

**Questions and Answers**  
**Solicitation—Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities**

1. Q: A lot of information has been collected as part of the design project (SIPLJ). Can you tell us if any of that information will be made available to other bidders to put them on an equal footing with the SIPLJ contractor?

A: The purpose of the solicitation is to complete work for the national implementation of the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities (SISFCF). The solicitation includes information about the Survey of Inmates in Prisons and Local Jails: Design and Testing Project (SIPLJ), and describes the goals and issues being explored through SIPLJ. No reports or a project summary on SIPLJ have been delivered to BJS because at this point the SIPLJ project is slightly behind schedule due to the time it is taking to redesign the questionnaire, which is why only a draft of the questionnaire has been posted. Other than working on the questionnaire, the only other SIPLJ task we have worked on has been to explore different sampling options. This solicitation requests applicants to propose sample design options because we remain interested in additional options. If you have specific questions about the SIPLJ redesign work or need clarification on specific tasks of this implementation project, please contact Lauren Glaze, Program Manager, at 202-307-0765.

2. Q: Has SIPLJ done any work on the issues associated with obtaining and using criminal history information from administrative databases?

A: Not at this point. This work will be part of the pilot study, which has been delayed due to the amount of time it is taking to finish the questionnaire. The pilot study will not be fielded before the solicitation closes. The issues described in the solicitation related to Subtask 2.3, Protocols to Obtain Inmate Consent and IDs to Link Survey Data to Administrative Records, have been only discussed at this point. We are looking for applicants to propose strategies to address these issues.

3. Q: For example, will it be possible to use the FBI's centralized database? (This is a follow-up question to the question above.)

A: BJS has developed a new automated process, which obtains state and federal RAP sheet data through the FBI's Interstate Identification Index and collates the information into a single database that supports national-level recidivism research. BJS is currently using this protocol in a study of prisoners released from state prisons in 2005. The SIPLJ redesign project, through the pilot study, will explore the feasibility of using this same protocol to obtain inmates' criminal history data through the RAP sheets and conduct a recidivism study of the inmates in the SISFCF 2012.

4. Q: Has the SIPLJ investigated issues related to obtaining this information from a single state or jurisdiction?

A: No.

5. Q: Does the 40 double-spaced page referenced on pg. 22 of the solicitation include the performance measures?

A: No.

6. Q: Is BJS requesting two separate detailed budgets? One accounting for the minimum cost for the smallest sample size proposed and one accounting for the maximum cost for the largest sample size proposed?

A. The program narrative should provide a total cost for the project based on the minimum sample size proposed and a total cost for the project based on the maximum sample size proposed. However, the detailed budget worksheet and narrative should be constructed around the minimum total project cost to achieve the precision goals outlined in the solicitation. Applications will be evaluated on that budget, but applicants may submit supplementary budget materials if they prefer to do so.

7. Q: Is BJS requesting that the disclosure analysis be conducted at a certain point during the project?

A. No. The solicitation states that soon after data collection begins, the recipient of funds will need to submit a plan to the BJS PM, for review and comment, for carrying out the disclosure analysis. That plan will need to include details about when and how the analysis will be conducted. Both the recipient of funds and the BJS PM will work together to finalize the plan before data collection ends.

8. Q: "Subtask 6.2 Methodology Reports" indicates the methodology report will need to be delivered to the BJS PM within the first month after data collection ends. What happens if all the components that need to be addressed in the methodology report cannot be addressed within one month after data collection ends?

A. BJS expects a draft of the methodology report for review and comment within one month after data collection ends because most of the sections in the methodology report can be described at that point. BJS understands though that more time may be needed to finalize the report, including the incorporation of BJS comments and additional sections of the report that could not be addressed within one month after the end of data collection.

9. Q: On pg. 7 of the solicitation, under Subtask 2.5, Sample Design and Selection, BJS provides sample design parameters. Do the prevalence rates provided by BJS mean that applicants should only consider them when determining the optimal sample sizes? Or is BJS interested in analyzing those prevalence rates by other characteristics too?

A. The information provided in Subtask 2.5 was intended to indicate that at the national level, BJS is interested in generating separate estimates of severe mental illness (SMI) for men and women. BJS is also interested in analyzing the SMI prevalence rates separately for men and women by other important characteristics that BJS has historically reported in special reports. See pg. 3 of the solicitation, under "Project-Specific Information," for a list of a few of those special reports. At the state level, BJS is interested in generating estimates of SMI for the total jurisdiction population (not separately for men and women), and also analyzing

the prevalence of SMI within those jurisdictions by important characteristics reported in prior BJS special reports.

10a. Q: On pg. 5 of the solicitation, under Subtask 2.1, Instrument, it says, “BJS will deliver to the recipient of funds the final survey instrument for the SISFCF 2012 in both English and Spanish and the source code and other associated files to develop the instrument.” Can you identify the software product and version for the source code?

A. The recipient of funds for the SIPLJ redesign and testing project must deliver an instrument that is created from nonproprietary software commonly available to government and industry, and in compliance with the government's desire for portability in applications. The source code will need to be compatible/transferable to other software.

10b. Q: What will be included in the associated files?

A. “Associated files” is a general term used to account for all other possible files that may be generated and delivered. The recipient of funds will deliver to BJS the SISFCF 2012 files needed to implement the national data collection. At this time BJS cannot anticipate the content of those files.

10c. Q: Can the bidders assume that “the final survey instrument for the SISFCF 2012 in both English and Spanish” is a functioning, executable CAPI program?

A. See pgs. 5-6 in the solicitation under Subtask 2.1, Instrument; BJS is requesting that applicants propose mode(s) of administration. If applicants make assumptions in their proposals, then they should state those assumptions clearly and justify them when necessary. Applicants can assume the final survey instrument delivered by BJS will be a functioning, executable program.