD RESPONSE:

PROBES

1. [IF VIRUTAL AND PRESENTING THE SHOWCARD WITH SCREENSHARE] How easy or difficult is it to see the information on the screen?
2. [IF IN PERSON AND PRESENTING PHYSICAL SHOWCARD] How easy or difficult is it to read the information on this page?
3. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question?
 1. [IF DIFFICULT:] What made the question difficult for you to answer?
4. We are going to ask this question to other incarcerated people in the future. Some people might answer this question honestly, while others will not answer honestly. How honestly do you think others might answer this question? Why is that?
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: WE DO NOT WANT THE RESPONDENT TO TELL US IF THEY ARE TELLING THE TRUTH OR NOT. FRAME ALL CONVERSATIONS AS TALKING ABOUT WHAT OTHER INCARCERATED PEOPLE MAY DO.]
5. I want to talk more about each of these statements. As I mentioned earlier, I am not trying to quiz or test you. I want to make sure these statements mean the same thing to everyone. But you do not need to tell me whether each statement is true for you. Let's start with the first statement. In your own words, what do you think the first statement means? [REREAD STATEMENT AS NEEDED FOR RESPONDENT]

[INTERVIEWER NOTES: PROBE AS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND CONFUSING TERMS AND WHAT WORDING MIGHT MAKE MORE SENSE FOR THE RESPONDENT.]

1. What about the second statement?
 2. What about the third statement?
 3. What about the fourth statement?
 4. And what about the last statement?
6. Right now, the last statement reads “You did not commit any of the crimes you are serving a sentence for.” We might instead use the statement “You committed one or more of the crimes you are serving a sentence for.” Do you prefer the statement we have now or this other option? Why?

[INTERVIEWER NOTES: PROBE AS NEEDED ABOUT COMPREHENSION OF THE ALTERNATIVE STATEMENT. WE ARE LOOKING TO SEE WHETHER THEY COMPREHEND THESE AS CONTRASTING STATEMENTS, I.E., THEY WOULD ANSWER YES TO ONLY ONE OF THE STATEMENTS. REMINDER THAT WE DO NOT WANT THEM TO VERBALIZE WHICH ONE THEY WOULD ANSWER “YES” TO.]

- a. [IF NEEDED]: Which statement is easier to understand or are they about the same? Why?
7. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW, ESPECIALLY CONFUSION OVER PROVIDING A TOTAL COUNT OF STATEMENTS THAT ARE TRUE]

Sensitive Item - Children

CHILDREN Do you have any children under the age of 18? Please include any of your own biological or legally adopted children. Do not include stepchildren unless they are legally adopted.

- 1 YES → SESB1
- 2 NO → FAMILYVISIT1
- DK/REF → FAMILYVISIT1

SESB1 [IF CHILDREN = 1] How many children under the age of 18 do you have? Please include any of your own biological or legally adopted children.

RECORD ANSWER:

[IF NO CHILDREN UNDER 18, THEN GO TO FAMILYVISIT1]

CHILDVISIT. Have you had in-person visits with [that child who is under 18 / any of those children who are under 18] during the past 12 months?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO
- DK/REF

SESB8 [IF CHILDVISIT=YES, THEN SAY:] For many different reasons, some people with children do not get visits from their children while they are incarcerated. I'd like to get your reaction to a question that inmates will be asked if they have children who have not visited them in-person during the past 12 months. The question is:

Why do you think you have not received an in-person visit from [that child / any of those children]? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

- 1 LIVES TOO FAR AWAY
 - 2 CAN'T HAVE VISITORS
 - 3 INMATE DOESN'T WANT CHILD TO SEE THEM INCARCERATED
 - 4 CAN'T AFFORD TO TRAVEL TO FACILITY
 - 5 VISITING FACILITY WILL BE UNSAFE
 - 6 CHILD DOESN'T WANT TO SEE INMATE WHILE INCARCERATED
 - 7 CHILD'S OTHER PARENT/GUARDIAN DOESN'T WANT CHILD TO VISIT
 - 8 CURRENT CAREGIVER DOES NOT WANT CHILD TO VISIT
 - 9 RECEIVED TELEVISIT INSTEAD OF IN-PERSON VISIT
 - 10 OTHER
- ENTER AT MOST 10 VALUES
- DK/REF

PROBES IF CHILD HAS VISITED IN PAST 12 MONTHS

1. How do you think someone else who has not had a visit from their child during the past 12 months may answer this question? [IF NEEDED] What are some reasons their child may not visit?
2. How easy or difficult do you think it might be for someone else who has not had a visit from their child during the past 12 months to answer this question? Why?
3. Do you think some people may find this question upsetting to answer? Why?

PROBES IF CHILD HAS NOT VISITED IN PAST 12 MONTHS

1. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? Why?
2. How comfortable do you feel answering this question? Why?
3. INTERVIEWER: ASK PARTICIPANT ABOUT THE MODE OF THE INTERVIEW THAT THEY ARE NOT ASSIGNED TO, I.E., IF DOING A VIDEO INTERVIEW, ASK ABOUT IN-PERSON INTERVIEW.
Do you think you would feel more comfortable, less comfortable, or about the same answering this question [in-person / during a video interview]?
4. Do you think some people may find this question upsetting to answer? Why?
5. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW.]

Sensitive Item - Family

FAMILYVISIT1. Have you had any in-person visits with any of your family, such as a spouse or partner, siblings, parents, or grandparents, during the past 12 months?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO
- DK/REF

PROBES

1. When you think of the word “family,” who comes to mind?
2. This question asks about a spouse or partner, siblings, parents, or grandparents. Are there any other family members who visit you in-person?

FAMILYVISIT2. **[IF FAMILYVISIT1=YES, THEN BEFORE QUESTION SAY:]** For many different reasons, some people do not get visits from their family while they are incarcerated. I’d like to get your reactions to a question that inmates will be asked if they have family who have not visited them in-person during the past 12 months. The question is:

[IF FAMILYVISIT1=NO, THEN ASK:] Why do you think you have not received an in-person visit from family, such as spouse or partner, siblings, parents, or grandparents, during the past 12 months? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

- 1 LIVES TOO FAR AWAY
 - 2 CAN’T HAVE VISITORS
 - 3 INMATE DOESN’T WANT FAMILY TO SEE THEM INCARCERATED
 - 4 CAN’T AFFORD TO TRAVEL TO FACILITY
 - 5 VISITING FACILITY WILL BE UNSAFE
 - 6 FAMILY DOESN’T WANT TO SEE INMATE WHILE INCARCERATED
 - 7 RECEIVED TELEVISIT INSTEAD OF IN-PERSON VISIT
 - 8 OTHER
- ENTER AT MOST 8 VALUES
- DK/REF

PROBES IF FAMILY HAS VISITED IN PAST 12 MONTHS

1. How do you think someone else who has not had a visit from their family during the past 12 months may answer this question? [IF NEEDED] What are some reasons their family may not visit?
2. How easy or difficult do you think it might be for someone else who has not had a visit

from their family during the past 12 months to answer this question? Why?

3. Do you think some people may find this question upsetting to answer? Why?

PROBES IF FAMILY HAS NOT VISITED IN PAST 12 MONTHS

1. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? Why?
2. How comfortable do you feel answering this question? Why?
3. INTERVIEWER: ASK PARTICIPANT ABOUT THE MODE OF THE INTERVIEW THAT THEY ARE NOT ASSIGNED TO, I.E., IF DOING A VIDEO INTERVIEW, ASK ABOUT IN-PERSON INTERVIEW.
Do you think you would feel more comfortable, less comfortable, or about the same answering this question [in person / during a video interview]?
4. Do you think some people may find this question upsetting to answer? Why?
5. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW]

Sensitive Item – Mental Health

MH7 Have you **ever** been told by a medical doctor or a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist or psychologist that you had...

	Yes	No
MH7a. Manic depression, a bipolar disorder, or mania?	1	2
MH7b. A depressive disorder?	1	2
MH7c. Schizophrenia or another psychotic disorder?	1	2
MH7d. Post-traumatic stress disorder, also known as PTSD?	1	2
MH7e. An anxiety disorder, such as panic disorder or obsessive-compulsive disorder, also known as OCD?	1	2
MH7f. A personality disorder, such as antisocial or borderline personality?	1	2
MH7g. A mental or emotional condition other than those I just asked you about?	1	2
MH7_OTH. [IF MH7g = 1] What condition is that? INTERVIEWER: RECORD RESPONSE VERBATIM_____		

PROBES

1. How easy or difficult was it to answer these questions? Why?
2. How comfortable do you feel answering these questions? Why?
3. INTERVIEWER: ASK PARTICIPANT ABOUT THE MODE OF THE INTERVIEW THAT THEY ARE NOT ASSIGNED TO, I.E., IF DOING A VIDEO INTERVIEW, ASK ABOUT IN-PERSON INTERVIEW.
Do you think you would feel more comfortable, less comfortable, or about the same answering these questions [in-person / during a video interview]?
4. Do you think some people may find these questions upsetting to answer? Why?
5. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW.]

Complex Item – Drug Use

DU2_NEW

INTERVIEWER PRESENT SHOWCARD 10 BEFORE ASKING

The next question is about using prescription opioids, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives in any way a **doctor did not direct you to use them**. This could include using it without a prescription of your own; using it in greater amounts, more often, or longer than you were told to take it; or using it in any other way a doctor did not direct you to use it.

Have you **ever**, even once, used any of the following in a way a doctor did not direct you to use it... [ENTER ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH]

	YES	NO
S8Q6a5.1. fentanyl or carfentanil?	1	2
S8Q6a5.2. other opioids, such as oxycodone, dilaudid, buprenorphine, Percocet, OxyContin, Methadone, or Vicodin?	1	2
S8Q6a5.3. “Speed,” “uppers,” amphetamines, or other stimulants, such as Ritalin, Adderall, Vyvance or Dexedrine?	1	2
S8Q6a5.4. “Downers” or sedatives, such as GHB or Rohypnol (“roofies”)?	1	2
S8Q6a5.5. Anti-anxiety medications or tranquilizers, such as Xanax, Ativan, Valium, or Flexeril?	1	2

PROBES

1. [IF VIRUTAL AND PRESENTING THE SHOWCARD WITH SCREENSHARE] How easy or difficult is it to see the information on the screen?
2. [IF IN PERSON AND PRESENTING PHYSICAL SHOWCARD] How easy or difficult is it to read the information on this page?
3. How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? Why?
4. Is anything confusing about this question or is everything clear?
5. Can you explain in your own words what it means when someone uses prescription medications in any way a doctor did not direct them to use them? What are some examples?
6. [NOTE ANY OBSERVED DIFFICULTIES THE PARTICIPANT HAD WITH RESPONDING BELOW.]

Debrief

1. Thank you so much for talking to me about these questions today. Before we end, I want to talk a little more about the topics we discussed today. We asked you about several different topics today, including drug use, contact with children and family, and whether you committed any of the crimes you are serving a sentence for. How did you feel answering these questions?
2. Were any of these topics sensitive or upsetting to think about?
 - a. IF YES: What were the sensitive or upsetting topics?
 - b. IF YES: I appreciate that you still talked to me about the topic/these topics. What led you to share that information with me?

End

That's all the questions I have for you. Thank you for your participation; your feedback has been really valuable!

Month XX, 202X

[COMMISSIONER/SECRETARY NAME AND TITLE]

[STREET ADDRESS 1]

[STREET ADDRESS 2]

[CITY, STATE, AND ZIP CODE]

Dear [COMMISSIONER/SECRETARY NAME]:

Earlier this year, [AGENCY NAME] agreed to permit the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and its data collection agent, RTI International (RTI), to conduct the Survey of Prison Inmates Research and Development Field Test at [FACILITY NAME]. We sincerely thank you for supporting this important undertaking.

We are now starting to develop the survey questionnaire that will be used in the next national implementation of the Survey of Prison Inmates. As part of this process, we would like to interview up to 30 inmates from two facilities in [STATE]. Outreach to facilities and logistical planning with each facility will begin in ~~late spring~~ [INSERT SEASON] 2025. This round of interviews will test items comparing in-person and virtual survey administration methods to help ensure that inmates understand questions the way they are intended. To this end, I am writing to request your approval for staff from our research team to conduct a test in [NAME OF FACILITY/FACILITIES] in [JURISDICTION].

The proposed interviews, planned for [INSERT MONTHS] ~~May through August~~ 2025, are critical to assess the quality of the survey items and data validity. The results will be used to inform decisions about items used on the national study in the future. The interviews would involve two tasks by staff from [NAME OF FACILITY/FACILITIES]: 1) providing a roster of incarcerated adults from which we can draw a random sample of about 30 to interview, and 2) assisting RTI staff in managing logistics associated with conducting the in-person and virtual interviews. The interviews would need to be conducted in a private secure area that is out of hearing range of facility staff or others to assure the confidentiality of the participants.

We aim to minimize disruption to each facility. We expect that RTI will have about two to three trained interviewers on site for up to three days. In addition, RTI will send an on-site coordinator to liaise with a facility point of contact and to assist with establishing connections to other interviewers conducting virtual interviews. RTI staff will follow all institution rules and adjust their schedules to minimize any potential disruption to facility operations.

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under 34 U.S.C. § 10132. By law, BJS employees and its data collection agents may only use your agency's information for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person [34 U.S.C. §§ 10134 and 10231]. BJS is not permitted to publicly release your agency's responses in a way that could reasonably identify a specific private person. Contact information collected through this effort will not be publicly disseminated by BJS.

As I'm sure you are aware, since 2007 BJS has entered your facilities for the purpose of conducting surveys required by the Prison Rape Elimination Act that are known as the National Inmate Survey (NIS). I want to let you know that neither these cognitive interviews for SPI nor the national SPI study is at all related to the aims of the NIS; the SPI cognitive interviews and national study do not produce facility-level estimates of any kind.

I would appreciate your help in conducting these cognitive interviews, and I also want to make sure that you have enough information to make an informed decision about whether you will grant my request. To that end, if you would like to talk with my staff about the survey, please feel free to contact Emily Buehler, BJS's SPI Project Manager, at Emily.Buehler@usdoj.gov or 202.598.1036.

If on the other hand, you have enough information about the cognitive interviews, then I ask that you provide me with the name and contact information of someone from your office or [FACILITY NAME] who can assist in arranging the interviews.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kevin Scott, PhD

Acting Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics

Month XX, 202X

[FACILITY ADMINISTRATOR NAME AND TITLE]

[STREET ADDRESS 1]

[STREET ADDRESS 2]

[CITY, STATE, AND ZIP CODE]

Dear [FACILITY ADMINISTRATOR NAME]:

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and its data collection agent, RTI International (RTI), have begun preparing for one of BJS's major surveys, the Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI). One component of this preparation is testing questions that might be used on the survey. The testing involves asking incarcerated persons to answer the questions and tell us how they interpreted them and arrived at their answers. The results of the testing will help us decide on the final wording of questions asked on the national study. This research has been approved by [STATE APPROVAL AUTHORITY]. An RTI representative will contact you soon to discuss the research and arrangements, and to request your facility's participation. This letter is intended to provide you with additional information about the goals and procedures of the testing.

By way of background, BJS uses the SPI to generate national estimates of the characteristics of the prison population, including characteristics that are germane to corrections management such as the severity of offenses committed and criminal history; medical, mental health, and substance abuse and dependency problems; behaviors in prison including both rule infractions and participation in programs.

In past iterations of the SPI, data have been collected through in-person interviews with a sample of incarcerated adults. The testing that we have planned will compare in-person and virtual survey administration methods, focusing on whether respondents understand the questions they are being asked and data quality. Each interview, regardless of method used, is estimated to take about 60 minutes on average. To conduct the research, we request two types of assistance from you: 1) providing a roster of incarcerated adults from which we can draw a random sample of about 30 to invite to participate, and 2) assisting RTI staff in managing logistics associated with conducting the in-person and virtual sessions. We expect that some of those selected will be unavailable or unwilling to participate.

The sessions will need to be conducted in a private secure area that is out of hearing range of facility staff or others to assure the confidentiality of the participants. All information collected will be kept confidential and will be used only for the purposes of refining the data collection approach in future iterations of SPI.

We aim to minimize disruption to your facility. We expect that RTI will have between two and three trained researchers on site for up to three days. We will also have an on-site coordinator to liaise with a facility point of contact and to assist with establishing connections to other

researchers conducting virtual interviews. RTI staff will follow all facility rules and adjust their schedules to minimize any potential disruption to facility operations.

BJS is authorized to conduct this data collection under 34 U.S.C. § 10132. By law, BJS employees and its data collection agents may only use your agency's information for statistical or research purposes and must protect the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person [34 U.S.C. §§ 10134 and 10231]. BJS is not permitted to publicly release your agency's responses in a way that could reasonably identify a specific private person. Contact information collected through this effort will not be publicly disseminated by BJS.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find a FAQ document that provides more information about the research sessions and is intended to assist you and your staff with the data collection process. We would greatly appreciate your help in conducting this important study and thank you in advance for your participation. As mentioned above, an RTI representative will contact you soon to discuss the research and arrangements. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study, please feel free to call Ashley Murray, RTI Cognitive Interviews Manager, at amurray@rti.org or (919) 248-1480.

Sincerely,

Kevin Scott, PhD

Acting Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics

Survey of Prison Inmates – Research and Development

Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) Document for Correctional Facilities and Staff

What is this study about?

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is conducting research to prepare for next Survey of Prison Inmates (SPI). BJS uses the survey to generate national estimates of the characteristics of the U.S. prison population, track changes in the characteristics of prisoners over time, conduct studies of prisoners on special topics, and identify policy-relevant changes in the prison population. As we prepare for the next national survey, we are testing draft questions that might be used. The testing involves asking incarcerated persons to answer the questions and tell us how they interpreted them and arrived at their answers. The results of the test will be used to help us decide on the final wording of questions asked on the national study.

How will people be selected to participate?

BJS's data collection agent, RTI International (RTI), will randomly select approximately 30 incarcerated adults in the facility to participate in the study and then provide the facility with the names of those selected. Half will be asked to meet with a study interviewer in-person and half will be asked to talk with an interviewer virtually (e.g., using Zoom). Facility staff will be asked to escort each selected adult to areas where the interviews will take place. We expect that some of those selected will be unavailable or unwilling to participate.

What should I say to the incarcerated persons who have been randomly selected to participate?

When approaching those who have been randomly selected to participate, you can use the following script: *"[Insert person's name], our facility is participating in a special research study and one of the researchers would like to invite you to participate in an interview. The researcher will meet with you and can tell you what it is about. Please come with me so I can introduce you to the researcher."*

If the person requests more information, you can say: *"I do not know much about the research, but the person conducting it will tell you what it is all about. The study is important, but it's your choice. If you come with me, I will introduce you to the researcher, but you do not have to come with me or participate in the research."*

Where will the research be conducted?

All sessions, whether done in-person or virtually, will be conducted in private areas or rooms within the facility. For those sessions conducted virtually, the area must have a computer or other device capable of connecting to the internet for a teleconference.

What does the research involve?

Participation in the research is completely voluntary, so incarcerated adults 18 and older can refuse to participate or to answer any of the questions. First, the participant will be asked a series of questions. Depending on how they respond to these initial questions, they may not qualify to participate in the study. Therefore, some might be excused after only a few minutes while others will qualify for the study and be in the research area or room for about 60 minutes. Participants may be asked about topics such as their backgrounds, families, criminal and incarceration histories, pro-social connections, program participation, substance use, mental health, medical problems, and reentry-related needs and plans.

Survey of Prison Inmates – Research and Development

Roster Request

In order to draw a random sample of incarcerated adults and accurately analyze the interview data from each facility, we are asking agencies to provide rosters as described below.

Number of Rosters and When They Are Needed

1. Example Roster

We would appreciate having this roster as soon as possible so that our statisticians can review the format of the roster you provide and determine any steps we need to take in preparation for sampling incarcerated adults for the study. If facilities are responsible for sending their own rosters, we will need an example roster from each selected facility in that state DOC. Otherwise, we only need one example roster.

2. Sampling Roster

We will need this roster one week before data collection is scheduled to begin in each facility (specific date to be determined after we receive the example roster) so that we can select a random sample.

3. Confirmation Roster

We will need this roster to be run on the morning of the first day of data collection so that we can cross-check it against the Sampling Roster that was provided the week before and used to generate our random sample. This will allow us to determine which persons were released or transferred from the facility between the time the Sampling Roster was produced and when data collection begins. If it is not possible to run a confirmation roster that accurately reflects the population at the facility when data collection begins, we will need to work with you to develop a way to identify releases and admissions to the facility that occurred between the time when the Sampling Roster was produced, and the time data collection begins.

Content of Rosters

Below is a list of requested data elements for the study. Please provide only the names of individuals who are 18 years of age or older. Variables marked with an asterisk* are optional and may be left out of the roster if needed for confidentiality or privacy reasons. If there is a particular required data element that is not available, please let us know.

- **Inmate or Facility ID Number.** This is a number a facility uses to locate sampled adults. It may also be called a DOC number.
- **State IDNumber.***
- **First name.**
- **Middle name/initial.** (if available)
- **Last name.**
- **Housing assignment or unit.**
- **Sex/gender.** (Numeric code and associated documentation explaining the code)
- **Date of birth.**
- **Race.*** (Numeric code and associated documentation explaining the code)
- **Ethnicity.*** (Numeric code and associated documentation explaining the code)
- **Current prison admission date.*** The date the person was admitted to the current facility/ prison.
- **Sentence length.*** If sentence length is not available, maximum release date [preferred] or expected release date will suffice.

Please DO NOT include Social Security Numbers.

Transmission of Rosters

Rosters can be transmitted to RTI in two ways:

1. Uploading to the project's secure website (preferred) or
2. Emailing a password protected file (roster) to project staff. Excel files are preferred; however, please produce the roster in whatever format is most convenient for you. Regardless of format, please encrypt the file prior to emailing it to RTI and follow up with a second message in which you provide the password for the encrypted roster file.

Instructions for uploading to the website and for password protecting a file will be provided before the first roster file is requested.

Survey of Prison Inmates – Research and Development Consent to Participate in Research

What is the purpose of this interview?

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and RTI International (RTI), a not-for-profit research organization, are developing a survey that will collect information from incarcerated people across the United States. To develop the survey, RTI researchers are meeting with people in prison to discuss some of the questions that could be asked on the survey. The information we collect will help us make improvements to the survey questions.

Why was I chosen?

You were invited to take part in this discussion because you are currently incarcerated and your opinions are important.

What will happen during the interview?

The researcher will ask you some survey questions related to being incarcerated. The discussion will last about 60 minutes, and the topics will include your experiences before you were incarcerated, your health and mental health, drug use, and your family. The researcher will ask whether the questions make sense to you. You can help by telling them anything that is confusing or unclear about the questions.

Are there risks?

There is no expected risk to participating in this study.

Are there benefits?

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. Whether you participate or not will not affect your legal status or any decisions regarding your release from this facility in any way.

What will I get for participating?

The results of this study will help us learn more about questions we may ask to other incarcerated people in the future. These future studies might help improve the condition and well-being of adults in prisons across the nation. [IF PERMITTED BY FACILITY: To show our appreciation for your participation, we will give you a snack to eat before you leave this room.]

Do I have to participate?

Your participation is voluntary. You can refuse to answer any question at any time.

Will this information be kept private?

The Bureau of Justice Statistics and RTI are required by federal law to protect your privacy and confidentiality. Any information that could identify you will be held strictly confidential. It also means that nothing you tell me during the interview can be used in any legal action. Your name will not be connected with the information you provide in this interview. We will not share any of the information you provide with anyone at this prison or anyone who is not directly working on the project. Secure systems are used to keep your data safe when it is electronically transferred from the laptop to RTI. A dataset of all the answers provided by inmates will be created and used for research in the field of criminal justice. The dataset will not include your name or other personal identifiers. It is a federal crime for anyone on the project team to release your confidential information.

There are, however, exceptions to our promise of confidentiality. If you tell the interviewer you intend to seriously harm yourself or a specific person, or that you plan to commit a crime in the future, they may need to inform correctional staff here or authorities outside the facility who are responsible for protecting prison inmates. Do you have any questions about taking part in this study?

Who do I call if I have questions?

If you have any questions about this research project, you can write to the Survey of Prison Inmates Project Director at RTI International, 3040 East Cornwallis Road, P.O. Box 12194, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you can write to RTI's Office of Research Protection at the same address.

Now, I want to ask if you're willing to take part in this study as I've described it.
Are you willing to participate in the interview? (DID THE INMATE CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW?)

☐ YES -> CONTINUE WITH INTERVIEW.

☐ NO -> *THANK THE RESPONDENT; DO NOT CONDUCT INTERVIEW.*

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the participant.

☐ I have read all required informed consent text to this individual.

Person Who Obtained Consent: _____

Interviewer ID Number: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Respondent ID Number: _____

APPROVAL

March 26, 2025

Timothy Smith
919-316-3988
tksmith@rti.org

Dear Timothy Smith:

On 3/26/2025, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Modification / Update
Title:	Survey of Prison Inmates Research and Development
Investigator:	Timothy Smith
IRB ID:	MOD00002360
Funding Source:	Dept of Justice BJS
Customer/Client Name:	Dept of Justice BJS
Project/Proposal Number:	0219408
Contract/Grant Number:	15PBJS-23-GK-05680-MUMU
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None

The IRB approved the study on 3/26/2025. Any changes to the approved study protocol or documents must be submitted to the IRB as a modification for review and approval prior to implementation. Within 30 days of study completion, you should request to close the study in IRB Express. You can submit a modification or study closure by navigating to the active study and clicking Create Modification / CR.

This minor modification was approved by expedited review in accordance with 28 CFR 46.110(b)(2).

In conducting this protocol, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system.

Sincerely,

The RTI Office of Research Protection