

FY 2023 Annual Evaluation Plan

U.S. Department of Justice



Introduction

Mission

The mission of the Department of Justice (DOJ) is to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights.

Organization

Under the leadership of the Attorney General of the United States, the Justice Department is composed of more than 40 separate component organizations and more than 115,000 employees. Headquartered at the Robert F. Kennedy Building in Washington, D.C., the Department maintains field offices in all states and territories across the United States and in more than 50 countries around the world.

Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018

The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), which was signed into law on January 14, 2019, emphasizes the importance of evaluation and requires agencies to undertake a number of activities to build and use evidence. These activities include developing and publicly sharing a learning agenda and an evidence-building capacity assessment, both published as part of the Department's [strategic plan](#), as well as this annual evaluation plan. Consistent with the Evidence Act, the Department of Justice is committed to conducting rigorous and relevant evaluations, to using evidence from these evaluations to inform policy and practice, and to conducting its evaluations in a transparent and ethical manner. This report provides an overview of each of the 17 significant evaluations DOJ plans to conduct in FY 2023.

Significant Evaluations

Consistent with the Evidence Act, this annual evaluation plan describes the *significant* evaluations that the Department will conduct in fiscal year (FY) 2023. The following criteria were used to identify significant evaluations:

Relevance to agency mission, goals, and objectives

- **Relevant** evaluations will focus on programs and policies that are important to the agency’s mission, goals, and objectives. Such evaluations might also address priority questions in the Department’s learning agenda, and these linkages are noted in the descriptions that follow.

Potential impact on agency decision making

- **Impactful** evaluations will produce actionable results with potential to inform high-stakes decisions that directly concern DOJ programs and policies.

Methodological rigor

- A **rigorous** evaluation employs methods most appropriate for the objectives, within constraints of timeline, feasibility, and available resources.

Statutory requirements

- **Legislative mandates** may require evaluation of specific programs and policies.

Overview of Evaluations

This report is organized around the strategic goals that the Department of Justice outlined in its *FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan* and *Learning Agenda: Uphold the Rule of Law, Keep Our Country Safe, Protect Civil Rights, Ensure Economic Opportunity and Fairness for All, and Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems*. Evaluations supporting each of these strategic goals are shown below.¹

Keep Our Country Safe

- Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Training
- Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN)
- Korean Americans for Healthy Families
- Domestic Violence Transitional Housing
- Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence

Protect Civil Rights

- Second Chance Act (SCA) Grants
- Community Relations Service Training and Facilitated Dialogue Programs
- Veterans Treatment Courts

Ensure Economic Opportunity and Fairness for All

- Small Business Reorganization Act of 2019

Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems

- Remote Adjudication and Virtual Staff Dedicated to Closing Pending Cases
- Anger Management Program
- Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program (BRAVE)
- Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN)
- Bureau of Prisons Needs Assessment System
- Bureau of Prisons Reentry Programs
- Drug Treatment Program
- Resolve Trauma Treatment Program

¹ In FY 2023, the Department does not plan on conducting a significant evaluation under strategic goal 1, Uphold the Rule of Law.



Keep Our Country Safe



Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Training

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

The Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force is a national network of 61 coordinated task forces representing more than 5,400 federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. These agencies are engaged in proactive and reactive investigations, forensic investigations, and criminal prosecutions. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) supports the ICAC Task Force program through funding under the Missing and Exploited Children appropriation included in the Department of Justice fiscal year appropriation. The ICAC training program, funded by OJJDP, is designed to assist state and local law enforcement agencies in developing effective responses to sexual predators who target children online and/or engage in or facilitate child exploitation, and in investigating and prosecuting child obscenity and pornography cases. Since 1998, more than 807,200 law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and other professionals have been trained on techniques to investigate and prosecute ICAC-related cases.

This nationwide evaluation, which will be conducted by WestEd in collaboration with the Center for Cybercrime Investigation & Cybersecurity, will focus on ICAC training designs, implementation, outcomes, and costs. This project began in October 2018 and is anticipated to run through September 2023; work in FY 2023 will include follow-up outcome data collection, cost analysis, and reporting.

Research Questions

The evaluation is guided by six evaluation questions:

- What is the quality of the training provided?
- To what extent are the training courses implemented with fidelity?
- What is the level of trainee satisfaction with the trainings?
- What growth occurs in trainee knowledge and skills as a result of the training?
- How do trainees use the information they learned in the field?
- What are the costs of providing training compared to any benefits regarding trainee knowledge, skills, and use?



Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Training (Continued)

Design and Methods

The study will focus on OJJDP-funded training provided by three specific providers and will involve implementation evaluation, outcome evaluation, and cost-effectiveness evaluation. The implementation evaluation will include assessments of ongoing training programs, curricula review, and observational assessment of fidelity of training delivery to identify any potential changes and improvements. The outcome evaluation will consist of pre- and post-assessments of trainees' knowledge and skills, including post-assessment by Task Force commanders and trainees regarding on-the-job utilization of training knowledge and skills.

Data required for this study will be gathered from: (1) course materials and learning plans for each investigative training course and observation of training delivery techniques and fidelity; (2) pre-post surveys and in-depth interviews with trainees, staff, and trainers; (3) post surveys of Task Force commanders; and (4) administrative records of training costs, staff, and participants. Specifically, the Task Force commanders will provide insights on the utility of training, while the trainees will contribute to pre-post assessments of training, satisfaction measures, and follow-up interviews on utilization of training.

Dissemination and Use

Planned dissemination efforts are primarily targeted to inform the ICAC program staff at OJJDP, the training providers, and the ICAC task forces; briefs are being prepared throughout the evaluation to provide feedback to these audiences. A publicly accessible project summary will be archived at the National Criminal Justice Reference Service.



Project Safe Neighborhoods

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) is a Department of Justice initiative aiming to reduce the most pressing violent crime problems through comprehensive, collaborative, and community-based approaches. Working together with agencies and organizations of multiple disciplines, U.S. Attorneys' Offices (USAOs) develop and implement violent crime–reduction strategies within the USAO districts. Most districts also have access to formula grant funds to implement some of the PSN strategies. Each district's PSN program is developed around specific design elements and core principles that include: (a) a partnership with federal, state, local, territory, and tribal law enforcement and prosecutors, as well as other agencies and organizations serving the community; (b) data-driven strategies to target enforcement efforts in locations with significant violent crime problems; (c) prevention of additional violence; (d) accountability through collection of relevant data and measurement of results and outcomes; (e) fostering trust and legitimacy in communities; and (f) setting focused and strategic enforcement priorities.

Though PSN is a long-standing program, it has not been evaluated in more than a decade, during which time the program has evolved. An enhanced version of the program, known as PSN 2.0, was introduced as a formula grant in FY 2018. PSN 2.0 features five key elements: leadership by USAOs, partnerships with law enforcement and community groups, targeted and prioritized enforcement using data and technology, prevention of additional violence through varied efforts, and accountability of the U.S. Attorney to produce results.

The current evaluation is funded via a competitive grant from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and is being conducted by RTI International with support from the Justice Research and Statistics Association. The Executive Office for United States Attorneys facilitates communication between NIJ and the USAOs and provides input to inform the evaluation. Other DOJ and OJP components provide needed data.

FY 2023 is the final year of the evaluation and is devoted to collecting and analyzing data on the extended impact of PSN and to preparing reports and scholarly products for the field.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department's learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

Which district-level strategies under Project Safe Neighborhoods are most effective in reducing violent crime, and how can the Department most effectively implement this program in fidelity with the evidence-based comprehensive violent crime reduction strategy?



Project Safe Neighborhoods (Continued)

Research Questions

Research questions related to outcomes:

- How do violent crime rates change in USAO districts during PSN implementation?
- How is PSN implemented in each USAO district, particularly regarding the selection of target enforcement areas and the application of core elements and principles?
- To what extent are changes in violent crime rates associated with various factors, including but not limited to PSN strategies and activities, the types of violent crime targeted, and the number and scope of prioritized target enforcement areas?
- In selected case study sites, to what extent do changes in violent crime rates differ in PSN target enforcement areas compared with other areas?
- How have violent crime rates changed in target, adjacent, and distal areas?
- How did PSN affect different violent crime types and locations in incident-based data?
- How were PSN activities and outcomes viewed by target area communities?

Research questions related to implementation:

- What direction, guidance, and resources did DOJ make available to USAO districts implementing PSN?
- How were the five PSN program principles implemented across USAO districts?
- In what primary ways did implementation of PSN vary across districts?
- Who were the primary PSN partners, and how did partnerships function?
- What community partners were involved in implementing PSN and with what roles and level of involvement?
- How did PSN task force partners collaborate and coordinate, and with what effect?
- What locations were targeted by PSN, and did target locations change over time?
- Did PSN affect levels of proactive policing as measured by calls for service data?
- What is the strategic plan for task forces regarding how PSN is to be implemented and which crimes are targeted? Has the strategic plan changed over time?
- How did PSN grantees coordinate with or leverage other funding?

Design and Methods

This multisite, multilevel evaluation includes both a national assessment and a set of case studies in 10 systematically selected districts.

The national assessment will evaluate implementation and outcomes across all 94 USAO districts. The national assessment will measure PSN imple-



Project Safe Neighborhoods (Continued)

mentation and outcomes in each district, while accounting for contextual factors, such as related community socioeconomic and demographic factors. To make use of available data, the evaluation team will conduct ancillary analyses in about 65 target enforcement areas (TEAs) whose law enforcement agencies (LEAs) submit data to the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

Appropriate statistical models² will be used to examine crime rates before and after the implementation of PSN 2.0, and a quasi-experimental design will be used to compare crime trends between PSN and non-PSN comparison areas.³ In addition to site-specific analyses, cross-site models will be used to examine how differences in violent crime trends were associated with PSN strategies and other implementation characteristics. Using data from the community resident survey, the team will analyze the extent to which attitudes and perceptions are associated with PSN strategies and implementation characteristics.⁴

Case studies in the 10 selected districts will be used for a more in-depth assessment of the program. This component will evaluate the implementation and outcomes of PSN 2.0 in 10 districts that were selected because they offer a strong test of the enhanced PSN model and incident-level crime data are available from law enforcement partners. In addition to using data collected for the national assessment, case studies will use qualitative information from interviews with PSN coordinators and key stakeholders and quantitative data on crime incidents provided by local law enforcement partner agencies. The major source of outcome data for the case studies is crime data from LEA partners. Trends in violent crime in each of the target enforcement areas will be compared to trends in similar non-PSN areas and to trends in crimes not targeted by PSN. Additionally, case studies may include community resident surveys to assess perceptions of safety, community engagement, and police legitimacy.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be disseminated through briefings to DOJ staff, NIJ publications, academic journal articles, publications aimed at practitioners and policymakers, and conference presentations. The evaluation will identify key elements of a successful violence reduction strategy and key roles that federal leadership can play in identifying strategies to effectively address violent crime.

² Latent growth curve models

³ The quasi-experimental design will involve a synthetic control

⁴ In addition to analysis of individual aspects of implementation, the team will create a more holistic account of PSN implementation by using latent class analysis (LCA) to identify groups of districts with implementation characteristics similar to those of other districts in the same group and distinct from those of districts in other groups. Implementation data and the LCA groupings will be used to produce descriptive summaries and conduct analyses to examine the relationship between implementation aspects and outcomes.



Korean Americans for Healthy Families

Participating Component: Office of Violence Against Women [OVW]

Background

Korean Americans for Healthy Families is a community-level intervention funded by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) that seeks to build the capacity of faith leaders to assist Asian domestic violence (DV) survivors, as well as strengthen community attitudes that condemn DV and facilitate survivors' access to services.

Funded by a grant from OVW, the University of Georgia will conduct a second-phase evaluation of the Korean Americans for Healthy Families program.⁵ This study focuses on two interventions that will be implemented sequentially: (1) a virtual simulation and in-person workshop for Korean American (KA) faith leaders in year 1, and (2) a community-wide communication campaign in year 2. The study's goal is to evaluate the combined impact of both interventions on community members and survivors. More specifically, the project seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the community intervention on Asian community members and Asian survivors who call or visit community agencies, assess the effectiveness of the faith leader training, and identify strategies to improve uptake of the faith leader training. This evaluation is planned for calendar years 2022 through 2024.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department's learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

Which criminal justice processes and victim service programs are most effective in addressing the needs of crime victims across different settings or contexts (e.g., programs embedded in criminal justice agencies, community-based programs)? Which best addresses the needs of underserved and hard-to-reach communities? What are the barriers to accessing these programs, and do they disproportionately affect traditionally unserved or underserved populations?

Research Questions

- How effective is the faith leader training as perceived by faith leaders? What is the impact of the faith leader training on the knowledge and attitudes of community members and domestic violence survivors?

⁵ For a report of the first-phase evaluation, see: Choi, Y. J., Orpinas, P., Kim, I., & Ko, K. S. (2019). Korean clergy for healthy families: online intervention for preventing intimate partner violence. *Global Health Promotion*, 26(4), 25–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757975917747878>



Korean Americans for Healthy Families (Continued)

- What is the impact of the communication campaign on community members' knowledge, attitudes, and intentions related to domestic violence?
- What is the combined impact of the faith leader training and the communication campaign?

Design and Methods

The evaluation will involve quantitative, qualitative, and trend analyses. The quantitative analyses will utilize a quasi-experimental design where the impact of the communication campaign is estimated by comparing regions where it is or is not implemented, and the impact of the faith leader training is estimated by comparing Asian American subpopulations within each region whose faith leaders do or do not receive the training. The effects of the faith leader training and communication campaign will be estimated using appropriate statistical models.⁶

Data will be collected from the virtual case simulations, calls to hotlines, focus group conversations with faith leaders, and surveys administered to community members, survivors, and faith leaders. Usage data from virtual case simulations (e.g., number of modules completed, number of times each simulation was reviewed, time spent in each, time to get correct answers, time spent on each step, and number of times participants completed each session changing the storyline) and survey data (from pre-intervention/baseline, after the faith leader training, and after the communications campaign) will also be used.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be disseminated through academic articles and government reports. The findings will be presented at conferences and briefings for victim service providers, the justice system, and faith leaders, and will also be shared in an easy-to-read format via a newsletter for organizations for KA faith leaders in each area. Finally, the findings from this evaluation will be presented and shared at scientific conferences for researchers working in specific areas related to domestic violence. Where possible, the findings will be used to enhance the effectiveness of programs or interventions funded by OVW.

⁶ Two-way mixed-effect ANOVAs with time as the within-subjects factor and exposure to the program as the between-subjects factor, controlling for city effect and baseline differences.



Domestic Violence Transitional Housing

Participating Component: Office of Violence Against Women [OVW]

Background

Domestic violence transitional housing (DVTH) programs provide housing units and supportive advocacy services, to build stability and support for safe, permanent housing, primarily for domestic violence (DV) survivors – a group with sustained, intergenerational, economic, and health disparities. These DV survivors may remain in or return to violent situations if they are unable to find and maintain safe, affordable, and quality housing. There are over 600 DVTH programs that exist across the United States, serving the housing needs of over 42,000 people a day.

Despite the widespread use of DV transitional housing (DVTH), programs remain largely untested for efficacy, creating a significant gap in our understanding of impactful housing for DV survivors. Funded by an OVW grant, the University of Central Florida will conduct a longitudinal, mixed-methods study to examine DVTH program outcomes, which include health, safety, and self-sufficiency, across individual, organizational, and community-level indicators. This is a five-year project, scheduled to run through October 2025.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

Which criminal justice processes and victim service programs are most effective in addressing the needs of crime victims across different settings or contexts (e.g., programs embedded in criminal justice agencies, community-based programs)? Which best address the needs of underserved and hard-to-reach communities? What are the barriers to accessing these programs, and do they disproportionately affect traditionally unserved or underserved populations?

Research Questions

- What changes in safety are reported by DVTH clients over time post–baseline assessment?
- What changes in self-sufficiency are reported by DVTH clients over time post-baseline assessment?
- To what extent do DVTH clients report changes in physical and psychological health over time post–baseline assessment?
- What type (and duration) of services accessed by survivors are correlated with better health, safety, and self-sufficiency outcomes?
- Are clients that exit DVTH able to successfully access and maintain stable housing?
- How do safety, self-sufficiency, and health vary based on individual characteristics and program factors?



Domestic Violence Transitional Housing (Continued)

Design and Methods

The study will involve collecting and analyzing data from a sample of DVTH programs across the country. A longitudinal, cohort design will be implemented to recruit survivors living in DVTH for 12 months or less and follow them for 36 months at 6-month intervals to assess outcomes during and after DVTH stays. Community- and agency-level data will be collected from participating agencies and OVW and Department of Housing and Urban Development grantees through data requests and surveys. Qualitative data collection is underway to incorporate survivor and agency voices into the study, enhance the efficacy of procedures, and identify additional items for examination related to DVTH operations and sustainability.

Bivariate and multivariate statistical models, including repeated-measures multivariate analysis of variance and hierarchical linear modeling, will be used to conduct group and nested comparisons of survivors by DVTH models and other related indicators. Qualitative and quantitative analyses on program models, sustainability, and costs will be conducted.

Dissemination and Use

To disseminate project findings to the scientific community and provide opportunities for replication, scholarly articles and reports will be produced for multi-disciplinary outlets, participating agencies, and OVW. Additionally, webinars and conference presentations are planned for practitioners and researchers. To publish the findings for consumption by the general public, a project website will be created to facilitate real-time dissemination. A relational database will be created for OVW and DV agencies for planning and program management purposes, and data will be archived according to DOJ guidelines. Where possible, the findings will be used to enhance the effectiveness of programs or interventions funded by OVW.



Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

The Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) STOP School Violence program provides grants to states, units of local government, and Indian tribes to improve security at schools and on school grounds by providing tools needed to recognize, respond quickly to, and prevent acts of violence. BJA created the program in response to the STOP School Violence Act of 2018.

In this study, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), through a grant to the University of South Florida, will examine a subset of FY 2018 and FY 2019 STOP grantees who received funding from the BJA to implement violence prevention and mental health training programs. The purpose of the project is to understand the challenges and facilitators of implementing violence prevention and mental health training programs among selected grantees. NIJ is funding the study to examine the effectiveness of grants made under the STOP School Violence Act.

The multi-year study began in January 2021 and is scheduled to conclude in December 2022. As of December 2021, a cross-site survey to gather STOP grantee feedback has been administered, seven sites for case studies have been enrolled, and case studies to assess contextual factors influencing implementation have been initiated.

Research Questions

- What is the stage of implementation for each site?
- From the grantee perspective: 1) What are the challenges and facilitators of program implementation? 2) What implementation drivers contribute to program success? 3) What implementation drivers are underutilized? 4) What capacity do grantees have to offer mental health support in schools? 5) How satisfied are grantees with their capacity?
- For case study sites, what contextual factors influence implementation?

Design and Methods

The study will involve process evaluation and include both quantitative and qualitative data.



Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence (Continued)

The quantitative portion will include a survey of BJA grantees that relies on several tools from the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN). The NIRN Stages of Implementation will be used to assess STOP grantees' stages of implementation. NIRN Implementation Drivers will be used to identify implementation drivers. The NIRN Hexagon Tool will be used to identify drivers of success, underutilization, and challenges. The School Mental Health Capacity Instrument (SMHCI) will be used to assess the capacity of schools across sites to address the mental health needs of students. The study team is developing a tool to assess satisfaction with capacity to address student mental health needs. The survey will include all grantees who have been awarded funding in the Violence Prevention and Mental Health Training category of the BJA's STOP Violence Prevention Act grants during the 2018 and 2019 award years.

A mixed-methods approach will be used to collect a variety of data from participating case study sites. The methods will include document review, virtual observation, and qualitative interviews with key project stakeholders at each grantee site.

Dissemination and Use

To disseminate the findings of this study, OJP plans to conduct a webinar and present at conferences in addition to publishing policy briefs and journal articles so the information can be accessed by decision makers and the research community. Datasets developed under this evaluation will be archived to the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD).



Protect Civil Rights





Second Chance Act Grants

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

The Second Chance Act (SCA), passed by Congress in 2008 and reauthorized in the First Step Act of 2018 (FSA), invests in strategies to reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and reduce corrections costs for state and local governments. This evaluation examines the effectiveness of grants used by the Department of Justice, specifically the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), to support offender reentry and recidivism reduction programs. BJA will support the evaluation by providing funds to selected SCA grantees to support tasks related to the evaluation. This evaluation is funded by NIJ via a grant to Georgia State University.

The SCA includes a requirement that NIJ evaluate:

- Effectiveness of SCA programs in relation to their cost, including the extent to which the programs improve reentry outcomes, including employment, education, housing, reductions in recidivism, of participants in comparison to comparably situated individuals who did not participate in such programs and activities
- The effectiveness of program structures and mechanisms for delivery of services
- The impact of such programs on the communities and participants involved
- The impact of such programs on related programs and activities
- The extent to which such programs meet the needs of various demographic groups
- The quality and effectiveness of technical assistance provided by the Department of Justice to grantees for implementing such programs
- Such other factors as may be appropriate

The study should measure the implementation, processes, outcomes, costs, and impacts of the grants sponsored by the SCA.

This multi-year evaluation focuses on three SCA grantee sites. It began in January 2021 and is scheduled to run through December 2026. In FY 2023, the evaluation will be in the third of the three phases described below (see Design and Methods).

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What effect does the Department’s grant funding have on states, localities, and other recipients in spurring criminal justice innovation and evidence-based reforms? How are the Department’s grant programs influencing community investment in innovation and evidence-based reforms?



Second Chance Act Grants (Continued)

Research Questions

- To what extent did each selected SCA site implement its program to meet the intended goals, meet the needs of its participants, and achieve SCA and local evaluation outcomes?
- To what extent did organizational and external environmental structures and policies influence program implementation?
- To what extent did the SCA site implement the program with fidelity?
- What is the impact of the site program on SCA outcomes, costs, other programs, and the community?
- To what extent did BJA-funded training and technical assistance support program implementation, fidelity, and participation in a multi-site (quasi-)experimental evaluation?

Design and Methods

This multi-site study has three phases: (1) evaluability assessments, which will inform site-specific designs for measuring the implementation, outcomes, costs, and impacts of the programs; (2) development of impact evaluation plans to allow for causal inference, where feasible, for each site; and (3) an assessment of the implementation, processes, outcomes, costs, and impacts of the SCA grants.

The evaluation will leverage multiple data sources, including program documents, administrative records, program case files, and secondary data on participants and controls, staffing, and service use. Additionally, expenditures and revenue data, along with progress reports and performance measures, will be required. Semi-structured key informant interviews will be conducted with program administrators, staff, service providers and partners, program participants, and training and technical assistance (TTA) providers to gain more insight into the programs. The evaluation team will also conduct site visits to directly observe the programs.

Dissemination and Use

It is anticipated that results will be disseminated through conference presentations; briefings and journal articles for practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders; and academic journal articles. Results will build the evidence base around effective reentry strategies funded through the SCA, provide greater understanding of the factors that influence evaluation readiness among reentry programs, describe the impact that SCA reentry programs have on recidivism when the services begin during detention and continue upon reentry to the community, and inform the funding and evaluation of reentry programs.



Community Relations Service Training and Facilitated Dialogue Programs

Participating Component: Community Relations Service [CRS]

Background

The Community Relations Service (CRS) works with community groups to resolve community conflicts and prevent and respond to alleged hate crimes arising from differences of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. In service of this mission, CRS delivers both training and facilitated dialogue programs to external audiences and stakeholders, including law enforcement, community leaders, state and local officials, and civil rights leaders.

Training programs are designed to increase local capacity to address conflicts, deescalate tensions, and prevent disputes by providing representatives from government, faith organizations, law enforcement, civil rights groups, and other community organizations with knowledge and skills that increase understanding and improve collaboration between diverse stakeholders.

Facilitated dialogue programs are designed to increase mutual understanding among parties, identify issues and solutions, and develop actions. Topics of discussion frequently include race, police-community relations, alleged hate crimes, communication, trust, and diverse perspectives on various issues.

In FY 2022, CRS is evaluating one facilitated dialogue program, the Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP) program, by means of retrospective surveys and interviews with participants. In FY 2023, this effort will be expanded to include prospective surveys, which will provide baseline data for later comparison with post-program results. It will also be expanded to include additional programs (both training and facilitated dialogue).

Research Questions

What are participants' perceptions of:

- community capacity to respond to and resolve community conflicts?
- the strength of partnerships between key groups and stakeholders within the community?



Community Relations Service Training and Facilitated Dialogue Programs (Continued)

- levels of tensions between key groups and stakeholders within the community?
- levels of trust between key groups and stakeholders within the community?
- To what extent are CRS-facilitated dialogue and training programs associated with changes in the participants' perceptions of community capacity, partnerships, tensions, and trust?

Design and Methods

Both prospective surveys and retrospective surveys and interviews will be used to measure participants' perceptions of community capacity to respond to and resolve community conflicts, changes in community partnerships and trust, and changes in community tensions. Surveys will be administered online to program participants – including law enforcement officers, public officials, community leaders, and other stakeholders – and will include both ratings and open-ended questions. Interviews with key stakeholders will be used to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on program impacts.

Dissemination and Use

Findings will be shared with CRS staff (leadership, programs, and field), Department leadership, and external stakeholders, including Congress and the public. This will be done through written reports, including the agency's annual report to Congress; conference presentations; webinars; website postings; and possibly journal articles. Results will be used to inform future deliveries of facilitated dialogue and training programs, by identifying promising implementation strategies and potential improvements to the designs of the programs.



Veterans Treatment Courts

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

Veterans treatment courts (VTCs) are dedicated court dockets that support justice-involved active military service members and veterans diagnosed with substance use disorders or mental health issues and other rehabilitation needs. Since their founding around 2008, VTCs and other veterans courts have proliferated to an estimated 623 dockets in 2021. These programs are supported by grants from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and managed by a multidisciplinary team of criminal justice professionals who consider criminal justice and treatment responses with attention to participants' unique experiences.

In collaboration with BJA, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has developed a plan for a cross-site evaluation of VTCs that includes process, impact, and cost efficiency. Outcomes of interest include equitable access, program retention, recidivism, relapse, mental health functioning, and housing stability.

The 5-year NIJ cross-site evaluation is scheduled to begin in July 2022. Potential research partner sites are being identified independently and will be confirmed and assessed for evaluability by the NIJ research team during the 2022 planning phase.

Research Questions

- Process evaluation: Do the programs work as intended? What is their case flow? How have they leveraged technology and peer mentoring? How are services accessed, and is service access equitable?
- Impact evaluation: What are the programs' impacts on relapse, recidivism, alcohol and other drug use, mental health, housing stability, and other outcomes? For whom are the programs effective? Which program elements are effective?
- Cost-efficiency analysis: How cost-efficient are VTC programs, considering the public investment and net benefits of these programs? How can programs maximize return on investment given target populations?



Veterans Treatment Courts (Continued)

Design and Methods

This study will involve process evaluation, impact evaluation, and cost-efficiency analysis. This study will include a cross-site evaluation with up to six research partner sites across the U.S., incorporating experimental design and other research methods. The NIJ research team leading the cross-site evaluation will work with the research partner sites and their program and court data representatives to finalize the research protocol during the planning phase. Data needed to support the process, impact, and cost-efficiency evaluation tasks will be derived from multiple sources. Qualitative and quantitative research tasks will range from baseline and follow-up interviews with objective bioassays to secondary archival data analysis and observation and other primary information collection regarding programs and comparison group processes.

Dissemination and Use

OJP expects the evaluation to produce a final report and relevant data sets. Additionally, NIJ expects scholarly products to result from each award under this solicitation, taking the form of one or more published, peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles, and, if appropriate, law review journal articles, book chapters, or books in the academic press. Findings will also be disseminated via outlets oriented to practitioner and policymaker audiences and applied by BJA and others to inform program, training, and technical assistance investments.



Ensure Economic Opportunity and Fairness for All



Small Business Reorganization Act of 2019

Participating Component: United States Trustee Program [USTP]

Background

The Small Business Reorganization Act (SBRA) of 2019 enables small businesses to file for bankruptcy under the new Subchapter V of Chapter 11 if they meet certain conditions, including having no more than approximately \$3.0 million⁷ in noncontingent liquidated debts. The SBRA is meant to provide distressed small business owners the opportunity to reorganize their businesses more quickly and at a lower cost. Comparing Subchapter V cases with non-Subchapter V small business cases, USTP will conduct an analysis of a variety of important case outcome measures to assess the effects of SBRA. This evaluation is an ongoing effort to periodically monitor the effects of the SBRA.

Research Questions

- Did the SBRA increase the likelihood of a plan of reorganization being confirmed by the court for Subchapter V debtors relative to other Chapter 11 small business debtors?
- Did the SBRA shorten plan confirmation time for Subchapter V debtors relative to other Chapter 11 small business debtors?
- Did the SBRA shorten dismissal or conversion time for Subchapter V debtors, relative to other Chapter 11 small business debtors, for those cases not leading to confirmed plans?
- Did the SBRA facilitate the consensual confirmation of plans of reorganization for Subchapter V debtors?

Design and Methods

The USTP plans to conduct descriptive quantitative analyses early in FY 2023. This evaluation will require access to data on all Chapter 11 small business bankruptcy cases filed in USTP districts and their outcomes since the SBRA came into effect in February of 2020. This information will mostly be leveraged from the USTP Automated Case Management System (ACMS).

⁷ The debt limit was originally set at approximately \$2.7 million but temporarily raised to \$7.5M by the CARES Act in March 2020 before reverting back to \$2.7 million in March 2022. In April 2022, the debt limit was increased to approximately \$3.0M through an inflation adjustment. Proposed legislation could potentially increase the debt limit to \$7.5 million, retroactive to March 2022.



Small Business Reorganization Act of 2019 (Continued)

Dissemination and Use

The USTP plans to use the results of this analysis to guide leadership decision making and may share some of these results with other stakeholders in the bankruptcy community, such as judges and private bankruptcy trustees. If results change over time, then the USTP can undertake further efforts to understand how its implementation of the program may have contributed to this change and how it can be adjusted, if necessary. In addition, if Congress considers updating the SBRA in the future, these results will inform the Program's position on any potential changes.



Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems



Remote Adjudication and Virtual Staff Dedicated to Closing Pending Cases

Participating Component: Executive Office for Immigration Review [EOIR]

Background

Remote adjudication involves conducting immigration court proceedings by telephone, by video teleconferencing (VTC), or by internet-based hearing. In-person and telephonic hearings have been standard for immigration court proceedings, and VTC has become a widely used tool in judicial proceedings in the last 25 years. Immigration courts have consistently expanded the use of VTC for removal proceedings conducted remotely. Internet-based hearings came online in FY 2020. While progress with each technology has been made, technical challenges still exist for all three mediums.

Pending cases are those that require additional work before a decision is reached and the case can be closed. The number of pending cases has increased in recent years and in FY 2021 reached over 1,500,000. This evaluation will focus on the use of remote adjudication for pending cases and whether remote adjudication can help reduce the pending case backlog.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What technical innovations in courtroom proceedings more broadly can be adapted into the immigration context?

Research Questions

Does utilizing remote adjudication for pending cases have an impact on:

- the pending case backlog?
- the cost of adjudicating pending cases?
- current caseload completion rates?

Design and Methods

This evaluation will involve a randomized controlled trial (RCT), with immigration judges (IJs) and supporting staff randomized to either a treatment group, where remote adjudication will be used for all pending cases, or a control group, where IJs will be free to hear cases either remotely or in person. Once the control and treatment groups are in place, cases for the control group will remain the same, and IJs in the treatment group, along with



Remote Adjudication and Virtual Staff Dedicated to Closing Pending Cases (Continued)

appropriate virtual court staff, will start working on pending cases only.

Outcomes to be measured include: (a) current caseload completion, (b) the cost of adjudicating pending cases, and (c) pending caseload completions. The data collected from each group will include Notice to Appear (NTA) dates, proceeding dates, types of cases, completion dates, and IJ decisions (whether written or oral). EOIR will leverage case, proceeding, and scheduling data, along with data from the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge (OCIJ) related to case adjudication. The primary data source will be the EOIR case management database.

Dissemination and Use

This evaluation has the potential to inform current and future court processes by providing evidence-based recommendations to reduce the backlog of pending cases while reducing court costs. Results will be made readily available on the EOIR website.



Anger Management Program

Participating Component: Bureau of Prisons [BOP]

Background

Anger Management is a low-dosage cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) intervention delivered by professional treatment staff to inmates in prisons managed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP). It addresses critical criminogenic needs and is completed by a large portion of the inmate population. While research exists on CBT and anger interventions generally, none is specific to the programming provided by BOP. In line with the First Step Act of 2018, in FY 2022, the BOP will begin conducting a retrospective evaluation to assess whether and to what extent the Anger Management program results in a reduction in misconduct, a reduction in recidivism, and a reduction in mental health crisis contacts. The study is expected to be completed in FY 2023, at which point a prospective study of the Anger Management program will be conducted, exploring changes in self-reported anger, reductions in misconduct, and reductions in mental health crisis contacts. This study is expected to be completed in FY 2025 and will capitalize on the addition of a subjective measure of anger, which could not be incorporated into the retrospective study due to the absence of this data. The BOP will conduct both studies via a contract with Texas Christian University.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What is the long-term impact of First Step Act programs on formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community?

Research Questions

- To what extent does BOP’s Anger Management program result in a reduction in prison misconduct following completion of the program?
- To what extent does the program result in a reduction in subjective feelings of anger?
- To what extent does the program result in a long-term reduction in recidivism?

Design and Methods

The program’s impact on misconduct, recidivism, and anger will be assessed using a quasi-experimental design. Program participants will be compared with a matched control group that is selected via propensity scoring on a range of demographic variables (age, race, ethnicity), as well as security level, education, and offense type. The analysis will account for participation in BOP’s Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program (BRAVE) program, which could interact with the Anger Management program.⁸ The study will make use of demographic data, as well as data on



Anger Management Program (Continued)

institutional conduct, program participation, and medical and mental health functioning collected by BOP. Criminal history data and data on recidivism from the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (Nlets) will also be used.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be disseminated through peer-reviewed publications and posted on the BOP website for stakeholders, community providers, and correctional facilities. BOP will use the results of this research to inform the implementation of the Anger Management program in Bureau facilities.

⁸ The BRAVE program is described in a separate section of this document.



Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program (BRAVE)

Participating Component: Bureau of Prisons [BOP]

Background

The Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program (BRAVE) is a residential program designed to support first-time, medium-security, male inmates in prisons managed by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Specifically, the program is provided for inmates who are at the beginning of their sentence who are typically 32 years of age or younger and have a sentence of at least 60 months. BRAVE participants are housed together and spend at least 350 hours in programming focused on reducing criminal thinking and behavior, healthy communication, and emotional self-regulation. Substance abuse and mental illness may also be addressed. The goal of BRAVE is to reduce misconduct in prison and support appropriate adjustment to incarceration. In line with the First Step Act of 2018, in FY 2022, BOP will conduct a retrospective evaluation to assess whether and to what extent BRAVE results in a reduction in misconduct, a reduction in recidivism, and fewer mental health crisis contacts. This study is expected to be completed in FY 2023, at which time a prospective study will be completed. The prospective study will explore reductions in misconduct, reductions in mental health crisis contacts, and reductions in self-reported anger, trauma, anxiety, and depression. This study is expected to be completed in FY 2025 and will capitalize on the addition of subjective measures of psychological indices, which could not be incorporated into the retrospective study due to the absence of this data. The BOP will conduct both studies via a contract with RSG CJ Analytics.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What is the long-term impact of First Step Act programs on formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community?

Research Questions

- To what extent does the BRAVE program result in a reduction in misconduct?
- To what extent does it result in a reduction in crisis contacts for inmates following program completion?
- To what extent does BRAVE result in reduced recidivism?

Design and Methods

The program’s impact on misconduct, recidivism, and crisis contacts will be assessed using a quasi-experimental design. Program participants will be compared with a matched control group that is selected via propensity scoring on a number of variables. The matched control group will be selected



Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program (BRAVE) (Continued)

from two pools of program non-participants: individuals who met the eligibility requirements to participate in BRAVE (based on age, length of sentence, and prior BOP commitment), and individuals who just failed to meet the eligibility requirements (e.g., individuals who were slightly older and had slightly shorter sentences). The analysis will account for participation in BOP’s Anger Management program, which could interact with the BRAVE program. The study will make use of BOP data on program participation, mental health status and diagnosis, and misconduct, and analysis may include age, gender, criminal history, and other demographic and programming variables. Data on recidivism from the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (Nlets) will also be used.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be disseminated through peer-reviewed publications and posted on the BOP website for stakeholders, community providers, and correctional facilities. BOP will use the results of this research to inform the implementation of the BRAVE program in Bureau facilities.



Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN)

Participating Components: Bureau of Prisons [BOP], Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

The Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN) is a risk assessment tool used to assess and periodically reassess the risk of recidivism of each person in the custody of the federal prison system. The tool has both “static” risk factors, including several criminal history items, and “dynamic” factors, including institutional programming, work, and behavior items. PATTERN was developed for the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) in accordance with the First Step Act of 2018 (FSA) and is used to inform the type, amount, and intensity of evidence-based recidivism reduction programming and productive activities assigned for each prisoner.

The FSA mandates that the PATTERN tool undergo an annual review and revalidation that includes: “(A) any subsequent changes to the risk and needs assessment system made after the date of enactment of [the FSA]; (B) the recommendations developed under paragraph (2) [of 18 U.S.C. § 3631], using the research conducted under paragraph (3); (C) an evaluation to ensure that the risk and needs assessment system bases the assessment of each prisoner’s risk of recidivism on indicators of progress and of regression that are dynamic and that can reasonably be expected to change while in prison; (D) statistical validation of any tools that the risk and needs assessment system uses; and (E) an evaluation of the rates of recidivism among similarly classified prisoners to identify any unwarranted disparities, including disparities among similarly classified prisoners of different demographic groups, in such rates.” By assessing PATTERN’s validity as a predictor of recidivism, this study evaluates the effectiveness of one component of BOP’s recidivism reduction programming – in particular, the tool used to target this programming. This study also evaluates the equity with which BOP’s recidivism reduction programs are targeted, by assessing whether the tool produces unwarranted disparities across racial or ethnic groups.

In collaboration with the BOP, the annual assessment of PATTERN is supported by the NIJ through a contract. BOP supports the annual assessment through the provision of administrative data and technical and operational expertise.

Research Questions

- What changes have been made to PATTERN since the enactment of the FSA?
- Is PATTERN a valid predictor of general and violent recidivism?
- Are changes in PATTERN scores over time related to differences in risk for recidivism?



Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN) (Continued)

- Are there any unwarranted disparities identified based on the rates of recidivism among similarly classified prisoners of different racial or ethnic groups?
- What recommendations can be made to enhance the performance and utility of PATTERN?
- Does the risk and needs assessment system base prisoner risk of recidivism on indicators of progress and regression that are dynamic and can reasonably be expected to change while in prison?
- Are the four PATTERN risk assessment tools statistically valid?

Design and Methods

The FY 2023 evaluation will analyze a cohort of individuals released from BOP custody to assess the predictive validity, dynamic validity, and racial and ethnic neutrality of PATTERN. Researchers will make use of BOP administrative data and individual criminal history records from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and Nlets. Key data elements will include offender demographics, risk and security level, inmate static and dynamic data, programmatic elements (types and numbers of programs received, program completion), criminal history, recidivism, information related to drug treatment, history of institutional violence, and misconduct.

Dissemination and Use

It is anticipated that results will be released on the DOJ and NIJ websites, in addition to being included in an annual report to Congress, as required by the FSA.



Bureau of Prisons Needs Assessment System

Participating Components: Bureau of Prisons [BOP], Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) conducts a variety of assessments early in the prison admission cycle, in order to identify and provide programs and services to prepare inmates for their eventual reentry into society following completion of their sentence. BOP assesses individual needs as part of the intake assessment, with reassessment occurring at least semi-annually throughout a person's term of incarceration. Staff meet with those who are incarcerated to discuss assessment findings with regard to criminogenic and other needs. From these discussions, those who are incarcerated are referred to appropriate programs.

For this purpose, BOP has developed a needs assessment system known as the Standardized Prisoner Assessment for Reduction in Criminality (SPARC-13), which assesses needs related to anger/hostility, antisocial peers, cognitions, education, dyslexia, family/parenting, finance/poverty, medical care, mental health, recreation/leisure/fitness, substance abuse, trauma, and work.

Together, this needs assessment system and the Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN) make up the risk and needs assessment system required by the First Step Act of 2018 (FSA). The FSA mandates that this risk and needs assessment system undergo an annual review and revalidation that includes: “(A) any subsequent changes to the risk and needs assessment system made after the date of enactment of [the FSA]; (B) the recommendations developed under paragraph (2) [of 18 U.S.C. § 3631], using the research conducted under paragraph (3); (C) an evaluation to ensure that the risk and needs assessment system bases the assessment of each prisoner's risk of recidivism on indicators of progress and of regression that are dynamic and that can reasonably be expected to change while in prison; (D) statistical validation of any tools that the risk and needs assessment system uses; and (E) an evaluation of the rates of recidivism among similarly classified prisoners to identify any unwarranted disparities, including disparities among similarly classified prisoners of different demographic groups, in such rates.”

In collaboration with the BOP, the annual assessment of the needs assessment system is supported by the NIJ through a contract. BOP supports the annual assessment through the provision of administrative data and technical and operational expertise.

Research Questions

Specific research questions have yet to be determined but will be consistent with the statutory requirements noted above.



Bureau of Prisons Needs Assessment System (Continued)

Design and Methods

An appropriate design and methods will be identified based on the research questions.

Dissemination and Use

It is anticipated that results will be released on the DOJ and NIJ websites, in addition to being included in an annual report to Congress, as required by the FSA.



Bureau of Prisons Reentry Programs

Participating Components: Bureau of Prisons [BOP], Office of Justice Programs [OJP]

Background

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilitates programs to assist incarcerated individuals in their transition out of prison. These programs range from residential treatment programs for incarcerated women, to faith-based programs to ground incarcerated individuals in positive values and responsibility, to residential programs that offer psychological support.

This project will evaluate a number of BOP reentry programs, including Female Integrated Treatment (FIT); the Foundation program; the Threshold program; Life Connections; Steps Toward Awareness, Growth, and Emotional Strength (STAGES); the Skills program; and the Non-Residential Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP-NR). This evaluation will support the First Step Act mandate requiring the Attorney General to conduct ongoing research and analysis on evidence-based recidivism reduction programs and will support an understanding of which programs are the most effective at reducing the risk of recidivism for the federal inmate population.

A collaboration between BOP and OJP, this evaluation will be funded by NIJ via a contract using funds transferred from BOP. This project is expected to take place over calendar years 2022 through 2026.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What is the long-term impact of First Step Act programs on formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community?

Research Questions

- To what extent are BOP reentry programs implemented as intended?
- To what extent are the BOP reentry programs effective in improving outcomes post-release, for example, reducing recidivism and increasing housing stability and employment opportunities?
- How effective are the BOP reentry programs under evaluation in relation to their cost?
- How effective are program structures for the BOP reentry programs under evaluation?



Bureau of Prisons Reentry Program (Continued)

Design and Methods

The evaluation of each reentry program is expected to examine cost, program structure, implementation, and mechanisms for program delivery. Each is expected to involve process evaluation, impact evaluation (if feasible), and cost-efficiency analysis involving both qualitative and quantitative data. The research team will utilize program logic models, programmatic and performance data, observation and interview data, policy and practice data, administrative data, and other sources to design and conduct the evaluation of each program. Program documents, policy documents, administrative records, and program case files will also be used. Additionally, semi-structured key informant interviews with program administrators, staff, service providers and partners, and program participants, along with direct program observation through site visits, will inform each evaluation. This will be a multi-site project, with different sites and numbers of sites used to evaluate the different reentry programs.¹⁰

Dissemination and Use

Results will be made available on Department webpages, and additional reports may be prepared for correctional facility staff or other stakeholders. Results will be taken into consideration when planning future management of reentry programs.

¹⁰ If there are sites that offer more than one of the programs, then the evaluation may also examine combinations or interactions between the programs.



Drug Treatment Program

Participating Component: Bureau of Prisons [BOP]

Background

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) offers multiple drug treatment programs to incarcerated individuals, including:

- Drug Education, a 12- to 15-hour psychoeducational program that covers the cycle of drug use and crime, offers a compelling perspective on the consequences of continued drug use, and introduces the inmate to available treatment options
- the Non-Residential Drug Abuse Program (NRDAP), which involves a cognitive-behavioral treatment protocol completed over the course of 12-14 weeks of group therapy
- the Residential Drug Abuse Program (RDAP), a multi-component program that includes treatment services both within BOP facilities and during transition from incarceration to the community
- Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), which offers individualized treatment and support to inmates with histories of opioid use disorders who are nearing community placement

This retrospective evaluation seeks to measure the effectiveness of these four programs by analyzing existing data related to each program. BOP will fund an independent contractor to conduct these evaluations.

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department's learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What is the long-term impact of First Step Act programs on formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community?

Research Questions

- When compared with non-participants, did enrolled program participants (regardless of length of program participation) have better program-related outcomes, such as reductions in institutional misconduct, improved institutional adjustment, and lower recidivism rates?
- Did program completers have better outcomes than do program non-completers?
- What pre-program variables (e.g., demographic/background factors) were associated with program placement, completion, and outcomes?



Drug Treatment Program (Continued)

Design and Methods

Individuals who participated in a drug education/treatment program will be compared with an untreated matched control group of individuals who were eligible for but did not participate in the same drug education/treatment program. Matching will incorporate a number of variables, including demographics, security level, education, and offense type. Individuals who participated in more than one program will be compared to those who participated in only one program. Outcomes of interest include institutional indicators (e.g., misconduct), intermediate outcomes (e.g., symptom reduction), and post-release indicators (e.g., recidivism).

In general, data will be analyzed using strategies based on the general linear model (e.g., analysis of variance, analysis of covariance, multiple regression) and logistic regression to assess each program's impact on institutional, intermediate, and post-release outcomes. Multilevel analyses will also be performed to test for potential variation across institutions, regions, and other relevant subgroups.

Data will be drawn from the Bureau's inmate tracking system (SENTRY) and institutional treatment and mental health database (Psychology Data System [PDS]). If recidivism is studied as a long-term outcome, BOP will rely on data from the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (Nlets). The design of the evaluation will be informed by qualitative information about the implementation of the program, gathered through direct observations and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and staff.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be disseminated through peer-reviewed publication and posted on the BOP website for the wider audience of stakeholders, community providers, and correctional facilities. Findings will enable BOP to assess the relative effectiveness of its drug treatment programs relative to outcomes including symptom reduction and recidivism. Findings will inform future updates of treatment protocols, revisions to policy, and management of drug treatment programs.



Resolve Trauma Treatment Program

Participating Component: Bureau of Prisons [BOP]

Background

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) Resolve program, a trauma treatment program for inmates, consists of a psycho-educational workshop called Trauma in Life followed by a non-residential treatment program for those who are eligible. The workshop provides inmates with information on trauma and its potential impact on their lives and functions to identify and motivate inmates who need treatment to participate in the Resolve program's non-residential protocol during their incarceration. The non-residential component consists of a protocol called Seeking Safety for females and Seeking Strength for males.

This evaluation seeks to analyze the effectiveness and efficiency of the Resolve program with regard to reducing recidivism for participating inmates. This is consistent with the First Step Act of 2018, which calls for ongoing research and analysis on evidence-based recidivism reduction programs. It will be conducted by staff in the Bureau's Office of Research and Evaluation and is expected to take 5-7 years (depending on the rate at which inmates progress through the treatment and the time it takes them to complete the program).

This evaluation will contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department's learning agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

What is the long-term impact of First Step Act programs on formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community?

Research Questions

- Do inmates participating in the Resolve program have lower levels of trauma/PTSD symptoms upon program completion as compared to a sample of similarly situated non-participants?
- Do inmates participating in the Resolve program have lower rates of observed recidivism as compared to a sample of similarly situated non-participants?

Design and Methods

This study will involve both retrospective and prospective analyses. A retrospective design will be used to study behavioral markers, such as number of incident reports, and psychological data related to major events, such as suicide risk assessment. Specifically, this approach will include an analysis of rates of misconduct, major psychology services events, and restrictive housing placement. For the purposes of the evaluation, major psychology services events are defined as those instances where an inmate has contact with a psychology staff member for one or more of the following reasons:



Resolve Trauma Treatment Program (Continued)

- crisis intervention
- disruptive behavior intervention
- suicide risk assessment
- psychology alert
- restrictive housing

As no control group can be constructed at this phase, an appropriate statistical model will be used to examine the degree to which we observe a reduction in the above markers for program participants from 12 months prior to enrollment to 12 months after program completion. Additionally, those who successfully complete the program will be compared with those who enter but do not complete all phases of the program to determine the degree to which successful completion influences the results.

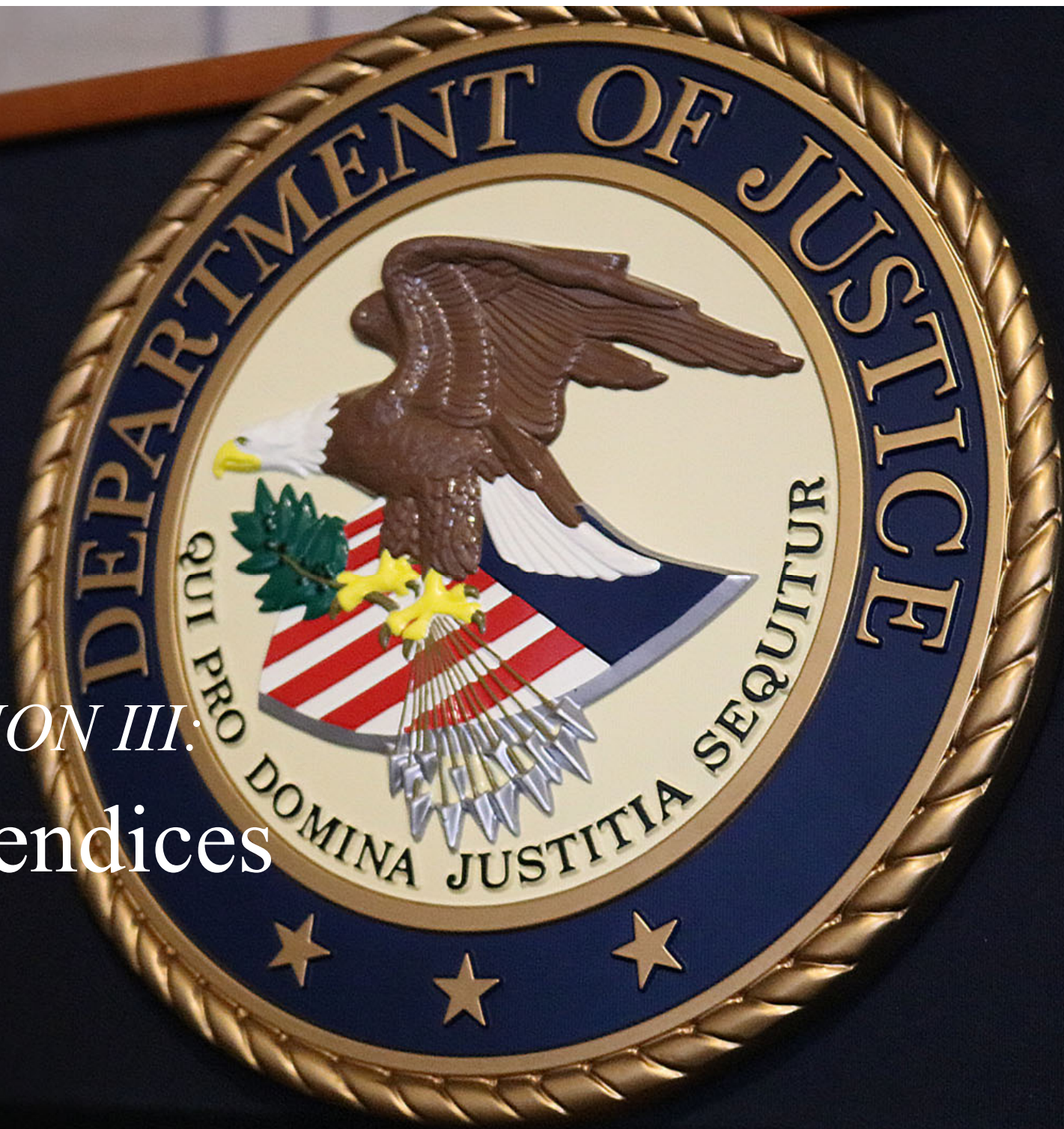
Additionally, a prospective design will be used to study specific psychological symptoms not available in the existing data and compare such symptoms between a cohort of Resolve participants and a comparison group. Moreover, as more Resolve programs for male participants have been activated, it allows us to focus on these programs which were not available in the existing data (which is primarily for female programs). The second phase will include a prospective analysis where we will examine the degree to which the Resolve program influenced symptoms of trauma, anxiety, and depression as compared to a group of similarly situated inmates who did not participate in the program. An additional analysis will be conducted with the treatment and comparison groups, but with recidivism as the outcome, as data permits.

In addition to information gathered directly from the participants of the Resolve program (and the comparison sample of non-participants), the following data sources will be used:

- SENTRY, the BOP's inmate tracking system, will be used to gather data for relevant Resolve participants and inmates selected as part of the comparison group.
- The Psychology Data System, the BOP's psychological services records system, will be used to capture data for relevant Resolve participants and inmates selected as part of the comparison group.
- Data on rearrests will be collected for relevant Resolve participants and inmates selected as part of the comparison group for the three-year period after their release from custody.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be disseminated through peer-reviewed publications and posted on the BOP website for a wider audience of stakeholders, community providers, and personnel at correctional facilities. Findings will inform future updates or treatment protocols, revisions to policy, and management of drug treatment programs.



SECTION III:
Appendices

Appendix A: Abbreviations and Acronyms

A		F	
ACMS	Automated Case Management System	FIT	Female Integrated Treatment
B		FSA	First Step Act
BJA	Bureau of Justice Assistance	FY	Fiscal Year
BOP	Federal Bureau of Prisons	I	
BRAVE	Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program	ICAC	Internet Crimes Against Children
C		IJ	Immigration Judge
CAC	Crimes Against Children	K	
CBT	Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy	KA	Korean American
CRS	Community Relations Service	L	
D		LCA	Latent Class Analysis
DOJ	Department of Justice	LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
DV	Domestic Violence	M	
DVTH	Domestic Violence Transitional Housing	MAT	Medication-assisted Treatment
E		N	
EOIR	Executive Office for Immigration Review	NACJD	National Archive of Criminal Justice Data

Appendix A: Abbreviations and Acronyms

NCIC	National Crime Information Center	R	
NIJ	National Institute of Justice	RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
NIRN	National Implementation Research Network	RDAP	Residential Drug Abuse Program
NLETS	National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System	S	
NRDAP	Non-Residential Drug Abuse Program	SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
NTA	Notice to Appear	SBRA	Small Business Reorganization Act
O		SCA	Second Chance Act
OCIJ	Office of the Chief Immigration Judge	SMHCI	School Mental Health Capacity Instrument
OIP	Office of Information Policy	SOTP-NR	Non-residential Sex Offender Treatment Program
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	SPCP	Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships
OJP	Office of Justice Programs	STAGES	Step Toward Awareness, Growth, and Emotional Strength
OVW	Office on Violence Against Women	STOP	Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence
P		T	
PATTERN	Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs	TEA	Target Enforcement Area
PDS	Psychology Data System	TTA	Training and Technical Assistance
PSN	Project Safe Neighborhoods		

Appendix A: Abbreviations and Acronyms

U	
USAO	United States Attorney's Office
USTP	United States Trustee Program
V	
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VTC	Veterans Treatment Court

Appendix B: Component Websites

Component	Website
Community Relations Service	www.justice.gov/crs
Executive Office for Immigration Review	www.justice.gov/eoir
Executive Office for U.S. Trustees	www.justice.gov/ust
Federal Bureau of Prisons	www.bop.gov
Justice Management Division	www.justice.gov/jmd
Office of Justice Programs	www.ojp.gov
Office on Violence Against Women	www.justice.gov/ovw