

Guidelines for Analysts, Program Officers, and Contractors

The National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) at the University of Michigan archives datasets, codebooks, and other supporting research documentation for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). This document provides guidelines for Office of Justice Programs (OJP) analysts, program officers, and contractors to facilitate NACJD data archiving.

For Everyone

- 1. Study Documentation and Instruments:** All deposited studies should include sufficient documentation to facilitate data archiving. This documentation includes, but is not limited to, codebooks, data collection instruments, titles, study time periods, and data.
- 2. File Formats: Contact NACJD to deposit data in formats not listed below**
 - **Quantitative data:** SPSS is preferred. Stata and SAS are acceptable with embedded variable and value labels. Please contact the NACJD team at nacjd@icpsr.umich.edu to submit data in non-statistical software packages, including Excel.
 - **Qualitative data:** Preferred formats include plain text, RTF, Word, or PDF with Optical Character Recognition. We cannot accept Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) file formats (e.g., NVivo, ATLAS.ti, MAXQDA) at this time. Instead, please submit Word extracts from CAQDAS files.
 - **Geospatial data:** ESRI shapefiles are preferred and must include the main file (.shp), the index file (.shx) and the dBASE table (.dbf). Optional, but helpful, files include projection files (.prj) and spatial index files (.sbx, .sbn). Other acceptable formats include MapInfo (.tab, .dat, .map, .id) and Geography Markup Language (.gml, .xsd).
- 3. Data Deliveries:** Whenever possible, the delivery of data and associated products should be limited to prevent errors and effort duplication. This is particularly important in cases when NACJD project managers and OJP analysts or contractors work together to produce and/or archive a dataset. Only the final version of each dataset should be submitted to NACJD for archiving.

For NIJ and OJJDP Program Officers and Project Contractors

Variables that directly identify research subjects must be removed from the data prior to archiving. For more detailed information on preparing quantitative, qualitative, and geospatial data for deposit, see [Guidelines for Depositing NIJ and OJJDP Data at NACJD](#) available on our website. NACJD also provides an orientation video that discusses the archiving requirements and the online deposit system.

- 1. Quantitative Data:** Variable information should be embedded in data files to ensure accurate documentation.
 - Variable labels should provide information on the item or question number in the associated data collection instrument (unless the item number is part of the variable)

name), a clear indication of the variable's content, and an indication of whether the variable is constructed from other items.

- Value labels/codes should be assigned to each variable. Assign a set of exhaustive and descriptive codes (e.g., "0" No, "1" Yes). Data values should fit into one and only one category.
- Assign separate codes for missing values – refusals, non-response, not applicable, etc. – for all variables. Use numeric codes that are above the maximum valid value for the variable (e.g., "97," "98," and "99"), because special missing characters are often lost when converting between software packages.

2. Qualitative Data:

- Include a coding schema or coding tree that identifies any themes, ideas, and patterns that were extracted from the narrative data/transcripts.
- Provide interview "maps" that document information on headers, speaker tags, and question and answer sequencing.
- Submit an interview roster or summary listing of all interviews. The list should include ID numbers and other key characteristics such as interview dates, numbers of pages, and interview numbers.

3. Geospatial Data:

- Include attribute information (tabular or textual) that can be linked to spatial data and describes the geographic characteristics of features such as variable names, types, and relationships to other features.
- Submit geometry files used to produce data analysis, figures, and tables.
- Submit programming code or project files used to create map visualizations.

BJS Analysts and Project Contractors

1. Data Transfers: All BJS data should be transferred to and from NACJD using the Justice Enterprise File Sharing (JEFS) system.

- **Transfer Email:** After uploading data and documentation files to JEFS, BJS analysts or project contractors should send an email to Justin Noble, Senior Data Project Manager (noblejus@umich.edu). NACJD staff will then coordinate and prioritize data curation requests with BJS leadership, analysts, and the ICPSR/NACJD data curation team.
- **Submissions Template:** We **strongly recommend** that BJS analysts and project contractors attach a completed [NACJD-BJS Data Transfer Form](#) to the data transfer email.
- **Transfer of Data to BJS:** Once data have been curated and quality-checked, ICPSR staff will transfer curated data and ICPSR-generated codebook(s) back to BJS data stewards via JEFS for their review and approval to release.
- **Release Notifications:** ICPSR/NACJD will schedule a study for release and provide an advance notice of release email to the BJS data steward and the OJP social media team after transferring data to BJS.

2. New Data: When BJS deposits new data, data that have not been submitted in several years, or when there is a change to an instance of a study series, BJS staff should consult with NACJD about the deposit and arrange a kickoff meeting.

- **Deposit Coordination:** When there is a new BJS data collection, or a collection that hasn't been submitted for several years, it is beneficial for BJS analysts and/or contractors to discuss the submission process, the data, and documentation products with NACJD staff. For example, the *2016 Survey of Prison Inmates* was previously the *2004 Survey of*

Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities. A deposit coordination meeting would ensure continuity within the data series.

- **Meetings:** All BJS analysts with new submissions should schedule a one-on-one consultation **before** submitting data to NACJD to discuss the expectations and requirements surrounding the submission of data, documentation, and metadata, as well as enhancements that can be performed on the files. To arrange a meeting, email noblejus@umich.edu.
 - **Deposit Evaluation:** NACJD staff will perform an initial review of submitted files and request additional information about the data, or revisions, as needed.
3. **Timeline Coordination:** BJS analysts and ICPSR staff should work closely together to communicate target release dates, clarify the reasons for release dates, and provide regular updates about anticipated changes to datasets.
 - **Establishing Target Release Dates:** When BJS transfers data to ICPSR, they should set a target release date.
 - **Release Status:** BJS analysts and contractors should communicate whether deposited data have been cleared for release or are awaiting approval to release at the time of transfer. If data are awaiting approval to release, depositors should indicate the reason to hold the release.
 - **Anticipated Changes to Data:** After a deposit, indicate if the analyst or contractor expects to make updates to the data so that NACJD and BJS can coordinate how to update the collection and determine whether work should begin before data are finalized most efficiently.
 4. **Access Level:** BJS analysts should identify whether files are for public- or restricted-use upon transfer and whether a disclosure review has been performed.
 - **Direct Identifiers:** If data contain any identifiers (e.g., individual names, court names, and agency names), BJS analysts should state whether this information can be released to secondary users of the data.
 5. **Clarify Data Release Authority:** For planned releases, BJS analysts should state who has the authority to allow NACJD to release data.
 6. **Clarify BJS Publication Timetables:** Whenever possible, BJS analysts should clarify to NACJD staff what the process and typical timelines for releasing official BJS publications are so they can coordinate work.
 - **Release Calendar:** One way to clarify publication timetables is to follow the lead of the BJS Victimization Unit and share an annual publication calendar with NACJD staff.
 7. **Error Checking:** When data are transferred, analysts or contractors should state if there are plans to continue to analyze or quality-check the data and whether an analysis and review of the data have been completed.

NACJD-BJS Data Transfer Form

Aside from uploading BJS data and documentation files to JEFS, please provide information about the BJS data collection being transferred to ICPSR/NACJD for archiving and dissemination using this form. Download, complete, and email this form as an attachment to Justin Noble, Senior Data Project Manager (noblejus@umich.edu).

Data Collection Information

Title of BJS Data Collection: _____

JEFS Folder Name: _____

Are the data uploaded to JEFS the final versions of each dataset? Yes No

BJS Data Deposit Characteristics

Describe if the data are part of an existing serial NACJD data collection and whether there are significant differences compared to the most recent data archived with NACJD.

Should the data be restricted-use? Yes No

Do the data contain content such as direct or indirect identifiers? Yes No
(See [the Data with Confidential Content webpage](#) for information)

If applicable, please list any direct or indirect identifiers included in the data and describe whether these identifiers can be made available to secondary users of the data.

Study Prioritization and Target Release Data

Study Priority (select one): Lowest Low Medium High Highest

Does the data release need to coincide with an accompanying report or publication release? Yes No

What is the target release date for the data collection? _____

If applicable, how should the processing of the data be prioritized in relation to other data collections that you or your unit have transferred or plan to transfer to ICPSR/NACJD for archiving?

BJS Data Release Authorization

After ICPSR curates and quality-checks a data collection, the curated data files and an ICPSR codebook will be returned to BJS for review and approval to release. Provide the **name**, **title**, and **email** of the person who will review the data and ICPSR-generated codebooks and provide approval to release the files.

Name/Title: _____

Email: _____

Describe any factors or considerations that ICPSR/NACJD should be aware of that might impact the ability for ICPSR/ NACJD to release the study after the files have been processed.

