

What is the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP)?

NCRP compiles offender-level data on admissions to and releases from prisons and post-confinement community supervision. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has administered the NCRP since 1983. State departments of correction and community supervision provide these data, which are used at the federal and state levels to monitor correctional populations and address policy questions related to recidivism, prisoner reentry, and trends in demographic characteristics of the incarcerated and paroled populations.

What is the Bureau of Justice Statistics?

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), a component of the Office of Justice Programs in the U.S. Department of Justice, is the United States' primary source for criminal justice statistics. Its mission is to collect, analyze, publish, and disseminate information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operation of justice systems at all levels of government. These data are critical to federal, state, and local policymakers in combating crime and ensuring that justice is both efficient and evenhanded.

How many states participate in NCRP?

All 50 states are participating in NCRP.

What is Abt Associates' role in NCRP?

Abt Associates was awarded a grant in October 2010 (and again in October 2015) by the Bureau of Justice Statistics to direct the NCRP. (Prior to that date, the U.S. Census Bureau was the NCRP data collection agent.) Abt is responsible for collecting, processing and analyzing data submitted by state departments of corrections and community supervision. Working with BJS, Abt will also implement BJS's vision of an enhanced and expanded NCRP system that provides timely and useful information to federal and state policymakers.

What is Abt Associates?

Abt Associates is a global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of social and economic policy, health, and international development. Abt Associates has 40 years of experience working for the U.S. Department of Justice and criminal justice agencies across the country. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms. The employee-owned company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in nearly 40 countries.

What data are collected under NCRP?

- State departments of correction are asked to submit three data files:
 - Prison Admissions (Part A): one record for each *admission* of a sentenced offender to the state's prison system.
 - Prison Releases (Part B): one record for each *release* of a sentenced offender from the state's prison system.
 - Prison Custody (Part D): one record for each sentenced offender in the physical custody of the state's prison system at year end.
- State agencies responsible for supervising offenders on a term of community supervision immediately after release from prison are asked to submit two data files:
 - Post Confinement Community Supervision Admissions (Part E): one record for each *admission* to a post-confinement community supervision program.
 - Post Confinement Community Supervision Releases (Part F): one record for each *release* from a post-confinement community supervision program.

- Most states submit these data these data annually, with the submissions containing admissions and releases from the previous calendar year.

What data elements are requested in these files?

- The data elements differ somewhat across the five data files, but generally include:
 - Offender characteristics (e.g., unique agency identifier, name, date of birth, race, sex, veteran status)
 - Sentence characteristics (e.g., county where sentence imposed, offenses, sentence length)
 - Date and type of admission to prison
 - Date and type of release from prison
 - Date and type of admission to post-confinement community supervision
 - Date and type of release from post-confinement community supervision
- The NCRP data request documentation contains complete information on all the requested data elements.

What if we are unable to provide all of these data elements?

If your agency does not collect one or more of the requested data elements or providing them would be an excessive burden (or is not allowed under agency policy), those data elements do not have to be included in the data submission. The data request documentation also highlights the “core” data elements that are most important to NCRP.

How long will it take us to respond to this data request?

The amount of time depends on the characteristics of your agency’s offender information system, the type of data extraction tools available for that system, and the level of expertise agency staff have in using those tools. The largest time commitment is in the first year of participation, when data extract procedures must be developed. BJS estimates the time needed to develop computer programs to extract data and to prepare a response to be 24 hours, on average, per type of database containing the information needed, for the first year of participation, and 8 hours, per type of database, during the second and subsequent years. Feedback during data processing and review is estimated to take 2 hours. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspects of the collection of this information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Director, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 810 Seventh Street, NW, Washington, DC 20531, and to the Office of Management and Budget, OMB number 1121-0065, Washington, DC 20503. For more information on the NCRP reporting burden (OMB No. 1121-0065 Exp. 10/31/2015), see the NCRP’s OMB submission.¹

When is the data submission due?

The target date for submitting NCRP data is March 31 of each year, but we understand that agency constraints in many states preclude meeting that target date. The Abt NCRP site liaison assigned to your state will work with you to set a realistic target date.

Is there a specific format or coding scheme for the data?

There is no required format or coding scheme for the data you submit.

How do we submit the NCRP data?

The preferred method for submitting data to Abt Associates is via the NCRP data transfer site (transfer.abtassoc.com). This site is compliant with FIPS (Federal Information Processing Standard) 140-2 and meets all the requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) and the Privacy Act. The data are automatically encrypted during transit.

¹ http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewICR?ref_nbr=201208-1121-005

How can we be assured that data we submit is secure?

BJS and Abt are bound by federal law (42 USC 3789g) which provides that, “No officer or employee of the Federal Government, and no recipient of assistance under the provisions of this chapter shall use or reveal any research or statistical information furnished under this chapter by any person and identifiable to any specific private person for any purpose other than the purpose for which it was obtained in accordance with this chapter. Such information and copies thereof shall be immune from legal process, and shall not, without the consent of the person furnishing such information, be admitted as evidence or used for any purpose in any action, suit, or other judicial, legislative, or administrative proceedings.” Both BJS and Abt are required to follow the BJS Data Protection Guidelines (<https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/BJSDataProtectionGuidelines.pdf>).

What happens after we submit data?

Abt will verify the contents of the data files and conduct a series of validity checks on the data, including comparing the submitted data to your submissions from prior years. Typically, this will be accomplished within 1-3 weeks of receipt of your data. Your Abt site liaison will then contact you to review our findings. Having a thorough understanding of what data you submit is necessary in order to construct valid and reliable national NCRP datasets.

How will the data be used?

NCRP data are intended to be used at the federal and state levels to address policy questions related to recidivism, prisoner reentry, and trends in demographic characteristics of correctional and community supervision populations. BJS uses NCRP data to monitor these issues at the national level. Abt Associates actively solicits ideas from state NCRP contacts on how NCRP data can be used in their state. Researchers at universities and other institutions can access NCRP data - minus offender unique identifiers and names - at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/NACJD/>), following a review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Who do we contact for more information?

- **Tom Rich** (Abt Associates Project Director and site liaison) - tom_rich@abtassoc.com or 617-349-2753
- **Michael Shively** (Abt Associates site liaison) - michael_shively@abtassoc.com or 617-520-3562
- **Josh Markman** (BJS Program Manager) - joshua.markman@usdoj.gov or 202-616-1718
- Or, visit www.ncrp.info