



## U.S. Department of Justice

### Office of Justice Programs

*Washington, D.C. 20531*

#### **Message from the survey sponsor:**

With support from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has designed and is implementing the National Survey of Victim Service Organizations (NSVSO). The NSVSO is a first-of-its kind attempt to develop and disseminate reliable statistical information about victim-service providing organizations, such as their organization, staffing, funding, and types of services provided to victims. The NSVSO will standardize measures of victim services to enable comparisons among types of organizations to learn about capabilities and constraints these organizations face in delivering services.

The NSVSO fits within OVC's Vision 21 effort to transform the victim services field by using research to identify challenges, best practices to improve services, and evaluation to determine what works. Vision 21 reflects OVC's understanding of the needs of the victim services field and lays out a strategic vision for the field to enhance our nation's capacity to assist crime victims and promote justice through the delivery of support services to victims of crime.

The NSVSO also complements BJS's National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which tells us much about criminal victimization, victim injury and loss, crimes reported and not-reported to the police, reasons for not reporting to the police, and follow-up by the police or with other criminal justice agencies. In addition, the NCVS currently provides limited information about whether or not victims obtained services from a public or private victim serving agency. However, as the NCVS focuses on victims of crime, it is unable to address fully the provider side. The NSVSO will address this gap in our understanding of victim services, as in conjunction with the NCVS and other data on criminal victimization, the NSVSO data will contribute to describing needs for services and the capacities of the field to meet these needs.

By participating in the NSVSO, your organization will help to provide more comprehensive data on the current state of the victim services field, the field's changing needs, and gaps in the provision of services. The goal is for the NSVSO to eventually provide a barometer of progress made in the efforts to provide comprehensive and effective services to victims and of the relative health of victim service providers.

As one of the 13 principal statistical agencies in the decentralized federal statistical system, BJS collects, analyzes, and disseminates statistics on criminal victimization, criminal offenders, and the operations of the criminal justice system at all levels of government for purposes related to improving the efficiency and fairness of criminal justice systems. The data that BJS collects through the NSVSO will be disseminated publicly through BJS statistical reports that describe the characteristics of organizations and the services they provide.

I both want to encourage and thank you in advance for participating in the NSVSO.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Sabol".

William J. Sabol  
Acting Director  
Bureau of Justice Statistics