

**Comment on Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed eCollection
eComments Requested; Revision of a Currently Approved Collection: Annual Survey
of Jails in Indian Country [OMB Number 1121-0364]**

We submit this response to OMB Number 1121-0364 on behalf of the University of Michigan's (U-M) Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). ICPSR manages the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD), a longstanding collaborative project that facilitates open science in crime and criminal justice. Since 1978, the archive has been instrumental in archiving and disseminating data for the U.S. Department of Justice. This letter responds to your request for commentary about the collection of the Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country (SJIC).

Founded in 1962, ICPSR is the largest archive of digital social and behavioral science data in the world. ICPSR curates, preserves, and disseminates original social science data for research, instruction, and policy evaluation. The organization hosts over 25,000 data collections comprising 345,000 files of data and documentation, with over 850,000 downloads each year. Membership has grown from 22 founding institutions to over 800 educational and research institutions worldwide today. In 2019, ICPSR received the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

Comment 1: Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, including whether the information will have practical utility

The Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country (SJIC) series stands as a highly utilized and respected BJS data resource, with both public-use and restricted-use datasets archived at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD). NACJD usage statistics reflect strong engagement from the research community. For example, *the Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country, 2023 (ICPSR 39184)* was downloaded 444 times since its release in September 2024, indicating ongoing demand and relevance for secondary analysis. The most recent release, *Annual Survey of Jails in Indian Country, 2024 (ICPSR 39407)*, has already been downloaded 31 times just weeks after publication.

Applications for restricted-use data are managed through the standard application process (SAP) portal, ResearchDataGov, demonstrating that the collection facilitates access to sensitive data for qualified researchers while maintaining necessary protections.

SJIC is a longstanding, invaluable resource for criminal justice research and policy with data collection stretching back to 1998. It is both practical and necessary for BJS to continue this annual data collection. Ongoing data collection ensures continuity for this

serial dataset, supporting longitudinal analyses by BJS experts and enabling new research by the wider

criminal justice data community via NACJD. Continued support for the SJIC contributes directly to evidence-based policy and research focused on Indian country correctional facilities.

Comment 2: Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used

The 70.5 total annual burden (hours) is a reasonable estimate for time required for respondents to complete the SJIC survey. For SJIC 2024, the burden of this collection was estimated to average 60 minutes per form, so the updated estimated time for each respondent of 55 minutes is in line with, though slightly lower than, previous years.

The value of the SJIC data to the scientific research community and to policymakers outweighs the minimal time burden associated with facility responses.

Comment 3: Evaluate whether and if so how the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected can be enhanced

The quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected can be enhanced by continuing to ask survey questions in a consistent manner with prior years. Consistency supports comparability for longitudinal analysis. Additionally, ongoing archiving of the data collection at NACJD ensures that data can be curated and made available to secondary users in a manner consistent with prior years. This archiving process includes performing quality checks and converting files to multiple data formats, which promotes both accessibility and usability for researchers and other stakeholders.

Comment 4: Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses

Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information include offering multiple modes of data collection and standardizing the questionnaire and data collection methods over the three-year period. Providing respondents with a consistent form from year to year increases the efficiency with which they can complete the survey, reducing the time required and minimizing potential confusion or errors.

We appreciate the Bureau of Justice Statistics's ongoing commitment to high-quality data collection and transparency. By continuing to support the SJIC and facilitating open access

to these important datasets, BJS helps advance evidence-based practices and research on Indian country correctional facilities. We look forward to continued collaboration in ensuring that these resources remain useful and accessible to all stakeholders.