



Bureau of Justice Statistics

2012 National Survey of Tribal Court Systems

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is pleased to announce that it will administer the 2012 National Survey of Tribal Court Systems (NSTCS). BJS was established in December of 1979 under the Justice Systems Improvement Act of 1979, an amendment to the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. As the statistical agency for the Department of Justice, BJS is responsible for the collection, analysis, publication, and dissemination of statistical information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operations of criminal justice systems at all levels of government. The Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 mandates BJS “establish and implement such tribal data collection systems as the BJS Director determines to be necessary.”¹ On behalf of BJS, Kauffman & Associates, Inc. (KAI), a Native-owned research firm, will administer the survey.

Implementation of the NSTCS is part of a multifaceted effort by BJS to expand statistical activities related to tribal crime and justice issues. BJS will contact the approximate 200-300 federally recognized tribal justice systems in the United States and gather information about the following topical areas:

- **Tribal Court Administration**
(Governance, Authority, and Jurisdiction)
- **Tribal Court Operations**
(Management & Budgets)
- **Staffing**
- **Case processing and Caseloads**
- **Prosecution**
- **Indigent Defense**
- **Sanctions and Sentencing**
- **Probation and Parole**
- **Information systems access and data entry**
- **Juvenile Justice and Delinquency**
- **Justice Functions**
(Law Enforcement, Corrections)

Who: Each federally recognized tribe in the U.S. will be contacted to verify and determine the operation of a recognized judicial system.

What: Respondents will complete an automated instrument or paper version and submit to the data collection agent.

When: Tribal courts should expect to receive the survey materials in early 2013.

Why: The NSTCS will provide long-term benefits for tribes; update the 2002 Census of Tribal Agencies; serve as an authenticated source for tribal court statistics; foster greater transparency in addressing the problems of crime and justice in Indian country; and enrich tribal eligibility for justice program funding resources, prevention programs, and justice services.

Where: Tribes may find additional information on BJS program and publications via the website: www.bjs.gov.

For additional information on Indian Country Justice Statistics Program, please contact Steven W. Perry, BJS Statistician at 202-307-0777 or Steven.W.Perry@usdoj.gov

¹42 U.S.C. § 3732(d)(2)