

Frequently Asked Questions

2011 Census of Adult Probation Supervising Agencies Solicitation

Question: Is it possible for you to share the draft survey form with us? This will help us in budgeting and addressing the imputation component of the solicitation. If the CAPSA 2011 questionnaire draft is not ready for circulation, could you comment on whether or not it will be similar to the 2006 Census of Adult Parole Supervising Agencies form?

Answer: Unfortunately BJS does not yet have a draft of the questionnaire; we are still working on it. At this point, we don't yet know if one section will have five questions and another section will have ten questions. However, we do know the topics that will be addressed, which are outlined in the solicitation, but the extent to which they will be addressed has yet to be determined. I also know that we do not want to make the questionnaire too lengthy because that will add respondent burden and may adversely affect response rates for the annual probation collection.

It is understood that some information on the questionnaire is necessary in order to address the budget and imputation components in the solicitation. What can be said is that BJS will attempt to collect agency-level information that is addressed in the solicitation, and then will also need to collect some basic office-level information. Applicants can state that they assume the questionnaire will be similar to the 2006 Census of Adult Supervising Agencies. Applicants can also state additional assumptions about collecting some basic office-level information about population size and some other basic information (e.g., number of probation officers) that will be necessary to create a frame of probation offices that will allow for future surveys of probationers and probation officers. This will be sufficient as long as applicants clearly state their assumptions and state that they have based their decisions on those assumptions. Once the recipient is selected and the project begins, the task(s) and/or the project timeline may be revised based on discussions with BJS.

Question: If an applicant proposes completing the non-core special task (identified on page 11 of the solicitation) that refers to outlining a special topic report that uses the CAPSA2011 data along with data from other sources that may be correlated with probation, is it BJS's intention that this non-core special task be completed within the 24-month CAPSA project period?

Answer: The intent is to complete the non-core special task within the 24-month project period. However, if you have concerns about completing it within that period, you can propose a timeline of how long you think it will take to complete the non-core special task beyond the 24-month project period (with no additional costs).

Question: For budgeting purposes, we are trying to develop an estimate of the number of probation offices to be included in the universe file and, thus, the data collection effort. We consulted the 2006 Census of State Parole Supervising Agencies, which reported 2,287 parole agency offices, including 1,784 that also serve probationers. Because there are more probationers than parolees and community-based corrections facilities are included in the sample, we are thinking that 2,287 might be a low estimate. In addition, our research has indicated that there are more disparate numbers presented on other establishment frames for the industry of probation agencies. Noting these varying counts and the fact that the estimated count of agencies is a key budget driver, can BJS please specify an assumed number of agencies for the purposes of the proposal?

Answer: It is important to note that an agency may consist of one or more offices. BJS initially envisioned developing a list of probation agencies and offices using the various sources identified in the solicitation, as well as any other available sources, and then having the probation agency verify the offices identified within that agency. For the 2011CAPSA collection, BJS originally assumed a strategy similar to the one used for the 2006 Census of State Parole Supervising Agencies in which the basic information about the parole offices was obtained from the main entity (i.e., parole agency).