

**FY 2025
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 DOJ is committed to conducting rigorous and relevant evaluations, using evidence from these evaluations to inform policy and practice, and conducting its evaluations in a transparent and ethical manner. This report provides an overview of the significant evaluations DOJ plans to conduct in fiscal year (FY) 2025. This includes evaluations that will begin in FY 2025, as well as ongoing evaluations that have not been described in [previous Annual Evaluation Plans](#).

Significant Evaluations

Consistent with the Evidence Act, this Annual Evaluation Plan describes the *significant* evaluations that the Department plans to conduct in FY 2025. 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 five strategic goals that the DOJ outlined in its FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan and Learning Agenda: (1) Uphold the Rule of Law; (2) Keep Our Country Safe; (3) Protect Civil Rights; (4) Ensure Economic Opportunity and Fairness for All; and (5) Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems. Evaluations supporting three of these strategic goals are shown below.¹

<i>Keep Our Country Safe</i>	4
Community Violence Intervention and Prevention in St. Louis, Missouri	5
Flexible Financial Assistance for Survivors of Domestic Violence	8
Healing-Centered Community-Wide Approach to Addressing Firearm Violence in New Orleans, Louisiana	11
Houston Police Department’s Domestic Abuse Response Team	14
Human Trafficking: California Victim Assistance Grant Program.....	17
Human Trafficking: Housing Models for Victims	20
Language Access Barriers Among Victims with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	23
National Association of School Resource Officers Training for School Police.....	26
ProACTIVE: A Community-Based Relationship Violence Intervention Program for Men of Color.....	28
<i>Protect Civil Rights</i>	31
Co-Response for Mental Health Calls to the Police in Fort Collins, Colorado	32
Effective Youth Interactions.....	34
Hate Crime Task Forces	36
Holistic Defense in Wayne County, Michigan.....	38
Money Bail and Other Pretrial Release Options	40
Not in Our Town Hate and Bias Action Teams Model	43
San Gabriel Valley Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement	45
<i>Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems</i>	47
Bureau of Prisons Reentry Programs.....	48
Bureau of Prisons Restrictive Housing Practices	53
HeartMath Resilience Program	56
Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN)	59
Standardized Prisoner Assessment for Reduction in Criminality (SPARC-13).....	61
<i>Appendices</i>	63
Appendix A: Abbreviations and Acronyms	64
Appendix B: FY 2025 Evaluations by Component.....	66

¹ In FY 2025, the Department does not plan to conduct significant evaluations under Strategic Goal 1: Uphold the Rule of Law and Strategic Goal 4: Ensure Economic Opportunity and Fairness for All.



Keep Our Country Safe





Community Violence Intervention and Prevention in St. Louis, Missouri

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The city of St. Louis, Missouri, recently opened an Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) with the core mission of “coordinating public safety resources and community violence intervention programs to make St. Louis neighborhoods safer.” The OVP is partnering with a cohort of seven local service providers that operate community violence intervention and prevention (CVIP) programs. These organizations have similar broad objectives but different specific initiatives. Their efforts include violence interruption by credible intervention specialists, case management and support with individualized services and referrals, victim and family outreach to respond to needs compassionately while preventing further victimization, and the provision of trauma informed services.

This evaluation, conducted by the University of Missouri St. Louis (UMSL) and running from January 2024 through December 2027, will begin with the construction of a program logic model for all services offered by the St. Louis cohort of CVIP providers. The evaluation will assess the impact of the St. Louis OVP and its cohort of service providers on community outcomes in ten CVIP neighborhoods compared with a group of comparison neighborhoods that have demographic characteristics and crime levels most like the CVIP areas. This project will describe: (1) the implementation context for CVIP in St. Louis; (2) implementation facilitators; and (3) implementation barriers relative to best practices and model cases. The project also includes a rapid dynamic assessment and summative evaluation of CVIP efficacy relative to facilitators and barriers.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.3: Combat Violent Crime and Gun Violence.

Research Questions

- What is the full implementation context for CVIP programs in St. Louis?
- What factors serve to facilitate the use of research evidence in the St. Louis CVIP programs?
- What are the barriers to collecting and using research evidence in the implementation of each program?

- What are the short- and long-term impacts of the St. Louis CVIP programs on crime, economic, and health outcomes in ten focus neighborhoods compared with a group of comparison neighborhoods?

Design and Methods

This four-year evaluation will require conducting case studies using mixed methods. This approach offers an opportunity to develop a rich description and assessment of implementation in community-based violence prevention by collecting data from a cohort of independent organizations that vary in their immediate implementation contexts but have the city of St. Louis and the OVP in common. As the CVIP is new and evolving, this research project will take a dynamic approach and document how people and organizations adapt to opportunities and potential challenges that come with being part of the CVIP cohort. To identify and assess both facilitators of and barriers to the use of research evidence, practices in St. Louis will be compared to the Bureau of Justice Assistance Community-Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative Implementation Checklist, as well as implementation science frameworks and other prominent cases.

Further, the UMSL team will focus on the joint impact of the St. Louis CVIP programs in a contextualized way. The team will collect and analyze several different types of data from interviews with CVIP personnel, CVIP clients, and residents and community leaders. Semi-structured interviews will focus on participants' involvement and perception of CVIP efforts. Systematic observation of meetings and public hearings and document reviews of organizational materials will identify and contextualize implementation drivers. Case records from CVIP partners and data from publicly available information systems will be used to measure outcomes across multiple dimensions. Rapid assessments will be submitted to stakeholders quarterly. Summative analysis of outcomes will be conducted in the fourth year. Crime, economic, and health indicators will be used as neighborhood- and city-level outcomes. Impact on community outcomes will be measured by comparing ten CVIP neighborhoods with a group of neighborhoods that have demographic characteristics and crime levels most like the CVIP areas.

Dissemination and Use

Between FYs 2022 and 2023, OJP has awarded nearly \$200 million to support more than 75 sites nationwide through the CVIP Initiative (CVIPI). Results from this evaluation will inform future DOJ funding and grant decisions. Results from this project may also be used to inform the larger OJP CVIPI, as it should provide actionable information for CVIPI-funded programs, for CVIPI-funded training and technical assistance, and for CVIPI-funded program evaluations.

A comprehensive final report will describe the project design, data, and methods as well as the key results, implications, and recommendations. All datasets and related documents from this project will be archived prior to the close of the project. Research presentations and manuscripts for submission to peer-reviewed journals will be developed during and at the conclusion of the project period to ensure contributions to the wider evidence base on CVIP implementation and outcomes.

The project team will routinely report to the local partners involved in CVIP during bi-monthly meetings. One- to two-page web-based translational "fact sheets" will be used to communicate ongoing findings. A shared CVIP data dashboard will offer regular updates on quantitative performance and outcome measures. A web- and print-based CVIP implementation guide fusing insights from the existing evidence and this St. Louis project will be developed and distributed locally through community-based presentations. The UMSL team will also work with OVP leaders and their contacts to seek a spot to discuss the project on the National Violence Prevention Network's "Hard Data" podcast, and to present findings and recommendations to the National OVP Network. The guide and the accompanying presentations/webinars will present findings and lessons through "implementation narratives" based on thick case descriptions, designed to be more memorable and accessible to those in the field than other ways of presenting results.



Flexible Financial Assistance for Survivors of Domestic Violence

Participating Component: Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

Background

Survivors of dating/domestic violence (DV) have acute and long-lasting financial needs. Flexible financial assistance is typically administered to address survivor-defined needs, with preliminary findings indicating positive impacts on housing stability and health, and reductions in subsequent experiences of violence and stress. Though initial findings appear positive, there has been limited longitudinal assessment of the outcomes of flexible financial assistance, and scant implementation guidance to inform communities and funders considering this innovative practice. To address this gap, researchers with the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) Center for Violence Prevention and Temple University will partner with the Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (HCDVCC) to assess the short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes of the Domestic Violence Assistance Fund (DVAFF), a flexible funding assistance program administered by HCDVCC and implemented in 14 sites serving survivors of DV in Harris County, Texas. The 14 sites vary in their implementation of flexible financial assistance, including funding types and amounts.

This two-year project will begin on January 1, 2024, and end on December 31, 2025. Using a researcher-practitioner partnership and guided by a survivor advisory group, the research team will assess four broad outcomes: (1) DV revictimization; (2) perceptions of safety; (3) economic and housing stability; and (4) health. The research team will also explore effective implementation practices for flexible financial assistance to reach diverse groups of DV survivors.

This evaluation is aligned with DOJ's FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities. It will also 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/underserved populations?

Research Questions

- What are the short- (0-1 weeks), mid- (3-6 months), and long-term (12 months) outcomes of the 14 flexible financial assistance sites on survivors of DV?
- What are effective implementation strategies for local programs administering flexible financial assistance?

Design and Methods

To assess the outcomes of flexible financial assistance, longitudinal assessments will be conducted on 300 DVAF program participants. For the longitudinal study, survivors who have used the DVAF program at one of the 14 sites will be recruited to complete an online survey within seven days of DVAF assistance administration, and to participate in a series of prospective longitudinal surveys focused on DVAF program access, experience, and outcomes (violence revictimization, perceptions of safety, economic and housing stability, and health). The research team will use linear and generalized linear regression models to test for program effects while controlling for confounding variables. A group of survivor experts with DVAF experience will help inform the focus of the study and finalize all study materials, including promotional items, surveys, and interview guides. Follow-up interviews with DVAF program participants and semi-structured interviews with DV agency program staff will be conducted to assess perceptions of program impact and motivators and barriers to use. A longitudinal, sequential mixed-methods design will be used and will focus on five domains: (1) reach; (2) efficacy; (3) adoption; (4) implementation; and (5) maintenance. HCDVCC will facilitate the collection of key data from all participating DVAF agencies. Data elements from DVAF program sites collected by the study team will include number of individual and household members served, number of applications for funds received, number of fund requests approved, amount of funds requested, amount received, fund administration method (gift card, third party payment, cash transfer), and demographic and geographic information about fund recipients.

The primary objective of the statistical analyses of the quantitative data is to assess the risk of DV revictimization following administration of DVAF assistance. The statistical analysis will be conducted in three phases: (1) preliminary analysis; (2) confirmatory analysis; and (3) exploratory analysis. Quantitative data will be monitored as it is collected to provide preliminary information, which will be considered in the refinement of follow-up interview guides and used in the purposive recruitment strategy for qualitative follow-up interviews. Qualitative data sources for this project will include survivor advisory focus groups, staff and longitudinal study participant interview transcripts, and memos/notes from data collection.

Dissemination and Use

The 14 unique DVAF sites will showcase a range of implementation approaches to help programs in Texas and nationally. The study may help foster replication and expansion of successful programs across diverse communities by sharing lessons learned and best practices. The study also has the potential to contribute significantly to an understanding of financial strategies to address the impact of DV. The study provides a crucial first step in understanding longitudinal outcomes of financial

assistance, and the opportunity to investigate the impact of this support on safety, economic and housing stability, and health. The research team will disseminate study findings and implications to both the academic community and service providers alike using a multifaceted approach that incorporates webinar presentations, written and electronic materials, and peer-reviewed publications. The webinars will be publicly available in perpetuity at either the UTMB CVP and/or HCDVCC website. The research team will develop an implementation guide that includes a set of one-page briefs and corresponding infographics that can be shared with participating organizations as well as on the UTMB CVP and HCDVCC social media sites to generate engagement with community members. To disseminate study findings to the scientific community, multiple manuscripts are planned that will be targeted to high-impact peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journals.



Healing-Centered Community-Wide Approach to Addressing Firearm Violence in New Orleans, Louisiana

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The New Orleans Community Violence Intervention Program (NOCVIP), implemented by the New Orleans City Health Department and community partners, is designed to reduce fatal and non-fatal shootings through applied best practices in community violence interruption alongside strategies that strengthen the community violence intervention ecosystem. Project activities include the creation of a comprehensive Violence Reduction Strategic Plan, regular review of data, street outreach, community awareness, referrals from partners including law enforcement, community providers, and schools, to identify conflicts requiring immediate intervention, and robust program evaluations to ensure success and sustainability. The program involves assessing individual needs and linking participants to a range of services including behavioral health, employment, education, housing, and family supports.

The goals of NOCVIP are to: (1) reduce the number of shootings in New Orleans; (2) increase conflict mediation with and between individuals at high risk of gun violence; (3) expand connections of high-risk individuals to needed services; (4) provide training and community dissemination of trauma-informed, healing-centered approaches to violence intervention; and (5) increase coordination across the community to build a cohesive violence intervention ecosystem of care. Intended beneficiaries of the program are residents of New Orleans neighborhoods experiencing concentrated disadvantage – areas with high rates of poverty, food insecurity, and higher exposure to gun violence or community violence. This includes Black residents who are over the age of 13 and considered high risk (people who have been shot, have been previously incarcerated, have witnessed violence, and/or have high trauma exposure).

Tulane University’s Violence Prevention Institute, in partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice, will conduct a five-year, mixed-methods evaluation of NOCVIP being implemented from January 2024 through December 2028. Both the NOCVIP program and the Tulane University evaluation received FY 2023 funding support under OJP CVIPI.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.3: Combat Violent Crime and Gun Violence.

Research Questions

- What are the barriers and facilitators related to acceptability and feasibility for the sustainable implementation of NOCVIP?
- To what extent does meaningful engagement of diverse stakeholders in the strategic planning process and throughout the course of NOCVIP implementation create a more effective and sustainable intervention?
- To what extent does regular, formalized, and well-resourced cross-sector coordination create a more effective intervention and facilitate sustainability by establishing the foundation for system-level change?
- What are the short- and long-term effects of NOCVIP on risk factors for firearm violence amongst participants and across New Orleans?
- To what extent does NOCVIP reduce fatal and non-fatal shootings within New Orleans?

Design and Methods

The purpose of the proposed research is to evaluate the development and implementation process and conduct an outcome study to assess system change and rates of non-fatal and fatal firearm violence in New Orleans. Project activities include a process evaluation with participant observation, qualitative interviews, focus groups and a mixed-methods outcome evaluation including collection and analysis of survey data, as well as a time series analysis using secondary data and qualitative focus groups.

The process evaluation will include participant observation and focus group interviews to evaluate the comprehensiveness of the NOCVIP planning process; interviews and focus groups with intervention staff and participants to evaluate program fidelity and acceptability; and focus groups with other agency stakeholders to evaluate efficacy of cross-sector coordination in intervention implementation. The mixed-methods outcome evaluation will include a study of program effects for individual participants and city-wide indicators of firearm-related injuries, fatalities, and arrests, coupled with a qualitative evaluation. Surveys with intervention staff and participants, examination of secondary quantitative data, and focus group interviews will be used. Meaningful engagement of diverse stakeholders will be assessed via participant observation of the NOCVIP planning process and qualitative interviews and focus groups with intervention staff, program participants, community members, and cross-sector NOCVIP stakeholders (e.g., program staff at the local Trauma Recovery Center, the New Orleans Department of Health, and the New Orleans Police Department).

Program participants’ level of risk for, and participation in, firearm violence will be measured through surveys administered at baseline and at 6-month follow-up to assess individual change in firearm-related attitudes and behaviors, and qualitative focus groups with intervention staff and participants. Additionally, city-wide secondary data sources including firearm-related fatal and non-fatal injury and reinjury, and other firearm-related arrests including possession at baseline, 6 months, and 12 months (with extended follow-up of up to 36 months for those participants enrolling earlier in the intervention) will be examined. The broader effects on fatal and non-fatal shootings within New Orleans will be

assessed via analysis of secondary data sources (e.g., records to be obtained from the New Orleans Police Department, the New Orleans Coroner’s Office, and the Louisiana Department of Health) where date and longitude/latitude coordinates are available. This data will be used in the calculation of rates and density of cases of firearm injury and mortality, other homicide and assault rates, and hospital admissions in geographic areas of the city.

Dissemination and Use

Expected outcomes from this evaluation include the development of a model for cross-sector coordination and community engagement in violence prevention and intervention in New Orleans, expansion of the evidence base on the efficacy of healing-centered approaches to violence reduction, and furthering criminal justice practice and policy to address violence prevention locally in New Orleans, statewide, and nationally.

The Tulane University Violence Prevention Institute in partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice will prioritize translating research findings from the process and outcome evaluation to community members, practitioners, policymakers, and other researchers in the field. The evaluation team will disseminate research findings, reports, policy briefs, and academic presentations and publications. The evaluators are planning to provide feedback at annual community engagement events which will include a presentation of a summary of findings and recommendations for revisions to strategy development or implementation. These annual engagement events will also provide the opportunity for the evaluators to integrate community feedback on related recommendations.



Houston Police Department's Domestic Abuse Response Team

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The Houston Police Department (HPD) implements a multidisciplinary co-responder program focused on reducing barriers to services and treating the underlying symptoms of intimate partner violence (IPV). HPD developed the Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) model to respond to increases in intimate partner violence-related homicides, particularly among underserved communities where a lack of trust in police has resulted in reduced engagement with law enforcement and other service providers. A key focus of the DART program is bringing services to victims and/or providing a warm handoff to ensure that victims get the support and resources they need. In 2021, DART served 4,379 victims of crime, which represented approximately 12% of all victims served by HPD's Victim Services Division.

A limited program assessment was conducted to identify opportunities to enhance program outcomes. It involved an assessment of data, the perceptions of the program by referral partners and perceptions of vicarious trauma support from DART personnel. As part of this limited review of DART's implementation, HPD officers working with DART reported that observing the work of civilian advocates increased their understanding of: (1) the role and importance of a trauma-informed response to crisis situations; (2) how best to manage a scene from a victim's perspective; (3) the workflow of medical and service intervention for victims; and (4) effective communication strategies for interacting with civilians while on patrol.

This new study, to be conducted by RTI International (RTI) from January 2024 through December 2026, is a two-phased implementation and fidelity assessment and outcome evaluation of the DART program.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities. It will also 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

Phase 1 Objective: Conduct an implementation and fidelity assessment.

- What are the program inputs, resources, activities, outputs, and short- and long-term outcomes?
- Are there any variations in the intended versus actual implementation of DART or challenges encountered in implementing DART as designed?
- Are the DART program activities being implemented consistently regardless of victim or incident characteristics?
- What are the perceptions of the DART program effectiveness and outcomes among victims served by DART, DART advocates, and other officers working with DART?
- Are there differences in how victims and DART advocates and affiliates view the program based on whether victims receive an immediate or delayed DART response?

Phase 2 Objective: Evaluate DART effectiveness.

- To what extent have IPV-related homicides decreased since the implementation of DART?
- To what extent has utilization of IPV services increased since the implementation of DART?
- To what extent does DART effectiveness vary based on victim characteristics?
- To what extent is the type of DART response (immediate on scene versus follow-up outreach) related to variations in DART outcomes?

Design and Methods

Phase 1 of the evaluation will assess the extent to which DART has been implemented as designed and with fidelity to the original model, using data from a program policy review, interviews with DART staff, community partners, and former DART program participants, and HPD case records. Phase 2 will involve a quasi-experimental test of the effectiveness of the program on key outcomes of interest, including revictimization, lethality, and referrals to and use of victim services using data from HPD reports, victim service data, and exit survey completed by victims.

In Phase 2, the research team plans to use two different analytical methods to assess the impact of DART on key outcomes (lethality, revictimization, and service utilization). First, they will conduct a time-series, pre- (2018–2019) and post- (2021–2025) program test, focused on citywide trends in IPV and service utilization before and after DART implementation. Second, they will assess the effectiveness of the two forms of DART response, by comparing serious IPV incidents occurring from 7 pm to 3 am and receiving immediate on-scene DART response, versus serious IPV incidents occurring from 3 am to 7 pm and receiving delayed DART outreach. Additionally, if there are enough DART-eligible cases that did not receive the DART response, either due to a lack of available responders or victim refusal, the Phase 2 assessment may also include a control group of those who did not receive the DART response.

Data sources include qualitative data from interviews with program staff, program partners, other non-DART HPD officers, and prior DART participants. The evaluation will also utilize de-identified case information available through the Records Management System (RMS) for all IPV and other DART-relevant offense types that occurred between January 2021 and March 2026. Although deidentified, these cases will retain the incident report number. This output will include case-level information and victim and perpetrator information. Further, supplemental case records for 200 randomly selected DART cases per year will be used. Supplemental data will include all Victim Service tracking information, all supplemental reports appended to the original incident report in the RMS, and all supplemental information received from Houston Area Women’s Shelter about victim engagement with services. Supplemental reports will be linked back to RMS output using the incident report number.

Dissemination and Use

This project will have considerable impact in furthering the Department’s goal of protecting vulnerable communities as it relates to advancing knowledge to inform and advance effective services for victims, by building evidence about IPV co-responder models and enhancing law enforcement’s response to IPV.

Findings from the evaluation will inform best practices in the implementation of co-responder models in jurisdictions nationwide and provide HPD with concrete information on the effectiveness of the program and recommendations for continuing to enhance its value and impact for victims. Major findings from this research will also be published in relevant scholarly outlets and a series of accessible practitioner-oriented materials to describe the mechanics of the DART program and provide tangible, actionable strategies to better address IPV in communities nationwide. These materials will be circulated among stakeholders nationally through networks of law enforcement leadership, victim service providers, and policymakers. These materials will succinctly summarize the study findings and provide implications for policy and practice and practical and targeted suggestions for implementing the DART co-responder model and the supports that must be in place to do so. Information will also be disseminated through the RTI website and blog, their JustScience podcasts, social media platforms, and the Symposium on Community Safety and Policing Research.



Human Trafficking: California Victim Assistance Grant Program

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The California Office of Emergency Services' Human Trafficking Victim Assistance (HTVA) grant program funds 31 organizations to provide comprehensive services to sex and labor trafficking victims. This study is a multi-method, multi-site program evaluation of three human trafficking service models: the Comprehensive Service Model, the Coordinated Care Service Model, and the Housing First Service Model. The Comprehensive Service Model provides wraparound services in-house; the Coordinated Care Service Model involves a central case manager that coordinates services for a survivor; and the Housing First Service Model focuses on stable housing before addressing other survivor needs.

With funding from OJP's National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the research, development, and evaluation agency within OJP, RTI will conduct a holistic process evaluation of the HTVA grantee program, a quasi-experimental impact evaluation on the three service models and service receipt characteristics, and a survivor equity and access study on barriers to service and referrals. This evaluation will occur between January 2024 and December 2026.

The evaluation aligns with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities. 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 are the relative impacts of the three service models on outcomes for human trafficking survivors?
- To what extent do service receipt characteristics, including delivery mode, frequency, intensity, and duration of services moderate the impact of the three service models on outcomes for human trafficking survivors?
- To what extent do differences in client demographic or victimization characteristics exist in service receipt characteristics and in outcomes for human trafficking survivors?
- How do outcomes for human trafficking survivors change over time, and do these trajectories of change vary by client demographic characteristics, service receipt characteristics, or the three service models?

Design and Methods

First, RTI will conduct a process evaluation designed to describe HTVA grantee program functioning and capacity, service models, service receipt characteristics, community partnerships, service provider experiences with collecting outcome data, trafficking victimization experiences, and demographics. Second, RTI will conduct a rigorous quasi-experimental impact evaluation designed to test the relative impact of three service models and service receipt characteristics on client outcomes, explore longitudinal survivor outcome trajectories, and assess race equity disparities in services and outcomes. Third, RTI will conduct a survivor equity and access study to examine systemic, personal, and logistical barriers to service and referral access and uptake among human trafficking clients and survivors. Finally, RTI will translate research to practice by developing and disseminating user-friendly products, including California state- and site-level reports, and a Human Trafficking Evaluation Toolkit each designed to support policy, research, and practice.

Appropriate statistical models will be used to estimate the relative impacts of the three service models while accounting for differences in those receiving the three service models. Latent growth curve models will be used to explore outcome trajectories over time, including variability by client demographic characteristics, client victimization characteristics, service receipt characteristics, or the three service models.

The outcome evaluation will use the Outcomes for Human Trafficking Survivors (OHTS) instrument, which is the most rigorously developed and tested instrument available to evaluate human trafficking service models. The OHTS instrument captures outcomes related to survivors' behavioral health, physical health, safety, housing, language and literacy, education, employment, resource management, public benefits, life skills, legal issues, immigration, social support, and parenting. HTVA grantees are already required to collect quarterly client-level process and outcome data using the OHTS instrument.

This evaluation will also require a program-level document review, including logic models if present, as well as qualitative interviews with program directors and case managers, and quarterly OHTS data across five quarters submitted by the 31 programs to the state of California. There will be interviews with 10 survivors served by HTVA grantees and 10 survivors who have recently received HTVA

services but discontinued them for the survivor equity and access study that will examine systemic, personal, and logistical barriers to service and referral access and uptake among survivors who are and are not engaged in HTVA services. These interviews will be conducted by trained survivor expert consultants.

Dissemination and Use

This study will establish a foundation for evidence-based service models that are urgently needed to address survivors' needs and support the criminal justice system response to human trafficking. Concurrently, it will produce the largest and most comprehensive assessment to date of survivor outcomes over time, addressing immediate information needs among human trafficking comprehensive service programs. The OHTS instrument will support the rigorous research and evaluation designs needed to identify longitudinal associations between program participation and outcomes. These findings can, in turn, guide program investments and policy development by the state of California, the DOJ Office for Victims of Crime, and other public and private entities addressing human trafficking.

At the project conclusion, survivor-informed translation and dissemination products will be created for the participating programs, service provider and training and technical assistance (TTA) providers, funders, policymakers, and researchers and evaluators. This will include site-level outcome reports for participating programs, evaluation toolkits, an OHTS 2.0 user guide, practice briefs, and webinars for service and TTA providers. An outcome data report on the HTVA program will be prepared for the California state legislature along with a brief on how outcome evaluation contributes to agency goals. Additional briefings for federal agencies including evidence-based service strategies, journal articles, conference presentations, and a final research report will also be prepared.



Human Trafficking: Housing Models for Victims

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

Safe and stable housing is a protective factor as well as a critical resource for survivors of human trafficking as they exit their situations of exploitation and start their journeys toward healing. Community-based organizations delivering services to victims of human trafficking rely on a variety of models and resources to address differing housing needs. The models range from emergency shelters to meet the immediate needs of survivors, to longer term safe housing options designed to allow survivors to concentrate on their healing process, including the mental health aspects of such progress and risk of falling into situations of re-exploitation. The Department’s Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) has invested over \$15 million in housing programs for human trafficking survivors to date, but few evaluations of these programs have been conducted.

This evaluation, being conducted by the Community Safety Evaluation Lab (C-SEL) at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in collaboration with a network of community-based organizations providing services to victims of human trafficking, aims to gather a better understanding of available housing services for victims of human trafficking, challenges experienced by community-based organizations developing such services, and examples of best practices in the provision of housing to this population based on the experience of human trafficking survivors as well as service providers. The evaluation is planned to take place between January 2024 and December 2025.

Specific project objectives are to: (1) describe and map the types of housing models and services for victims of human trafficking available at the national level; (2) identify the most appropriate housing models and services to meet service needs for different types of victims of human trafficking; and (3) conduct a process and outcome evaluation of specific housing models and services for victims of human trafficking delivered by community-based organizations.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities. It will also 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 types of housing models exist in the United States for victims of human trafficking, what is their capacity, and where are they located?
- What challenges and solutions do providers developing housing models for victims of human trafficking experience?
- What are examples of best practices and practical recommendations to address homelessness in this population?
- How do the five selected housing models compare in achieving specific outcomes for victims of human trafficking?

Design and Methods

Complexity in this case necessitates an evaluative approach that is adaptive and driven by a stakeholders' engagement process to make sure that the results are used in practice by allowing the embedding of formative analysis with evaluability assessments and outcome evaluation within the same study. The evaluation approach is flexible, with new measures and monitoring mechanisms evolving as understanding of the housing programs being studied deepens. This process will include staff interviews, survivor interviews, creation of logic models, and process mapping conducted at repeated intervals to detect changes. Outcome evaluation methods will be finalized at the end of the formative phase of the evaluation once logic models, capacity, and data capabilities are established.

A literature review will be conducted to identify types of housing models and published examples of successful interventions to support victims experiencing homelessness. Structured interviews will be conducted with representatives from all 147 National Human Trafficking Hotline listed housing providers to establish an understanding of national housing service provision and to create an interactive national map of housing service providers with greater detail than is presently accessible in a central location. The nominal group technique will be used with groups of survivors and groups of service providers identified using the local services directory to identify consensus points on survivor needs and optimal housing solutions, including best practices. Once this is complete, the outcome evaluation of five selected housing programs (Salvation Army, Health Imperatives, Zoe Ministries, Rescue 1 Global and Unbound Now) will begin.

Dissemination and Use

At this time, there are few evaluations of housing programs for trafficking survivors despite the \$15 million invested in them by OVC. This evaluation will provide critical information on program effectiveness needed to guide future investments in housing programs for trafficking survivors, especially given that precarious housing is a primary risk factor for trafficking and re-trafficking. This project will develop policy recommendations and practice guidelines based on which of the selected housing services models achieves the best outcomes for victims of human trafficking, including guidance for organizations who are at different stages of development of such services as well as

policymakers who are working on initiatives addressing both human trafficking and homelessness in various parts of the country. At the conclusion of this two-year project, dissemination products will be created for the participating programs, service providers, training and technical assistance providers, funders, policymakers, and researchers and evaluators. Results have the potential to inform future funding of such programs by OVC and others.



Language Access Barriers Among Victims with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Participating Component: Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

Background

Findings from nationally representative surveys indicate that persons with disabilities have a higher risk of victimization, in general, than persons without disabilities². Among individuals with disabilities, persons with disabilities that impact cognitive functioning³ or learning have a higher risk of victimization than individuals with other types of disabilities⁴. While there are overlaps between disabilities, efforts will focus on persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), who are at the highest risk of victimization. IDD is characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviors that originate before the age of 22 and may include communication challenges.

The goal of this evaluation is to identify the language access needs of survivors with IDD and determine the feasibility of accommodations as it relates to victims of Violence Against Women (VAW) with IDD pursuing safety and justice. The research team will conduct a comprehensive assessment of what language barriers inhibit victims with IDD from accessing services. Further, the evaluation will assess potential accommodations, policies, and communication tools which may facilitate language access for victims with IDD. Identification of this population’s needs will generate knowledge on how to ensure survivors with IDD have meaningful language access when seeking services or supports or reporting a victimization.

² Harrell, 2017; 2021; Rand & Harrell, 2009.

³ The National Crime Victimization Survey, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and many scholars use the terminology cognitive disability or cognitive impairment. When directly referencing this data or prior research, the terminology corresponds with the data source or that the authors used. For the purposes of the project, “persons with IDD” is used as this is the most inclusive term.

⁴ Harrell, 2021; Rand & Harrell, 2009; Reyns & Scherer, 2018.

The project’s interdisciplinary team includes faculty in both criminal justice and speech pathology, a national organization centered on persons with IDD, and people with lived experience as survivors with IDD. The team consolidates the range of expertise required to understand barriers to language access for survivors with IDD and disseminate the findings of the study in ways that are useful to practitioners across a spectrum of domains. This three-year project began on November 1, 2023, and is slated to end on October 31, 2026.

This evaluation is aligned with DOJ’s FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities. It will also 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/underserved populations?

Research Questions

- What is the current state of knowledge about language access barriers for victims of VAW with IDD, and what are current policies around accommodations among law enforcement agencies and victim services?
- What are the language access barriers around help-seeking for VAW among persons with IDD, the disability community writ large, and practitioners who serve this population?
- What policies and recommendations are most likely to increase access to justice among VAW victims with IDD?

Design and Methods

First, a systematic literature review will be conducted on research related to accommodations, language access, and victims of VAW with IDD. Articles will be identified through database searching, handsearching references and conducting forward record searches. A systematic review and policy analysis will be conducted to identify what policies are in place around accommodations for persons with disabilities. Interviews and focus groups will be conducted, looking at the communication barriers to reporting VAW among victims with IDD, accommodations to increase language accessibility, and other recommendations to increase access to justice among survivors with IDD. The sample size for the semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups will be 175 participants and be split between two broad groups, the disability community and practitioners who may support VAW victims with IDD. Driven by the findings of the semi-structured interviews and focus groups, a roadmap of policies and recommendations will be developed to increase access to justice among VAW victims with IDD that provide victims with IDD voice, power, and autonomy.

Dissemination and Use

Findings will be informative for understanding the language access barriers within the criminal justice system for VAW victims with IDD. Beyond facilitating increased access to justice, findings can improve rapport between victims with IDD and law enforcement, as well as build the relationship between the disability community and the criminal justice system.

In Year 2, the research team will engage in a concentrated outreach effort that targets stakeholders, policymakers, practitioners, and the disability community. The research team will also engage in more traditional forms of dissemination that includes members of the disability community in these efforts. Findings will be distributed through the monthly newsletter for The Arc, the national association for individuals with IDD, along with The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability community of practice group. Findings will also be presented at conferences. Webinars will be hosted through OVW and The Arc. Outreach will also include disseminating the findings to national stakeholders and policymakers who work to reduce VAW, along with podcasts and blogs.



National Association of School Resource Officers Training for School Police

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) provides annual training to more than 6,000 school police officers. Traditional training for law enforcement delivered through police academies does not provide the training necessary for officers to work effectively in schools, and states and districts have looked to other mechanisms to ensure school officers receive necessary training. Although training options exist, little is known about the quality or outcomes associated with school officer training.

With cooperation from NASRO, WestEd’s Justice & Prevention Research Center will conduct a three-year evaluation of NASRO’s school officer training, from January 2024 to December 2026. This will address a critical gap in the literature and the practical implications of ensuring that school officer training is high quality, promotes learning, and leads to improved school safety outcomes. This study will serve as the first national evaluation of training for school officers.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities.

Research Questions

- What is the NASRO training reach and trainee composition? What are the characteristics of the trainees served by NASRO training?
- What is the quality of NASRO training content and delivery? To what extent are trainees satisfied with the training they receive?
- To what extent does participation in NASRO training improve trainee knowledge and skills?
- To what extent do trainees use what they learn from NASRO in the field?
- What are the trainees’ perceptions of the impact of NASRO training?

Design and Methods

To address the research questions, quantitative metrics will be generated from qualitative data and combined into a database for analysis. The collection of findings from all data sources into one system allows the team to synthesize data across sources, rather than interpret data from each source independently. WestEd will conduct a thematic content analysis of interview transcripts, observation tool notes, and responses to open-ended survey items. Following coding, WestEd will conduct an analysis of the data to identify themes, outliers, and exemplar quotes.

Over the course of the project, WestEd will use data from document review, implementation records, observations, pre-post assessments, end-of-training evaluation surveys, 6-month follow-up surveys, and 6-month follow-up interviews. Quantitative data will be used to address the first research question above, and a combination of qualitative and quantitative data will be analyzed to address the other four research questions. Data collection methods will include the collection of implementation and trainee registration data, document review, training observations, pre-post assessments, end-of-course evaluations, and follow-up surveys and interviews. Descriptive and inferential quantitative analyses, coupled with content analysis of qualitative data, will be used to address the evaluation questions.

Data sources include NASRO's implementation records that catalogue key details about each training event (e.g., course, location, number of trainees) and a registration questionnaire that asks trainees to provide relevant demographic information (e.g., role, level of experience) as well as data from course documentation, observations, end-of-training evaluation surveys, and 6-month follow-up surveys and interviews. The evaluation will also utilize data from pre-post assessments administered at the beginning and end of each training, end-of-training evaluation surveys, and 6-month follow-up surveys and interviews. Finally, it will require data from the 6-month follow-up surveys and interviews to ensure sufficient time has passed for trainees to have opportunities to apply what they learned.

Dissemination and Use

In addition to addressing the gap in the literature regarding the quality and perceived impact of school officer training in the United States, this study is expected to provide robust insights into what constitutes high-quality training for school officers and will provide federal and state policymakers and funders with important information to inform policy and funding decisions regarding school officer training. Specifically, results from this project will inform the decision-making of school and law enforcement leadership as to whether this specific training merits the associated expense and trainee time away from the job. Results from this study may also be used to inform decision-making at higher levels (e.g., district or state) as to whether to require this training for all SROs in their jurisdictions. Finally, NASRO, the largest provider of school officer training, will receive feedback on their courses to drive course improvement and the availability of high-quality training for school officers nationwide.

Dissemination activities will include a practitioner-friendly brief outlining study findings in ways that are accessible and visually appealing, a webinar to share key learnings from the study, a publication in an academic journal to ensure findings are accessible to other researchers, and presentations at a minimum of four conferences over the project period to reach audiences of researchers and practitioners.



ProACTIVE: A Community-Based Relationship Violence Intervention Program for Men of Color

Participating Component: Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

Background

The ProACTIVE program is a community-based relationship violence intervention program (RVIP) that follows a cognitive behavioral approach that is designed to be culturally responsive for men of color. ProACTIVE is adapted from the Achieving Change through Value-Based Behavior (ACTV) abuser intervention model, which was evaluated through a randomized controlled trial under an earlier OVW Research and Evaluation grant and yielded promising findings.⁵ ACTV (and therefore ProACTIVE) is based on mindfulness principles, whereby the theory of change postulates that men can change their behavior if they acquire skills for tolerating uncomfortable feelings and recognizing how their choices “can get in the way of the lives they want.”⁶ This model is fundamentally different from traditional batterer intervention programs (e.g., the Duluth model) that attempt to change men’s beliefs and values. ProACTIVE focuses on building trust and validating the experiences of men of color, while addressing the male privilege and racial oppression that they simultaneously experience.

The purpose of the proposed study is to address problems in the field of RVIPs for men of color by evaluating the feasibility and initial effectiveness of ProACTIVE. It will allow the development of an accurate logic model and a sustainable implementation plan and play a role in the development of future randomized control trials (RCTs). The evaluation will leverage a mixed-methods approach to determine: (1) the feasibility of the ProACTIVE intervention; (2) the acceptability of the ProACTIVE intervention; and (3) the preliminary efficacy of the ProACTIVE intervention to effect change and reduce IPV behaviors.

⁵ Zarling, A., & Russell, D. (2022). A randomized clinical trial of acceptance and commitment therapy and the Duluth Model classes for men court-mandated to a domestic violence program. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 90(4), 326.

⁶ Boden, S. (2017, October 21). Iowa tries a new domestic violence intervention: mindfulness. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2017/10/21/558623534/iowa-tries-a-new-domestic-violence-intervention-mindfulness>.

This project, slated to be finished in late 2025, expands on promising findings from earlier OVW-funded research. It is being conducted in coordination between the principal investigator from Iowa State University and the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

This evaluation aligns with the DOJ FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 2: Keep Our Country Safe, Objective 2.3: Combat Violent Crime and Gun Violence, and Objective 2.6: Protect Vulnerable Communities.

Research Questions

- Is ProACTIVE feasible? Is the program able to recruit, enroll, and retain participants? Can ProACTIVE be implemented with fidelity?
- Do the participants like ProACTIVE? Were participants engaged in ProACTIVE?
- Does the ProACTIVE program positively affect the underlying processes of change (psychological flexibility)?
- Do ProACTIVE participants report decreased IPV behaviors?

Design and Methods

Participants in the study will be 90 men of color who have recently engaged in IPV and voluntarily take part in the 12-week program. They will be asked to complete surveys pre-treatment, post-treatment, and three months after the last program session. Some individuals will also be invited to participate in qualitative interviews about their experiences. Data will examine the initial effectiveness, feasibility, and acceptability of ProACTIVE, including participant retention, reports of working alliance (a feature of an effective therapeutic relationship), and any changes in participants' self-reported IPV behaviors. Research on this adapted RVIP model, which was created collaboratively with the community where it is implemented, will contribute knowledge about non-carceral and culturally responsive strategies for reducing IPV.

The evaluation will collect quantitative data using validated scales that measure psychological and behavioral outcomes. The research team will conduct analyses of the reliability for all measures for the population and examine the normality of scores on the measures; if necessary, transformations of the variables will be conducted prior to the analyses of the data. Qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews to inform the discussion and allow for exploration of new topics. During these semi-structured interviews, participants will be asked about their experiences with program implementation and participation and will be asked to share their perspectives on the feasibility, acceptability, and perceived value of the program.

Dissemination and Use

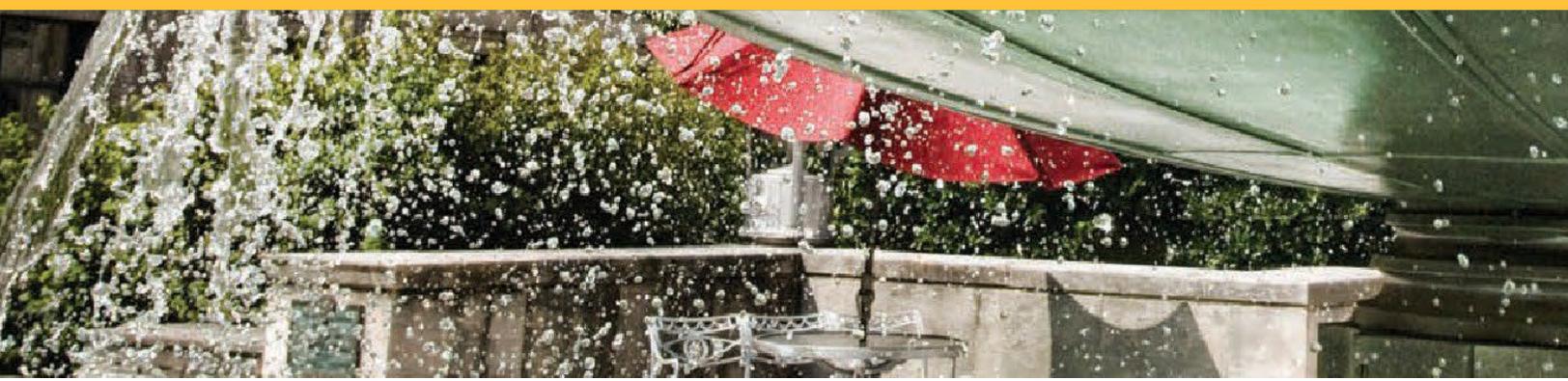
The research will evaluate if ProACTIVE can initiate and maintain engagement with men of color and retain them through the program, as well reduce IPV behaviors. It has the potential to confirm the feasibility of this program to be widely implemented in communities in need. If the evaluation deems that ProACTIVE is a successful program, it will provide evidence for a more rigorous scientific study including the gold standard methodology to evaluate RVIPs – a RCT that includes outcomes such as

official criminal justice data as well as data from victims. Additionally, the results of this evaluation have the potential to inform future funding decisions by the Department.

Findings will be disseminated through publications in the academic press, and presentations at practitioner conferences. The findings may have the potential to help communities (OVW-funded and not) craft and implement abuser interventions that actually – and simultaneously – reduce IPV recidivism and counter inequities in the justice system.



Protect Civil Rights





Co-Response for Mental Health Calls to the Police in Fort Collins, Colorado

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The Mental Health Response Team (MHRT) in Fort Collins, Colorado, is a co-responder team composed of four crisis intervention team (CIT) trained officers, four licensed behavioral health clinicians, and a unit sergeant that responds to behavioral health calls. MHRT, established in 2018, is a formal unit with the police department that is heavily data-driven and community informed. Currently, MHRT patrol is daily, covering 15-hours and providing overlapping coverage between two teams at the highest call volume period of the day. MHRT is designed to respond to all mental/behavioral health calls; however, due to the volume or time of day, MHRT does not respond, but does follow-up with the individual.

NIJ has awarded funds to the University of Wyoming to conduct an evaluation of the MHRT program between January 2024 and June 2026. While metrics and community input have been used to guide the program, no formal evaluation of the program has been conducted.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.3: Reform and Strengthen the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems.

Research Questions

- To what extent does MHRT impact stabilization of individuals on scene and unnecessary emergency hospitalizations compared to traditional police responses?
- To what extent does MHRT impact use of force and injuries on the part of both officers and citizens on calls compared to traditional police responses?
- To what extent does MHRT impact the time spent on the call and repeat (secondary) calls?
- To what extent does MHRT impact the use of diversion, both in the immediate contact (e.g., pre-arrest diversion), and secondary contact in the days following the initial police encounter through follow-up and connecting individuals to appropriate resources?

Design and Methods

The research team will conduct a randomized controlled trial to address the research questions. For behavioral health calls, either the MHRT will be dispatched to the call (treatment), or a traditional police officer will be dispatched to the call (control). For this study, only low risk calls for service are eligible for random assignment. Low risk calls would be those in which the dispatcher ascertains a low likelihood of danger to the person in crisis or those around them. If a call is low level, but the caller requests MHRT, MHRT will still respond, and the call will be dropped from the sample. Multiple statistical techniques, including a difference-in-differences analysis, will be used to assess the difference over time across the groups.

To examine the effectiveness of MHRT on the outcomes of interest, the research team will use data from the Fort Collins Police Services (FCPS) and the UCHealth healthcare system. The research team will collect multiple data sources to create robust outcome measures of calls to the police, referrals, hospital visits, and frequency of service use. They will also obtain the call and incident data from FCPS and include various fields and measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. They will collect the outcome, or disposition, of the behavioral health call for service and compare between the MHRT and traditional police response. Additionally, whether the individual was provided with resources or referrals for service will also be assessed.

Following interactions with the MHRT, the research team will use a semi-structured interview technique with approximately 40 clients. The aim of conducting interviews with individuals who have had direct exposure to the MHRT is to gain deeper insight into their firsthand experience with behavioral health services and their perceived effectiveness with MHRT crisis response support.

The research team will collect and utilize the number of police use-of-force incidents, service data, and policy deployment data to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. They will assess the continued use of services, including outpatient, inpatient, and hospitalizations, comparing individuals who received MHRT for the initial call to those who received MHRT within 24 hours of the initial call. The research team also proposes to collect and analyze data from body worn cameras (BWCs) and ride-alongs conducted by field researchers to explore the interaction between persons in crisis and either the police or co-responding team.

Dissemination and Use

The research findings are intended to inform practice concerning co-responder teams and similar programs nationwide, and DOJ and OJP may use these results to inform future decisions about grant funding of this type of program.

The research findings will be presented at either the International Association of Chiefs of Police or the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy's annual symposium. The research team will also share the condensed findings with Police Chief and Translational Criminology. Results will also be disseminated via NIJ outlets.



Effective Youth Interactions

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

Effective Youth Interactions is a unique law enforcement training program that seeks to improve law enforcement officer (LEO) youth interactions, reduce youth entry into legal systems, and address racial and ethnic disproportionality in youth legal system involvement. There is limited research that has assessed the impact of this type of training on police performance as it relates to youth legal system involvement or racial and ethnic disproportionality.

The planned research, to be conducted from January 2024 through December 2027, is a new evaluation that will increase knowledge on policing practices and enhance efforts to promote racial equity by evaluating the impact of the Effective Youth Interactions training over the course of four years across 21 police departments in Contra Costa County, California. It is anticipated that 859 police officers will participate in this study.

The evaluation is aligned with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically, Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.3: Reform and Strengthen the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems.

Research Questions

- To what extent does training result in reductions in racial and ethnic disproportionality in law enforcement officer stops of youths?
- To what extent does training result in reductions in racial and ethnic disproportionality in law enforcement officer criminal justice system referrals of youths?
- To what extent does training impact officer attitudes toward youths?
- To what extent does training impact officer knowledge in interacting with youths?
- To what extent does training impact officer confidence in working with youths?

Design and Methods

The evaluation will use a stepped-wedge cluster randomized controlled trial to: (1) test the impact of Effective Youth Interactions on law enforcement stops and referrals; (2) test the impact of Effective Youth Interactions on officer knowledge, attitudes, and confidence; and (3) assess key features of implementation. Particular attention will be given to racial and ethnic disproportionality in youth stops and referrals and officer knowledge of and attitudes toward youth of color; law enforcement attitudinal and program implementation data will be collected as it pertains to Black, Hispanic, and White youth.

The research team will randomly assign 21 police departments to one of three intervals, with departments switching from control to intervention every 12 months as the intervention is deployed. The research team will also assess developmental psychology knowledge, racial equity knowledge, attitudes toward youth, and confidence in working with youth among law enforcement officers in pretest, post-test, and follow-up assessments in intervention and control departments. Finally, the research team will document departmental, municipal, and key implementation indicators, assess differentiation across departments, and examine whether these indicators moderate the impact of the Effective Youth Intervention training on racial and ethnic disproportionality in contacts and referrals by the police.

For the process evaluation, the researchers will use a mixed-methods design to holistically analyze implementation features. For qualitative features, transcripts of interviews, field notes, and responses to open-ended satisfaction survey questions will be utilized. Results from qualitative analyses will provide important insights regarding intervention modification, barriers and facilitators to implementation, and perceptions of impact on participants and their interactions with youth.

Data will be drawn from the publicly available California Racial and Identity Profiling Act dataset. The primary outcomes of interest are racial and ethnic disproportionality in police stops and referral rates among youth which will be measured quarterly. For each stop, the dataset includes the date, the reason for the stop, action taken, and result, as well as the perceived age and race/ethnicity of the person stopped. Referrals will include citations, violations, and alleged offenses documented by police and measured quarterly per police department, and according to the researchers are tracked by the California Department of Probation. Study liaisons from the Office of Reentry & Justice will be situated within the Department and will extract data on referrals.

Dissemination and Use

These contributions will help direct policy and administrative efforts by informing conversations about what can improve LEO-youth interactions in the following ways: (1) clarifying the impact of an intervention on an intractable social problem; (2) providing findings relevant to policy makers and administrators in a range of locales nationally; and (3) supporting uptake and sustainable integration into LEO training protocols.

The dissemination plan involves products for academics and practitioners. Academic products include at least one academic conference presentation of preliminary data to facilitate dissemination, as well as garner input on the study as it continues to unfold and a set of three academic conference presentations and related manuscripts for publication, each of which will convey findings in relation to the three study aims. Additionally, the research team plans to submit manuscripts for publication to journal outlets.



Hate Crime Task Forces

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

Hate Crime Task Forces (HCTFs) are a common mechanism employed by state and local governments to reduce hate crimes by improving reporting, identification, and response. In FY 2021 and 2022, the Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded over \$5.3 million to state and local government agencies to start or expand HCTFs in their jurisdictions.

In FY 2023, NIJ funded a three-year implementation evaluation, running from January 2024 through December 2026, of Hate Crime Task Forces in up to seven jurisdictions that received recent funding support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This project will be the first national examination of the development and implementation of HCTFs and will provide critical information and identify promising practices for development and implementation. The project will also preliminarily assess the sites' readiness for outcome evaluation.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.2: Combat Discrimination and Hate Crimes. It will also contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department's Learning Agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

How can the Department effectively increase the reporting of hate crimes?

Research Questions

- What community- and justice-system-level contextual factors facilitate (or hinder) the development of HCTFs?
- What are the goals, objectives, planned activities, and intended outcomes of HCTFs, according to community- and justice-system-based practitioners?
- How well do the intended outcomes of HCTFs align with hate crime survivors' own perceptions of safety and justice?
- Which activities of HCTFs are the most effective at increasing hate crime reporting?
- To what extent are HCTFs fully implemented within three years of funding?
- What practices are associated with completed HCTF implementation?
- What is the readiness of sites for rigorous outcome evaluation?

Design and Methods

The three-year implementation evaluation will involve reviewing internal documentation from HCTFs on the development, launch, and implementation in seven geographically diverse jurisdictions, conducting semi-structured interviews with HCTF members and survivors of hate crimes, reviewing closed case files of hate crimes, and collecting quantitative data on hate crime reports from government and potentially community sources. Outcomes of interest include meeting diverse community needs for safety and justice, fidelity to envisioned theories of change, cost efficiency, and potential sustainability.

Qualitative data will be thematically analyzed to assess implementation outcomes of appropriateness, fidelity, cost efficiency, and sustainability. The quantitative data analysis will include examining changes in the number of hate crime victims identified and assisted and the number of hate crime cases investigated and prosecuted before and after HCTF implementation. This will involve using an interrupted time series approach and include examining differences in how cases are handled by a given task force from investigation through adjudication using bivariate and multivariate analyses.

The study will employ a community-participatory approach that incorporates a workgroup composed of hate crime survivors and practitioners throughout the research process and includes sharing key data and findings by means of Data Walks, a tool developed by the Urban Institute for sharing data with communities, to inform understanding, takeaways, and recommendations.

Dissemination and Use

The study will contribute to understanding of the design and implementation of HCTFs and will support state and local jurisdictions in establishing or improving their HCTFs. The findings will be shared throughout the project with practitioners through peer learning convenings of the participating sites and Data Walks with the community workgroup. The study plans to produce an HCTF Implementation Toolkit based on promising practices associated with successful HCTF implementation that will be shared publicly and with the Bureau of Justice Assistance to inform their training and technical assistance. NIJ anticipates the results will also be disseminated through a webinar; presentations at multidisciplinary, practitioner-focused conferences; a research brief; and peer-reviewed journal articles.



Holistic Defense in Wayne County, Michigan

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

Holistic defense provides client-centered and comprehensive advocacy prioritizing client needs, legal or otherwise, focusing on the whole person rather than solely on their criminal case. Holistic defenders work with an interdisciplinary team who provide services and social supports to minimize collateral consequences of criminal legal system involvement. With the 60th anniversary of *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335 (1963), and in collaboration with DOJ’s Office for Access to Justice, NIJ awarded a new research grant under the FY 2023 Research and Evaluation on the Administration of Justice solicitation to the Center for Justice Innovation (CJI) for an evaluation of holistic defense services in Wayne County, Michigan. CJI’s evaluation is in collaboration with the Neighborhood Defender Service of Detroit (NDS Detroit), the Wayne County Indigent Defense Services Department (IDSD), and SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics. The evaluation entails a mixed-methods implementation and impact evaluation of a holistic defense model in the context of a managed assigned counsel system. This evaluation is planned to begin in January 2024 and run through December 2026.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.4: Expand Equal Access to Justice.

Research Questions

- To what extent do holistic defense practices impact attorney-client relationships?
- To what extent do holistic defense practices impact linkage to services and non-criminal case outcomes for clients?
- To what extent do holistic defense practices impact case outcomes and future criminal legal system involvement for clients?

Design and Methods

The quasi-experimental evaluation will leverage Wayne County’s case assignment protocol for a “natural experiment” comparing cases assigned to assigned counsel versus NDS Detroit.

Quantitative research plans include conducting a multivariate statistical regression and survival analysis of about 48,000 felony cases assigned from 2021–2024 using data derived from Michigan State Court

Administrative Office, NDS Detroit, and IDSD records. They will examine the effects of holistic defense on: (1) felony case outcomes; (2) pretrial conditions and instances of pretrial failure; (3) instances of recidivism; and (4) engagement with holistic resources relative to assigned counsel attorneys.

Qualitative research plans include site visits for direct observation and semi-structured interviews with approximately 15 NDS Detroit, IDSD staff, assigned counsel attorneys, and other local stakeholders. They will hire and train a local research assistant to conduct recorded interviews with 15 former NDS Detroit clients, and 15 former assigned counsel clients. Interview notes and transcripts will be coded for content analysis to identify patterns across respondent type, observational situation, or interview domain.

NDS Detroit and IDSD will support qualitative and quantitative research requests and facilitate Third Circuit Court support of data extraction for cases represented by assigned counsel attorneys. CJI will employ SEARCH consultants with expertise in information sharing and computers, and experience working with criminal history repository, prosecutor, and court information systems in the state of Michigan.

Dissemination and Use

Research findings have the potential to affect the understanding of policymakers across the U.S. about the relative strengths and weakness of two major public defense representation models — holistic defense and managed assigned counsel. Information on case outcomes and recidivism is important as public defense attorneys advocate for non-incarceration but lack documentation on public safety effects. Also, information on the role of social workers, investigators, and others involved in holistic defense can be useful to jurisdictions implementing this model.

In addition to providing archived data, plans for dissemination include a public defense practitioner guide; a research summary for community members, other criminal legal system stakeholders, and elected officials; research and practitioner meeting presentations; topical briefs; and peer-reviewed journal articles.



Money Bail and Other Pretrial Release Options

Participating Components: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

Currently, more than two-thirds of the men and women incarcerated in America’s local jails are being held pretrial⁷, the majority of whom are detained because they could not afford to post the financial sum required for their release (i.e., money bail). Alternatives to money bail include non-financial release mechanisms, such as supervised pretrial release and personal recognizance release.

The overarching goal of this proposed work is to provide a systematic evaluation of the efficacy of money bail. To the extent that alternatives to money bail perform just as effectively, while also increasing release rates overall and especially among members of racial and ethnic minority groups, findings from this work will pinpoint public policy interventions that may reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system.

To achieve this goal, the research team proposes to: (1) employ a randomized controlled trial to examine the effectiveness of money bail at ensuring that defendants appear in court and avoid further contact with the criminal justice system during the pretrial period; (2) use quasi-experimental methods to compare the effectiveness of money bail to non-financial release mechanisms, including supervised pretrial release and personal recognizance release; and (3) use qualitative methods to assess defendants’ own perspectives on the mechanisms underlying the effects of bail and pretrial detention while also focusing attention on a broader range of outcomes; that is, moving beyond the criminal justice domain to consider the social and economic toll of individuals’ pretrial experiences. Notably, this will be the first experimental examination of money bail which holds great potential for generating insights and advancing our understanding of what works in this area.

This evaluation is projected to be completed in 2027 and leverages a collaborative, longstanding researcher-practitioner partnership between Florida State University and the Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission (CJC).

⁷ Zeng, Z., & Minton, T. D. (2021). *Jail inmates in 2019*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ji19.pdf>

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FY 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.4: Expand Equal Access to Justice.

Research Questions

- What is the effect, if any, of money bail on pretrial failure to appear and rearrest?
- How does the effectiveness of money bail compare to the effectiveness of non-financial release mechanisms, including supervised pretrial release and personal recognizance release?
- What are the defendants’ own perspectives on the mechanisms underlying the effects of bail and pretrial detention considering the social and economic toll of individuals’ pretrial experiences?

Design and Methods

To examine the effect of money bail on pretrial failure to appear and rearrest, a randomized controlled trial will be implemented at the point of defendants’ initial hearing in front of a judge. During the project period, defendants who remain detained at the time of their first appearance hearing will attend these proceedings, and among defendants who are set a monetary bail, their files will be reviewed immediately to determine eligibility, and to randomly assign either a secured or unsecured bond using a computer algorithm. The difference between secured and unsecured bail bonds is that unsecured bail does not require individuals to post an upfront financial payment to secure release. Instead, payment is only required if an individual violates the conditions of their bail (e.g., fails to appear at scheduled hearings).

To compare the effectiveness of money bail to non-financial release mechanisms, the researchers will use quasi-experimental methods that draw on administrative data sources to compare the effectiveness of money bail relative to supervised pretrial release and personal recognizance release. The research team will also draw on qualitative interview data drawn from a sample of men and women who have recently experienced the bail process to develop an understanding of the sequencing, relative import, and pitfalls associated with defendants’ pretrial experiences.

Data will be collected from a randomized controlled trial, county- and state-level administrative data and qualitative interview data. Baseline and outcome data will be compiled from four administrative sources, including the Booking Information Retrieval System of the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office, the Palm Beach County Clerk of Courts, the Palm Beach County Pretrial Services Program, and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). Data from the Clerk of Courts will be used to assess whether the defendant has a history of prior failures to appear and the bail amount. Statewide data obtained through the FDLE will be used for current charge information, including the offense type, level (e.g., misdemeanor, felony), and whether the defendant had any pending charges at the time of arrest, along with arrests for a new offense.

The quasi-experimental portion of the project will draw on existing administrative data, particularly all bookings into the Palm Beach County Jail during the 6-year period from July 2017 through June 2023. Quasi-experimental analyses will consist of using various statistical techniques such as coarsened exact

matching, Mahalanobis distance matching, and propensity score matching to compare the effectiveness of money bail to non-financial release options.

Dissemination and Use

To date, the research team has found no existing experimental studies of money bail despite the heavy emphasis on bail reform currently in public and policy spheres. This study will establish the efficacy of money bail relative to alternatives to promote greater equity and inform research and policy.

Evaluation results will be shared with project collaborators at the Palm Beach County CJC. Additional dissemination efforts include articles in multiple, peer-reviewed journal articles in criminology, sociology, and practitioner outlets, and a presentation at a professional conference. The team also plans to use findings to develop policy briefs for broad-based dissemination to policymakers, practitioners, and the public. The research team proposes to contract a communications specialist which, along with their affiliations with Florida State University's (FSU's) Jail Policy and Research Institute and Center for Criminology and Public Policy, will provide resources for developing and disseminating policy briefs that are sent to legislators, practitioners, policy organizations, and media. In addition, the researcher team will work with Palm Beach CJC to provide press releases to disseminate to other criminal justice bodies across the state and to other national professional organizations, such as the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies, the National Association for Public Defense, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, and the American Judge Association, among others. Reports and briefs will be available on the Palm Beach CJC, FSU Jail and Policy Research Institute and College of Criminology and Criminal Justice websites.



Not in Our Town Hate and Bias Action Teams Model

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

In FY 2023, NIJ funded a study to conduct an evaluability assessment of the Bureau of Justice Assistance-funded Not in Our Town (NIOT) Hate and Bias Action Teams (HBAT) model in two sites. NIOT-HBAT is a community-based model for preventing and intervening in hate crimes that builds upon NIOT’s film and media public awareness campaigns, which were developed partially in collaboration with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and includes HBAT core training, law enforcement training, and guidelines and tools to promote sustainability and community capacity building. The model uses a public health approach and involves a coordinated whole-of-community response to significant hate crime incidents. The model uses a structured approach for forming a matrix of active allies; raising awareness of hate crimes and incidents; promoting a shift in residents’ attitudes, perceptions, and behavior; building a bridge between vulnerable groups and law enforcement; developing trusted, alternative community pathways for reporting victimization; and providing positive support to targeted communities.

NIOT-HBAT is a significant effort to address the rise in hate crimes with a primary short-term goal of increasing hate crime reporting. The evaluability study, scheduled to take place January 2024 through December 2026, will be one of the first efforts to establish an evaluation framework for a community-level hate crime intervention by generating a logic model and implementation guide, developing and validating the program model and evaluation metrics, assessing site implementation and evaluability, and designing preliminary evaluations plans.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.2: Combat Discrimination and Hate Crimes. It will also contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department’s Learning Agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

How can the Department effectively increase the reporting of hate crimes?

Research Questions

- What are the proposed mechanisms of change for NIOT-HBAT?
- What are the activities in the NIOT-HBAT model designed to effect change?
- How do stakeholders of NIOT-HBAT, including survivors of hate crime, define success?
- How was NIOT-HBAT implemented within the two sites?

- Can the impact of NIOT-HBAT be rigorously evaluated?
- What data are required to evaluate the impact NIOT-HBAT?
- What is a rigorous impact evaluation design for NIOT-HBAT?

Design and Methods

The three-year mixed-methods evaluability study will begin with developing a generalized program logic model and implementation guide by convening NIOT leadership and key evaluation staff, facilitating a step-by-step process mapping and a step-by-step change theory mapping, and validating the model through consultation with expert advisors. Site implementation and evaluability will be assessed by conducting focus groups with survivor group members and staff from key implementers, reviewing program documents, and collecting local crime data.

The qualitative data will be thematically coded using a deductive approach. Quantitative data will be descriptively analyzed to assess initial implementation. Data and key variables for the examination of local site implementation will be determined based on the initial identification of implementation metrics. The evaluability of sites will be assessed systematically using the Evaluation Decision Support Tool to conduct a comprehensive assessment and develop objective recommendations.

Dissemination and Use

The study will contribute to building an evidence base of community-level hate crime interventions and knowledge of the design, implementation, and evaluability of NIOT-HBAT. The findings will inform the NIOT-HBAT model and determine whether and how its impact can be rigorously evaluated. NIOT-HBAT received funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, so this project will provide information on DOJ investments and inform program support. The logic model and implementation guide will inform efforts to expand or adapt the model and implement it in additional jurisdictions. NIJ anticipates the results will be disseminated through each of the participating program sites and NIOT, a conference presentation, a peer-reviewed journal article, and a research brief for policy makers.



San Gabriel Valley Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

The San Gabriel Valley Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement program (SGV CARE) is an alternative response model for individuals in crisis and is currently being implemented by six police agencies who are part of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, a collection of 31 mid-sized and small cities in the San Gabriel Valley, east of Los Angeles. SGV CARE incorporates both a co-response model and an alternative responder model into this program. In the co-response model, mental health clinicians accompany law enforcement on mental health crisis calls. The alternative responder model dispatches clinicians only to those calls. The six cities from the San Gabriel Valley implementing SGV CARE are Arcadia, South Pasadena, San Marino, Montebello, La Verne, and Baldwin Park, California. NIJ has awarded funds to the RAND Corporation to conduct an evaluation of SGV CARE between January 2024 and December 2026.

This evaluation is aligned with DOJ’s FY 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.3: Reform and Strengthen the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems.

Research Questions

- What is the impact of the barriers and facilitators to co-response and alternative responder model implementation and adaptation on program outcomes?
- To what extent has the program achieved its intended implementation outcomes?
- To what extent has the program achieved its intended client outcomes of reducing criminal justice system involvement and increasing connection to care, particularly for vulnerable populations?
- To what extent are communities aware of and satisfied with the program?
- How do program implementation and outcomes compare between the program’s two models?

Design and Methods

The research team will conduct semi-structured interviews with city and police department leadership in all six cities, and interviews with call-center leadership, call-takers, and police officers. They will also conduct two focus groups with the 25 cities that are a part of the San Gabriel Valley Council of

Governments, but not participating in SGV CARE. The research team seeks to gauge perception of the appropriateness and acceptability of SGV CARE’s co-response and alternative responder among program clients. The process evaluation includes interviews with 20 clients. It will also host two focus groups with the program community advisory board (CAB) and community-based organizations (CBO) that work with program clients.

For the outcome study, the applicant will obtain calls-for-service data to understand how the calls were dispatched. The study will deploy a difference-in-differences design to analyze intra-week variation as all cities will implement SGV CARE during specific days of the week. SGV CARE is scheduled to be active on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in the cities of Arcadia, South Pasadena, and San Marino, and Monday and Wednesday for the city of Montebello. The cities of the La Verne and Baldwin Park are planning to implement in a similar staggered fashion. Of the six cities implementing SGV CARE, four plan to transition to an alternative responder model after piloting the co-response model. The alternating implementation of SGV CARE allows each site to serve as its own control. The research team will not be comparing outcomes across cities, but rather within each city based on whether SGV CARE was active when the call came in or not. The research team will collect call data for a year prior to program deployment and during the program implementation period.

Qualitative data will include responses to interviews and themes gleaned during focus groups. Quantitative data on arrests, use-of-force incidents, injuries, and escorts to an emergency department, will also be collected to determine the outcome of the call. The research team plans to collect data on service referrals through the client interviews and focus groups with the CAB and CBO. The main outcomes of interest are service referrals, arrests, injuries, and use-of-force.

Dissemination and Use

The target audience of this research would be potential adopters of alternative responder models and implementors of current programs. The research findings will be published in academic and practitioner journals and disseminated through podcasts, webinar and conference panels.



Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems





Bureau of Prisons Reentry Programs

**Participating Components: Bureau of Prisons (BOP),
Office of Justice Programs (OJP)**

Background

BOP facilitates a broad range of reentry 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 treatment.

In line with the First Step Act of 2018 (FSA), BOP has a series of ongoing and planned evaluations of its reentry programs. In general, these evaluations are designed to assess the programs' effectiveness in reducing recidivism in the long term, as well as in achieving program-specific outcomes such as a reduction in mental health incidents or an improvement in literacy. These evaluations address the FSA mandate to conduct research and analysis on evidence-based recidivism reduction programs, and they will support an understanding of which programs are the most effective at reducing the risk of recidivism for the federal inmate population.

BOP is initiating these reentry program evaluations on a staggered timeline, initiating these evaluations over a series of fiscal years. Some of these evaluations are being conducted in collaboration with NIJ. The evaluations that are expected to continue into FY 2025 are listed here. For additional details on the programs themselves, please reference the [First Step Act Approved Programs Guide](#).

These evaluations align with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 5: Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems, Objective 5.2: Maintain a Safe and Humane Prison System. They will also contribute to addressing the following priority question in the Department's Learning Agenda for FYs 2022–2026:

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

In addition to informing BOP decision-making, these evaluations will address statutory requirements and concerns raised by GAO and others about the effectiveness of evidence-based recidivism reduction programs funded by the First Step Act.

Evaluations Initiated in FY 2021

Evaluations of three programs were initiated in FY 2021 and are expected to conclude in FYs 2025 and 2026. These programs and their evaluations were described in DOJ's [Annual Evaluation Plan for FY 2024](#):

- Anger Management Program: A cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)–based program on anger management.
- Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program (BRAVE): A six-month residential program for younger, first-time federal offenders designed to reduce misconduct in prison and support appropriate adjustment to incarceration.
- Drug Treatment Programs: A set of drug treatment programs offered to incarcerated individuals.

Evaluations Initiated in FY 2022

Evaluations of seven additional programs were initiated in FY 2022 and are anticipated to conclude in FY 2027. These evaluations are being conducted via a contract awarded by NIJ, and details on the research objectives and designs for these evaluations were included in DOJ's [Annual Evaluation Plan for FY 2024](#):

- Female Integrated Treatment (FIT): The primary objective of the FIT program is to provide integrated substance abuse, mental health, and trauma treatment based on individual need for female inmates. Through integrated treatment, participants will identify triggers, learn healthy coping skills, and better manage emotional distress; thereby improving quality of life and successful reentry into society.
- The Foundation Program: A program designed to assist women in assessing their individual needs and translating the results of that assessment into the selection of programs and plans to meet their goals.
- The Life Connections Program: An 18-month faith-based residential reentry program open to inmates of all religious traditions designed to assist inmate participants in developing their faith, moral ethics, and social responsibility—and in applying their beliefs to practical life skills in order to successfully transition back to their communities and families.
- Non-Residential Sex Offender Treatment Program: The Non-Residential Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP-NR) is a non-residential, moderate intensity CBT-based program for low-to moderate-risk sexual offenders.
- The Skills Program: A psychology treatment program for inmates who have significant difficulties adapting to the prison environment as a result of mental illness and/or cognitive deficits, including impairment in intellectual functioning. The goal of the program is to increase the academic achievement and adaptive behavior of this group of individuals, thereby improving their institutional adjustment and likelihood for successful community reentry.
- Steps Toward Awareness, Growth, and Emotional Strength (STAGES): A residential psychology treatment program with the primary objective of improving the quality of life and decreasing the risk of suicide for inmates who use self-harm as a means to manage emotional distress and have displayed poor functioning in prison as a result of historical characterological problems.

- The Threshold Program: The Threshold Program is a non-residential spiritual and values-based program designed to develop moral character and spiritual identity, in order to improve inmates' personal relationships and to make a positive impact with their families, neighbors, and surrounding community as they transition back home.

Evaluations Initiated in FY 2023

Evaluations of four reentry programs were initiated in FY 2023 and are anticipated to conclude in FY 2028:

- Basic Cognitive Skills: Basic Cognitive Skills is a cognitive behavioral therapy protocol that is used primarily for group treatment but may be used for individual treatment, in some cases. It is a psychology program designed to address irrational thinking and coping.
- Challenge Program: The Challenge Program is a cognitive behavioral, residential treatment program developed for male offenders in the United States Penitentiary settings. The Challenge Program provides treatment to high-security offenders with substance use problems and/or mental illnesses.
- Criminal Thinking: The purpose of Criminal Thinking group is to help the participant see how criminal thinking errors impact decisions in daily life.
- Literacy Program: The Literacy Program is designed to assist every individual who does not have a high school diploma or high school equivalency credential.

Evaluations To Be Initiated in FY 2024

BOP plans to initiate evaluations in FY 2024 for seven reentry programs, and these evaluations are anticipated to conclude in FY 2029:

- Illness Management and Recovery: Illness Management and Recovery is a consumer-oriented psychological treatment protocol for individuals diagnosed with serious mental illness.
- Mental Health Step Down: Mental Health Step Down is a residential program offering intermediate level of care for those with serious mental illness who do not require inpatient treatment but lack the skills to function in general population. The goal of Mental Health Step Down is to provide evidence-based treatment that maximizes the participants' ability to function while minimizing relapse and the need for inpatient hospitalization.
- Post-Secondary Education: The Post-Secondary Education program includes courses offered to those who have completed high school equivalency requirements and are seeking to enhance their marketable skills.
- Resource Tools for Reentry: The Resource Tools for Reentry program is designed to help prepare transgender participants for the challenges of reintegrating into society in the topics of ID documentation, housing, employment, healthcare, and mental health.
- Social Skills Training: Social Skills Training for Schizophrenia is a structured skills training intervention focused on improving social skills.
- Stronger Together, Emerging Proud: The Stronger Together, Emerging Proud (S.T.E.P.) program is designed to provide a safe, supportive place for participants to discuss shared experiences as a transgender person, build their resilience and create a support system.

- **Transition Acceptance:** The Transition Acceptance program is designed to provide a supportive place for participants to explore their gender transitions. The program consists of a women’s program series and a men’s program series, each designed to address the unique challenges faced by offenders during incarceration.

Research Questions

Specific research objectives will vary across the different reentry programs being evaluated, but, in general, the evaluations will address these two principal questions:

- To what extent does the program reduce the long-term likelihood of recidivism for individuals who have returned to the community?
- To what extent does the program have impacts, while individuals are incarcerated, on incidents (for example, mental health crises and incidents of misconduct) and program-specific outcomes (for example, literacy)?

Many evaluations also include research questions related to the implementation and cost-effectiveness of the programs.

Design and Methods

Process evaluations, impact evaluations, and cost-effectiveness analyses involving both qualitative and quantitative data are anticipated. In general, impact evaluations of these programs will make use of quasi-experimental designs (QEDs) to attempt to isolate and measure causal impact while accounting for variation among individuals, institutions, and other background factors.⁸

In general, these evaluations will assess institutional, clinical, and post-release outcomes. Institutional outcomes are those that can be observed while the individual is still incarcerated; these might include, for example, misconduct, and mental health crises. Clinical outcomes are changes in health or quality of life; these might include, for example, subjective feelings of anger, symptoms of a target mental illness, or drug use. Program logic models will guide the exact outcome variables to be used, but generally, outcomes will focus on changes to misconduct incidents, mental health crises, and recidivism, the latter of which is required by the First Step Act.

The research teams 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. Evaluations will also use program documents, policy documents, administrative records, and program case files. 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. Whenever

⁸ QEDs are a family of research designs that involve using data to identify or construct a comparison group of individuals who are similar to the individuals who receive a “treatment” (in this case, an evidence-based recidivism reduction program) except that they did not receive the treatment. QEDs have the potential to support conclusions about the causal impact of the program, based on assumptions about the similarity of the comparison group to a hypothetical control condition.

possible, recidivism will be studied as a long-term outcome, which will rely on data from the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System.

Dissemination and Use

Results will be made available on Department webpages, and additional reports may be prepared for correctional facility staff and other stakeholders. BOP will use the results of these evaluations to inform the implementation of specific programs and the management of reentry programs generally.



Bureau of Prisons Restrictive Housing Practices

**Participating Components: Bureau of Prisons (BOP),
Office of Justice Programs (OJP)**

Background

Most BOP facilities include a restrictive housing unit where individuals in BOP custody are securely separated from the general inmate population and may be housed either alone or with other inmates. Restrictive housing units help ensure the safety, security, and orderly operation of correctional facilities, and protect the public, by providing alternative housing assignments for inmates removed from the general population. BOP also uses restrictive housing in other settings, including the Special Management Unit, the Special Confinement Unit, Female Administrative Unit, and the United States Penitentiary Administrative Maximum. In collaboration with BOP, NIJ has funded RTI to design and conduct a comprehensive assessment of BOP’s restrictive housing practices. This assessment began in July 2023 and will run through November 2026.

This assessment supports the Justice Department’s FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 5: Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems, Objective 5.2: Maintain a Safe and Humane Prison System. It also aligns with the purpose of President Biden’s May 2022 Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety, which recommends that DOJ take steps to ensure restrictive housing is used rarely and that individuals in custody are housed in the least restrictive settings. This assessment also follows a 2021 BOP task force report on reducing restrictive housing populations, which generated a number of recommendations to decrease the pipeline into restrictive housing and expedite the removal of individuals from that setting.

Research Questions

- What is the current state of the published evidence on the purpose, use, and impact of restrictive housing in BOP facilities? What alternatives to restrictive housing in BOP facilities exist?
- What are the current BOP policies and practices for each type of restrictive housing in use?
- Are the promising/evidence-based practices identified in the literature also evident in current BOP policy?
- What does BOP’s current use of restrictive housing look like? How is each type of restrictive housing used (e.g., reason, length, release mechanism)?
- How has restrictive housing use changed over time, including under new BOP leadership?

- What individual and facility characteristics are associated with high and low facility use of restrictive housing?
- What are the characteristics of the people placed in each type of restrictive housing (e.g., risk, need areas)? Are some demographic groups overrepresented (e.g., racial/ethnic groups, or those with serious mental illness)?
- How is each type of restrictive housing related to misconduct and other key outcomes of interest (e.g., violence, subsequent restrictive housing placement, mental health status, program participation)?
- How are BOP's restrictive housing policies applied in practice? To what extent have institutions implemented recommendations from the 2021 task force report? Why have they, or why have they not?
- How do facility culture and physical design influence restrictive housing use?

Design and Methods

The assessment team will conduct a systematic literature review, a policy examination, and BOP-wide data collection and analysis to select sites for intensive, facility-level studies. This phase of the evaluation will include system-wide analyses at the facility level to document use of restrictive housing across facilities and categorize facilities by their restrictive housing usage level. Descriptive analysis and statistics will be used to document BOP's system-wide use of restrictive housing and policies, and to document the characteristics of those placed in each type of restrictive housing, including demographics, risk profiles, and criminogenic needs. Additional analyses may include interrupted time series analyses to assess pre/post differences following changes in BOP policy. Multi-level models may be used to identify the predictors of placement in restrictive housing and assess what impact such placements have on the occurrence, frequency, and timing until other outcomes of interest (e.g., subsequent placements in restrictive housing and misconduct). Analyses will also assess whether some demographic groups are disproportionately more likely to be placed in restrictive housing or are differentially impacted by the experience. Site visits will be conducted at a subset of 12 – 15 facilities that reflect variation in the type and level of restrictive housing usage, gender designation, region, and associated security levels. Interviews will be conducted with facility staff, incarcerated persons, and others to further contextualize facility-level practices and the use and impact of restrictive housing.

The primary data sources for this assessment are BOP administrative records, observations, and interview data. Key variables include individual-level characteristics, facility-level characteristics, restrictive housing measures, and other outcomes of interest. The scope of the population includes all individuals under the custody of the BOP who experienced placement in any type of restrictive housing confinement from 2014 to 2024.

Dissemination and Use

At least three reports will be generated for BOP to provide actionable policy recommendations for developing alternatives to and reducing the use of restrictive housing. First, a 12-month administrative data analysis report will document BOP's current use of restrictive housing system-wide and at the

facility level and showcase the changes in the use of this practice over time. It will also describe the characteristics of the people held in restrictive housing, predictors of placement, and associations between restrictive housing and subsequent outcomes of interest. Second, an interim report on short-term recommendations will detail areas for short-term improvements within BOP based on promising strategies from the literature, the results of the administrative data analysis, and initial insights from observations and interviews with facility staff, incarcerated people, and others. Third, a comprehensive recommendation report will summarize findings and recommendations. Additional deliverables may be developed for public dissemination. The content and dissemination strategy for such deliverables will be determined at a later date.



HeartMath Resilience Program

Participating Component: Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

Background

HeartMath is a comprehensive resiliency-based intervention that is emotion focused and designed to reduce stress and improve correctional officer (CO) well-being. HeartMath techniques have been shown across a variety of studies with clinical populations to reduce blood pressure, improve psychological health, and reduce depression among COs. In addition, a previous HeartMath intervention was found to significantly improve heart rate, blood pressure, and positive outlook three months following the intervention in a small sample of COs at a juvenile justice facility.

In this new evaluation of HeartMath, a randomized controlled trial will be conducted in partnership with the Leon County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) in Tallahassee, Florida. This evaluation is projected to be completed in 2028.

The overarching goal of this study is to determine whether HeartMath can improve jail COs' perceptions of job satisfaction, workplace safety, and occupational stress, and whether those improvements lead to increases in retention and decreases in absenteeism, less punitive attitudes, and greater apprehension to employ the use of force.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ's FYs 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 5: Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems, Objective 5.2: Maintain a Safe and Humane Prison System.

Research Questions

- To what extent does HeartMath improve perceptions of job satisfaction, workplace safety, and occupational stress among jail COs?
- To what extent does HeartMath improve jail COs retention and decrease absenteeism?
- To what extent do the potential benefits of HeartMath promote increased retention and decreased absenteeism of female staff?
- To what extent do the potential benefits of HeartMath promote increased retention and decreased absenteeism of racial and ethnic diverse staff?
- To what extent do the perceptions of job satisfaction, workplace safety, and occupational stress following HeartMath result in less punitive attitudes and greater apprehension to employ use of force among jail COs?

Design and Methods

The project will use a multiple cohort, staggered-entry, waitlist RCT study design, where 300 individuals will be randomly assigned to one of two conditions, either the HeartMath resiliency-based program or a waitlist control condition.

Correctional officers working at Leon County Jail will be recruited from their standard quarterly defensive tactics training over the course of approximately three years. They will be randomized to the treatment (HeartMath) or waitlist control group. A baseline interview of both groups will be conducted to assess stress, perceptions of workplace safety, job satisfaction, correctional orientation, and self-reported information related to organizational commitment, absenteeism, and turnover intent. Additionally, general measures of health (i.e., physical limitations and health rating) and behavioral health (i.e., post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, substance use disorder, and coping) will be collected from study participants.

After baseline, additional interviews will take place across four follow-up periods at three-month intervals. Data on job satisfaction, workplace safety, and occupational stress, as well as punitive attitudes, turnover intent, views on absenteeism and thoughts around the use of force will be collected during all follow-up interviews. During each follow-up period, officers will meet with a certified HeartMath professional and complete another HeartMath session.

Once participants enter the treatment condition, they will be allowed to take HeartMath devices home and data will be collected from HeartMath on an annual basis. Administrative data will also be collected from LCSO.

After completing interviews and relevant data collection, the first stage of the analysis will focus on examining differences between the treatment and waitlisted groups and is primarily focused on improving job satisfaction, workplace safety, occupational stress, retention of jail COs, and decreasing absenteeism. This stage of the analysis will include a series of multivariable regression models in which stress, perceptions of workplace safety, job satisfaction, and the examined staffing outcomes will be regressed on a binary indicator variable that distinguishes between the treatment and waitlisted groups.

The second stage of the analysis will be aimed at assessing within-individual changes in key study variables from the baseline assessment through the follow-up assessment periods. This stage of the analysis is more directly focused on measuring how job satisfaction, workplace safety, and occupational stress job satisfaction following HeartMath result in less punitive attitudes and greater apprehension to employ use of force among jail COs and will examine more long-term changes in officers' orientation toward their roles as an officer and how they interact with incarcerated individuals. This stage of the analysis will involve linear mixed models to examine the potential impact of within-individual changes following delivery of comprehensive resiliency-based program condition in stress, perceptions of workplace safety, and job satisfaction on within-individual changes in officers' support for treatment, support for punishment, and readiness to use force.

Dissemination and Use

The potential impact of the proposed study is wide-reaching and may result in meaningful contributions to the field. Outcomes from the proposed study have the potential to significantly influence policy and practice among correctional agencies as they train COs and develop wellness programming.

Strategically, if this programming is found to be beneficial, LCSO may fully adopt and implement the program, and some members of the wellness unit have already been trained in the programming. It is also possible that other facilities in Florida or other states will adopt HeartMath or similar strategies to increase officer wellness. Additionally, if HeartMath is found to be effective for COs in the jail setting, it may also hold promise for BOP. Further, this study will identify specific mechanisms that potentially underlie the association between officer well-being and retention (e.g., work stress, job satisfaction, and perceptions of workplace safety).

Research findings will be disseminated in professional journals and other outlets to help spark collaborations and discussions about the results and how they might impact community supervision, implementation of interventions, policy, and future research. Study findings will be disseminated to criminology, public health, and occupation health-related academic journals.

Study findings will be further disseminated at annual professional meetings. In addition, and to better facilitate the dissemination of the findings to other jails, the research team will present the findings with LCSO team members at annual and seasonal conferences. Finally, written and oral reports of findings will be provided to LCSO. Policy briefs will be written and shared with local politicians and justice system officials.

To facilitate additional research, the data collected for the proposed project will be deposited to the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data before the end of the project period.



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 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, NIJ supports the annual evaluation of PATTERN through a contract. BOP supports the annual evaluation through the provision of administrative data and technical and operational expertise.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ’s FY 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 5: Administer Just Court and Correctional Systems, Objective 5.2: Maintain a Safe and Humane Prison

System and Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.3: Reform and Strengthen the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems.

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?
- Are there any unwarranted disparities identified based on the rates of recidivism among similarly classified prisoners of different racial or ethnic groups?
- What are the recommendations 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 be reasonably expected to change while in prison?
- Are the four PATTERN risk assessment tools statistically valid?

Design and Methods

The FY 2025 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 and National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System. Key data elements will include offender demographics, risk and security level, static and dynamic data about incarcerated individuals, 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

Results of this evaluation may lead to adjustments to PATTERN. Additionally, NIJ and BOP will release results on the DOJ and NIJ websites, in addition to including them in an annual report to Congress, as required by the FSA.



Standardized Prisoner Assessment for Reduction in Criminality (SPARC-13)

**Participating Components: Bureau of Prisons (BOP),
Office of Justice Programs (OJP)**

Background

The BOP conducts a variety of assessments early in the prison admission cycle, in order to identify and provide programs and services to prepare incarcerated individuals 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 incarcerated individuals to discuss assessment findings with regard to criminogenic and other needs, resulting in referral 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 PATTERN make up the risk and needs assessment system required by the 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, NIJ supports the annual assessment of the needs assessment system through a contract. BOP supports the annual assessment through the provision of administrative data and technical and operational expertise.

This evaluation aligns with DOJ's FY 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Goal 5, Objective 5.2, Maintain a Safe and Humane Prison System and Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights, Objective 3.3: Reform and Strengthen the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems.

Research Questions

- Does the SPARC-13 have predictive validity by domain and calculated total score? Do scores predict rate of recidivism?
- Does the SPARC-13 show concurrent validity?
- For components of the SPARC-13 with psychometric item scoring, are cut scores optimized?
- Does the SPARC-13 demonstrate measurement invariance (i.e., does the SPARC-13 similarly measure subjects across race/ethnicity and sex/gender)?
- Does participation in programming impact scores upon reassessment of the corresponding domain on the SPARC-13?

Design and Methods

The evaluation will analyze the population of incarcerated individuals who have completed the SPARC-13 to assess multiple forms of validity (convergent, internal structure, concurrent, predictive), interrater reliability, and the racial and ethnic neutrality of the assessments. This will be done primarily with exploratory factor analysis, multigroup confirmatory factor analysis, correlational methods, and receiver operating characteristic analysis. Researchers will make use of BOP administrative data and individual criminal history records from the National Crime Information Center and National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System. Key data elements will include offender demographics, risk and security level, static and dynamic data about incarcerated individuals, 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

Results of this evaluation may lead to adjustments to improve the performance of the SPARC-13 needs assessment system. NIJ and BOP will also release results on the DOJ and NIJ websites, in addition to including them in an annual report to Congress, as required by the FSA.



Appendices

Appendix A: Abbreviations and Acronyms

A		L	
ACTV	Achieving Change through Value-Based Behavior	LEO	Law Enforcement Officer
B		M	
BOP	Bureau of Prisons	MHRT	Mental Health Response Team
BRAVE	Bureau Rehabilitation and Values Enhancement Program	N	
BWC	Body Worn Camera	NASRO	National Association of School Resource Officers
C		NDS	Neighborhood Defender Service
C-SEL	Community Safety Evaluation Lab	NIJ	National Institute of Justice
CBO	Community-Based Organizations	NIOT	Not in Our Town
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	NIOT-HBAT	Not in Our Town Hate and Bias Action Teams
CIT	Crisis Intervention Team	NRDAP	Non-Residential Drug Abuse Treatment Program
CJC	Criminal Justice Commission	O	
CJI	Center for Justice Innovation	OHTS	Outcomes of Human Trafficking Survivors
CO	Correctional Officer	OJP	Office of Justice Programs
CVIP	Community Violence Intervention and Prevention	OVC	Office for Victims of Crime
CVIPI	Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative	OVP	Office of Violence Prevention
D		OVW	Office on Violence Against Women
DART	Domestic Abuse Response Team	P	
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice	PATTERN	Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs
DV	Dating/Domestic Violence	Q	
DVAF	Domestic Violence Assistance Fund	QED	Quasi-Experimental Design
E		R	
Evidence Act	Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018	RCT	Randomized Control Trial
F		RMS	Record Management System
FCPS	Fort Collins Police Services	RVIP	Relationship Violence Intervention Program
FDLE	Florida Department of Law Enforcement	S	
FIT	Female Integrated Treatment	SGV CARE	San Gabriel Valley Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement Program
FSA	First Step Act of 2018	SPARC-13	Standardized Prisoner Assessment for Reduction in Criminality
FSU	Florida State University	STAGES	Steps Toward Awareness, Growth, and Emotional Strength

FY	Fiscal Year	S.T.E.P.	Stronger Together, Emerging Proud
G		T	
GAO	U.S. Government Accountability Office	TTA	Training and Technical Assistance
H		U	
HBAT	Hate and Bias Action Teams	USML	University of Missouri St. Louis
HCDVCC	Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council	UTMB	University of Texas Medical Branch
HCTF	Hate Crime Task Force	V	
HTVA	Human Trafficking Victim Assistance	VAW	Violence Against Women
I			
IDD	Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities		
IDSD	Indigent Defense Services Department		
IPV	Intimate partner violence		

Appendix B:

FY 2025 Evaluations by Component

Bureau of Prisons, www.bop.gov

- Bureau of Prisons Reentry Programs*
- Bureau of Prisons Restrictive Housing Practices*
- Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN)*
- Standard Prisoner Assessment for Reduction in Criminality (SPARC-13)*

Office of Justice Programs, www.ojp.gov

- Bureau of Prisons Reentry Programs*
- Bureau of Prisons Restrictive Housing Practices*
- Community Violence Intervention and Prevention in St. Louis, Missouri
- Co-Response for Mental Health Calls to the Police in Fort Collins, Colorado
- Effective Youth Interactions
- Hate Crime Task Forces
- Healing-Centered Community-Wide Approach to Addressing Firearm Violence in New Orleans, Louisiana
- HeartMath Resilience Program
- Holistic Defense in Wayne County, Michigan
- Houston Police Department's Domestic Abuse Response Team
- Human Trafficking: California Victim Assistance Grant Program
- Human Trafficking: Housing Models for Victims
- Money Bail and other Pretrial Release Options
- National Association of School Resource Officers Training for School Police
- Not In in Our Town Hate and Bias Action Teams Model
- Prisoner Assessment Tool Targeting Estimated Risk and Needs (PATTERN)*
- San Gabriel Valley Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement
- Standard Prisoner Assessment for Reduction in Criminality (SPARC-13)*

Office on Violence Against Women, www.justice.gov/ovw

- Flexible Financial Assistance for Survivors of Domestic Violence
- Language Access Barriers Among Victims with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- ProACTIVE: A Community-Based Relationship Violence Intervention Program for Men of Color

* Indicates evaluation is a collaboration between multiple components