



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

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Ms. Wendy A. Naus
Executive Director
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1403 K Street, NW, Suite 550
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Dear Dr. Wood and Ms. Naus:

This responds to your letter dated October 18, 2019, regarding statistical reports and staffing of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). We are deeply committed to BJS's mission and highly value the important statistics BJS provides to policymakers, researchers, and the general public.

Because of BJS's strong commitment to data quality, analysts thoroughly examine all datasets and documentation that are delivered from collection agents to ensure they meet BJS's data-quality guidelines. Some omissions and inconsistencies with specifications have been found and have taken considerable time and effort to fix. Such efforts ensure that the final datasets, documentation, and other products released to the public are complete, accurate, and meet BJS's standards.

In early 2020, BJS plans to release statistical briefs from the *Survey of Prison Inmates*, covering topics such as alcohol and drug use, incarcerated parents, mental health, medical problems, and veterans in prison. Afterward, the data file will be released to the public. BJS also plans to release a report on background checks that includes data for 2016 and 2017.

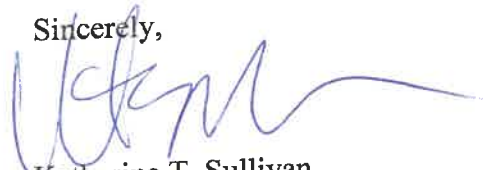
BJS discontinued the forensic science supplement to the *Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics* (LEMAS) Survey. BJS determined after cognitive testing that a full survey of law enforcement agencies was unlikely to succeed.

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Concerning the data collection on *Mortality in Correctional Institutions* (formerly the *Deaths in Custody Reporting Program*), the Bureau of Justice Assistance will assume responsibility for collecting mortality data from state prisons, local jails, and state and local law enforcement agencies. BJS will continue to collect and report mortality data from federal law enforcement agencies and prisons. In 2020, BJS plans to release reports closing out their data collections on deaths in state prisons and local jails.

BJS has been hiring staff and continues to recruit for vacancies. While BJS has had to prioritize efforts over the past year, BJS continues to work diligently to carry out its full range of programs and to fulfill its mandate to provide objective and timely statistics to inform national criminal justice matters. We hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



Katharine T. Sullivan
Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General