
The Joint Report of the Attorney General, through the Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, through the United States Chief Statistician, Pursuant to Section 18(b) of Executive Order 14074:

Department of Justice and Office of Management and Budget Efforts to Improve Current Data Collections and Expand the Quality and Availability of Criminal Justice Statistics



I. Introduction

This report responds to Section 18(b) of Executive Order 14074, which calls for the Department of Justice, through the Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), through the United States Chief Statistician, to jointly submit a report to the President detailing what, if any, steps the agencies will take:

- (i) to improve their current data collections, such as the National Crime Victimization Survey and the Police-Public Contact Survey Supplement, including how to ensure that such data collections are undertaken and published annually, and that they include victimization surveys that measure law enforcement use of force; serious bodily injury or death that occurs in law enforcement encounters; public trust in law enforcement; and actual or perceived bias by demographic subgroups defined by race, ethnicity, and sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity); and
- (ii) to improve the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics Survey, with a focus on ensuring that such data collections are undertaken and published regularly and measure law enforcement workforce data, use of force, public trust in law enforcement, and actual or perceived bias.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is the primary statistical agency of the Department of Justice. It is one of the thirteen principal federal statistical agencies throughout the Executive Branch, agencies whose activities are predominantly focused on the collection, compilation, processing, or analysis of information for statistical purposes. The mission of BJS is to collect, analyze, publish, and disseminate information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operation of justice systems at all levels of government. BJS also provides financial and technical support to state, local, and tribal governments to improve both their statistical capabilities and the quality and utility of their criminal history records. The Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics is appointed by the President to oversee the operations of BJS and serve as the Statistical Official of the Department of Justice.

The Chief Statistician of the United States is charged with coordinating the activities of the Federal statistical system to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the system; and the integrity, objectivity, impartiality, utility, and confidentiality of information collected for statistical purposes.* The concept of “utility” within that charge includes ensuring that the Federal statistical system is prioritizing the development and release of relevant, useful statistical products that can inform and improve evidence-based policymaking.

II. Actions to Improve Current Data Collections

a. Improving the National Crime Victimization Survey

The [National Crime Victimization Survey](#) (NCVS) is the nation’s primary source of information on criminal victimization. Each year, data are obtained from a nationally representative sample of about 240,000 persons in about 150,000 households. Persons are

* 44 U.S.C. § 3504(e).

interviewed on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in the United States.

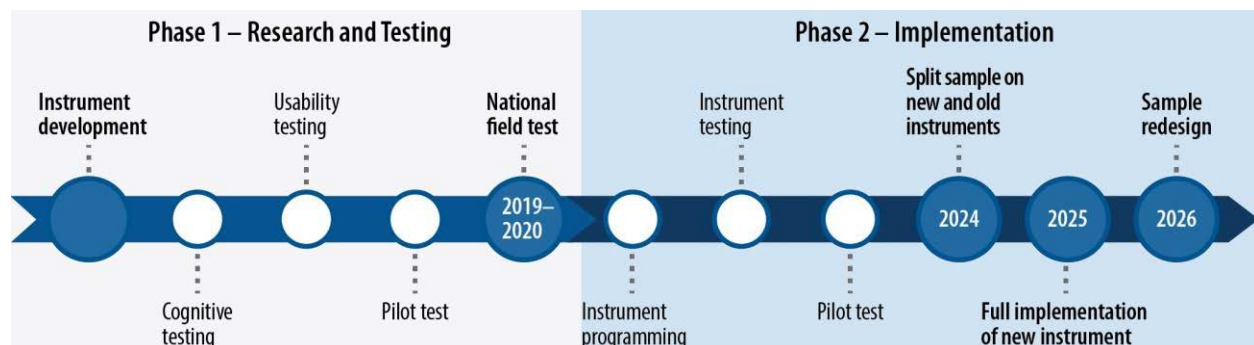
The NCVS collects information on nonfatal personal crimes (*e.g.*, rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and personal larceny) and household property crimes (*e.g.*, burglary/trespassing, motor vehicle theft, and other types of theft) both reported and not reported to the police. Survey respondents provide information about themselves (*e.g.*, age, sex, race and ethnicity, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, education level, and income) and whether they experienced victimization.

For nearly 50 years, NCVS has been undertaken annually and the core NCVS results are typically published in the early Fall. For each victimization incident, the NCVS collects information about:

- the offender, including age, race and ethnicity, sex, and victim-offender relationship;
- characteristics of the crime, including time and place of occurrence, if weapons were used, the nature of any injury sustained by a victim, and economic consequences to the victim related to their victimization;
- whether the crime was reported to police;
- reasons the crime was or was not reported; and
- and victim experiences with the criminal justice system.

Planned Improvements: In 2024, BJS will complete a multiyear effort to redesign the NCVS instrument to improve the efficiency, reliability, and utility of the NCVS. The effort has three main goals:

- reduce cognitive burden on respondents by modernizing the organization, flow, and content of the NCVS instrument;
- increase the completeness and accuracy of information collected; and
- improve the measurement and classification of crime.



BJS initiated this major effort to completely redesign the way that NCVS data is collected, including redesigning the household roster, victimization screener, and detailed crime incident report (CIR). During the research and testing phase of the redesign effort, which was completed in 2020, BJS tested the revised instrument using multiple rounds of interviews with respondents that focused on comprehension of the questions and navigation through the instrument. BJS also

tested data collection field procedures through a small-scale pilot test. The results of the testing informed the design of a new NCVS instrument that was assessed through a large-scale national field test.

The new NCVS instrument that will be debuted in 2024 retains the two-stage measurement approach of the current instrument for the screening and classification of criminal victimization. It is more conversational in style and promotes recall by asking respondents to consider each subset of examples or probes separately. The new instrument also improves measurement of victimization and incident characteristics. For additional information, see [Update on the NCVS Instrument Redesign](#).

Victimization screener updates include—

- separating screening probes into shorter examples with yes/no responses in each screener series;
- revising probe contents;
- using more behaviorally specific language and expanding the screening probes for rape or sexual assault; and
- adding vandalism as a crime screener.

Crime incident report updates include—

- improving the use of victimization screener responses to drive questions asked in the CIR;
- revising items to improve measurement of key NCVS concepts (i.e., incident location and presence of respondent during incident);
- increasing information collected about rape or sexual assault incidents; and
- expanding measures of victim experiences, including use of victim services, satisfaction with police response, and consequences of victimization.

The new instrument also includes two new periodic modules, obtained yearly, that will be able to provide national-level estimates:

- The **Police Performance** module measures the types of contact with police and opinions about police performance.
- The **Community Safety** module measures indicators of public perceptions of community issues related to crime and neighborhood safety.

b. Improving the Police-Public Contact Survey

The [Police-Public Contact Survey](#) (PPCS) collects data on interactions between law enforcement and the public from the perspective of the public. The existing survey collects data on law enforcement use of force and whether respondents feel that the conduct of law enforcement exhibited bias. The [results](#) of the 2020 Survey were released in November 2022. BJS will publish results from the 2022 data collection in late 2023 or early 2024. As noted above, the NCVS is undertaken and published annually. The PPCS is one of five existing supplements to the NCVS. Each supplement is administered after the NCVS core survey and is

in the field for 6 months.

Planned Improvements: BJS plans to improve the regularity and frequency of the PPCS by administering it once every two years after the redesigned NCVS core instrument is fully implemented in 2024. BJS will next administer the PPCS in 2025. Administering the PPCS annually would reduce the available windows to administer the other critical NCVS supplemental surveys on stalking, identity theft, fraud, and school crime. Importantly, the addition of the Police Performance module to the core NCVS starting in 2024 will provide annual estimates on key indicators of public evaluation of the law enforcement that serve their community.

c. Improving the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics Survey

The Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics Survey (LEMAS) has been conducted approximately once every four years since 1987. BJS's LEMAS survey collects data from over 3,000 general purpose state, county, and local law enforcement agencies, including all those that employ 100 or more full-time sworn officers and a nationally representative sample of smaller agencies. Data are obtained on agency responsibilities, operating expenditures, job functions of sworn and civilian employees, officer salaries and special pay, demographic characteristics of officers, weapons and armor policies, education and training requirements, computers and information systems, vehicles, special units, and community policing activities.

Planned Improvements: BJS is evaluating the feasibility of administering LEMAS in 3 out of every 4 years, with the fourth year reserved for BJS's Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies (CSLLEA), needed to maintain a current roster of law enforcement agencies in the United States. To maintain the high response rate of LEMAS (currently, 80% of eligible agencies respond) while administering it more frequently, the survey will need to be shortened considerably to focus on key indicators that need to be measured annually with additional data collected in rotating modules added on to the survey. BJS currently plans for LEMAS to be administered on this schedule starting in 2024. The President's FY 2024 budget request for the Bureau of Justice Statistics contains a request for the additional funding needed to sustain this work.

BJS is engaged in developmental work to support the move to this new schedule. First, in the summer of 2023, BJS will be doing stakeholder engagement to hear from law enforcement, civil rights groups, and researchers on priorities for what data elements need to be collected every time LEMAS is administered and which questions can be asked less frequently. Second, informed by that engagement, BJS will sort the LEMAS questions into a core set of questions that can be asked on every administration and develop rotating modules that can be asked less frequently. Third, BJS will test changes to the administration of the survey. The current LEMAS (last administered in 2020) has an estimated 3-hour burden and, to maintain the high response rate, takes 7–8 months to field. BJS will test a survey with a one-hour burden that it expects can be fielded in 3–4 months to see if the high response rate and data quality that characterize the current LEMAS can be sustained.

III. Improving the Quality and Availability of Priority Measurements

Section 18(b) of Executive Order 14074 identifies several priority topical areas that need better data to inform policies in pursuit of the goals of the Executive Order. In addition to making the improvements to the NCVS, PPCS, and LEMAS described above, BJS and OMB will also take the following actions to improve the quality and availability of statistical data on these priority topical areas.

a. Measuring Law Enforcement Use of Force

The PPCS collects data on interactions between law enforcement and the public from the perspective of the public. The existing survey collects data on law enforcement use of force. Law enforcement use of force is also currently captured in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) [Use of Force](#) collection which collects data from participating law enforcement agencies on use of force incidents that result in serious bodily injury or death. BJS consulted heavily with OMB and the FBI on the design of this collection. As the quality and completeness of the data continues to improve, more analyses will be possible in the future.

b. Measuring Serious Bodily Injury or Death That Occurs in Law Enforcement Encounters

As surveys of the public, neither PPCS nor NCVS can measure “death that occurs in law enforcement encounters.” Data on death and serious bodily injury that occurs in law enforcement encounters are captured in two existing DOJ programs. The [Death in Custody Reporting Act data collection](#), currently maintained by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), requires States to report information regarding the death of any person who is either detained, under arrest, in the process of being arrested, en route to be incarcerated, or is incarcerated at a municipal or county jail, state prison, state-run boot camp prison, boot camp prison that is contracted out by the state, or any state or local contract facility, or other local or state correctional facility (including any juvenile facility). OMB is facilitating and BJS is prioritizing consultation with BJA on the design of the study and quality assurance and analysis of the data.

c. Measuring Public Trust in Law Enforcement

BJS will use the NCVS to measure public perception of law enforcement, including how much trust individuals place in law enforcement, starting in 2024, which will provide first-ever national estimates of this key measure of policing. BJS's assessment of the quality of the data collected in this new module will determine the appropriate timing and format for publication of analyses.

d. Measuring Actual or Perceived Bias by Demographic Subgroups Defined by Race, Ethnicity, and Sex

The PPCS collects data on interactions between law enforcement and the public from the perspective of the public. The existing survey collects data on whether respondents feel that the conduct of law enforcement exhibited bias.

The Police Performance module that is part of the redesigned NCVS, when reported by race, ethnicity, and sex, will allow additional analysis of differences in perceptions of police performance by these demographic characteristics.

Neither PPCS nor NCVS collect data directly from the law enforcement officers, and thus neither can measure the motivation of the law enforcement officer at the time of the contact. BJS does not currently maintain a survey program that collects data directly from law enforcement officers and, while BJS successfully surveyed School Resource Officers in 2019–2020, even direct, confidential surveys of law enforcement officers are unlikely to show admissions of actual bias.

e. Measuring Law Enforcement Workforce Data

LEMAS has long served as the nation’s primary source of data on the law enforcement profession, including demographics (race/ethnicity and sex) of sworn personnel, first-line supervisors, and command staff. LEMAS also asks data on hirings by and separations from law enforcement agencies, offering insight on turnover in law enforcement personnel. Administering LEMAS more frequently will aid in providing timely law enforcement workforce data.

IV. Conclusion

The steps described above will improve current data collection efforts and result in more helpful statistical analysis in these key areas.