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Prosecutors in State Courts, 1996

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In 1996 State court prosecutors' offices employed approximately 71,000 attorneys, investigators, and support staff, with a median annual budget of \$254,000. The median total staff was nine. In 1996 half of all offices closed 250 or more felony cases with a conviction rate of 89%. These findings are from the 1996 National Survey of Prosecutors (NSP), the most recent in a series of surveys also conducted in 1990, 1992, and 1994.

The 1996 survey sampled 308 chief prosecutors from the estimated 2,343 that try felony cases. The nationally representative sample was drawn from a list of all prosecutors' offices that handle felony cases in State courts. The study does not include municipal attorneys or those county attorneys who primarily operate in courts of limited jurisdiction.

A chief prosecutor is the attorney who advocates for the public in felony cases and in a variety of other cases. State law determines the number of chief prosecutors and whether they are elected or appointed. Over 95% of chief prosecutors are elected locally. (See *Prosecutors in State Courts, 1990*, BJS Bulletin NCJ 134500.)

Highlights

State court prosecutors' offices, 1996

	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Number of offices	2,343	34	180	1,516	613
Median					
Population served	32,866	1,427,827	506,420	40,767	16,855
Total staff size	9	414	103	10	3
Salary of chief prosecutor	\$64,000	\$115,000	\$97,000	\$69,000	\$36,000
Budget for prosecution	\$254,000	\$25,500,000	\$4,800,000	\$293,000	\$90,000

- In 1996 State court prosecutors' offices employed about 71,000 attorneys, investigators, and support staff. The staff total had increased 25% from 1992 to 1996.
- About three-fourths of all offices reported employing a full-time prosecutor compared to about half of all offices in 1990.
- On average, offices with a part-time chief prosecutor had the smallest staff size, lowest percentage of staff members working full time, and the smallest budgets.
- Almost half of all offices reported the use of DNA evidence during plea negotiations or felony trials. DNA evidence was used most often for sex offenses (43%), followed by murder and manslaughter (28%) and aggravated assault (4%) cases.
- Over three-fourths of all offices indicated having proceeded against juveniles in criminal court. An estimated 27,000 juveniles were proceeded against in criminal court by prosecutors' offices in 1996.
- **Prosecutors' offices serving districts of 1 million or more**
 - 30% of all staff employed by prosecutors' offices nationwide worked in the 34 largest offices, which each serve 1 million or more residents.
 - Nearly three-fourths of offices serving districts of 1 million or more reported that an assistant prosecutor was threatened or assaulted.
 - About half of the prosecutors' offices that represented districts of 1 million or more had a specialized unit or designated attorney who handled juvenile cases in criminal court.

Office titles for State court prosecutors include district attorney, county attorney, prosecuting attorney, commonwealth attorney, and state's attorney. (See *Prosecutors in State Courts, 1994*, BJS Bulletin, NCJ 151656, Appendix 1.) Nearly all prosecutors' offices serve a county-based jurisdiction. In 1996, 89% of prosecutorial districts served one county compared to 80% in 1990. Half of all offices in 1996 represented districts with a population of 33,000 or less. Three-quarters served districts with fewer than 100,000 persons.

This report provides information about prosecutors' offices categorized by whether the chief prosecutor worked full or part-time and by the number of residents served. A full-time office in a large jurisdiction refers to an office with a full-time chief prosecutor in a jurisdiction of 1,000,000 or more persons. A full-time office in a medium jurisdiction refers to an office with a full-time chief prosecutor in a jurisdiction between 250,000 to 999,999 persons. A full-time office in a small jurisdiction refers to an office with a full-time chief prosecutor in a jurisdiction with fewer than 250,000 persons. A part-time office has a part-time chief prosecutor serving a jurisdiction of any size.¹

¹The full-time office categories used in this report differ from and are not comparable to the full-time categories in *Prosecutors in State Courts, 1994*. Appendix table A on page 8 contains the 1994 data in the current categories of full-time offices.

Cases handled by prosecutors' offices

Besides handling felony cases, 91% of all offices also had jurisdiction for misdemeanor cases; 82% handled traffic violations; 53%, child support enforcement; and 53% represented the government in civil lawsuits (table 1). Full-time small offices (84%) and part-time offices (83%) were more likely to handle traffic violations than either the full-time large (62%) or medium size offices (61%). The representation of the government in civil cases was also more common in part-time offices than in full-time offices. A larger percentage of full-time large offices had responsibility for child support enforcement compared to full-time offices of medium size.

Staffing of prosecutors' offices

In 1996 the Nation's prosecutors' offices employed a workforce of about 71,000 full-time and part-time staff, including assistant prosecutors, paralegals, investigators, victim advocates, and support staff (table 2). This total represents an increase of 25% in total staff from 1992 and 9% from 1994. Support staff, including clerks and secretaries, comprised about 35% of total office staff. Assistant prosecutors responsible for at least some phase of felony criminal cases made up a third of total staff. The number of assistant prosecutors grew to 24,000 in 1996. This represents an increase of 20% over the number of assistant prosecutors in 1990, 13% more than the

number in 1992, and 8% more than in 1994. In 1992 and 1994, total employment in prosecutors' offices accounted for about 4% of all State and local justice employment.²

In 1996 almost three-quarters of all offices reported employing a full-time chief prosecutor. In 1990 the percentage of full-time chief prosecutors was 53% nationwide. Sixty percent of all offices employed at least one full-time assistant prosecutor. Overall, 91% of the total staff positions were full-time. In part-time offices about 16% of staff members were full-time employees.

²*Justice Expenditure and Employment Extracts, 1994*, BJS report, forthcoming, reports a total State and local justice system employment of 1,901,773 in October 1994. *Justice Expenditure and Employment Extracts, 1992*, BJS report, forthcoming, has a total of 1,635,502 employees for October 1992.

Table 2. Personnel categories in prosecutors' offices, 1996

	Percent of total personnel in prosecutors' offices nationwide
Total	100%
Chief prosecutor	3
Assistant prosecutors	34
Managers/supervisors ^a	3
Legal services ^b	4
Victim advocates	5
Staff investigators	10
Support staff ^c	35
Other ^d	6
Number of personnel	71,000

Note: Detail may not add to 100% because of rounding. Data on the number of chief prosecutors were available for all offices. Data on the number of assistant prosecutors, managers, legal services personnel, victim advocates, staff investigators, support staff, and other personnel were available for 2,341 offices.

^aManagers/supervisors includes any attorneys in non-litigating, managerial, or supervisory positions. If managers/supervisors litigate cases, they are included in the number of assistant prosecutors.

^bLegal services includes law clerks and paralegals.

^cSupport staff includes secretaries, clerks and computer specialists.

^dIncludes civil attorneys and family support staff.

Survey question: How many of the following types of staff members are employed in your office?

Table 1. Type of cases other than felonies handled by prosecutors' offices, 1996

Type of case:	All offices	Percent of offices			Part-time offices
		Full-time offices (population served)			
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Misdemeanor	91.3%	94.1%	87.5%	92.7%	88.9%
Traffic violation	81.9	61.8	61.3	84.1	83.1
Child support enforcement	52.9	61.8	46.4	54.0	51.4
Representing government in a civil lawsuit	52.9	47.1	32.1	44.8	79.0

Note: Data on the percentage of offices handling misdemeanor cases were available for 2,330 offices; traffic violations, 2,332 offices; child support enforcement, 2,331 offices; and representing the government in civil lawsuits 2,330 offices.

Survey question: In addition to felony cases, does your office have responsibility for or jurisdiction over any of the following?

Table 3. Median staff size in prosecutors' offices, by type of office and personnel categories, 1996

	Median				
	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
1,000,000 or more		250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000		
Total staff size ^a	9	414	103	10	3
Number of assistant prosecutors	3	163	41	3	1
Number of managers ^b	0	10	2	0	0
Number of legal services personnel ^c	0	24	4	0	0
Number of victim advocates	1	8	5	1	0
Number of staff investigators	0	42	10	1	0
Number of support staff ^d	3	138	33	3	1
Number of offices	2,341	34	178	1,516	613

^aIncludes the chief prosecutor.
^bManagers/supervisors includes any attorneys in non-litigating, managerial, or supervisory positions. If managers/supervisors litigate cases, they are included in the number of assistant prosecutors.
^cLegal services includes law clerks and paralegals.
^dSupport staff includes secretaries, clerks, and computer specialists.

In 1996 the median total staff size was nine, including the chief prosecutor (table 3). Half of all offices reported three or more assistant prosecutors, not including the chief prosecutor. In 1994 the median total staff size was eight, with a median of two assistant prosecutors not including the chief prosecutor. In 1996 full-time offices in large jurisdictions had a median total staff size of 414, with a median of 163 assistant prosecutors, not including the chief prosecutor and 138 support staff. Half of part-time offices reported three or more staff members.

Length of service and salary of chief prosecutor

The median length of service for chief prosecutors nationwide (elected or appointed) was 6.0 years. Eighteen percent of all chief prosecutors had served 2 years or less. About a quarter had served 12 years or more. The longest tenure among surveyed respondents was 32 years. In 1994 half of all chief prosecutors had served 4.7 years or more.

The median length of service for chief prosecutors in full-time large offices was 6.6 years, for full-time medium offices, 6.0 years; for full-time small offices, 7.7 years; and for chief prosecutors in part-time offices, 4.8 years.

In 1996 half of all offices reported that the chief prosecutor earned \$64,000 per year or more. The median salary for chief prosecutors in full-time large offices was \$115,000; for full-time medium offices, \$97,000; for full-time small offices, \$69,000; and for chief prosecutors in part-time offices, \$36,000 (shown in *Highlights*).

Budget of prosecutors' offices

In 1996 half of all offices received 88% or more of their funds for prosecutorial functions from the county government. About 36% of offices relied exclusively on the county government for their budget. In 1994, 46% of offices reported receiving their total prosecutorial budget from the county government. Almost half of all offices indicated that some portion of their budget came from State funds in 1996. Twenty-nine percent of all offices received funding from State and Federal grants in 1996 compared to 17% in 1994. All surveyed part-time offices received total funding from the county government.

Table 4. Budget for prosecutorial functions, by type of office, 1994-96

Budget for prosecutorial functions	Full-time offices (population served)				
	All offices	1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	Part-time offices
Mean					
1994*	\$1,430,000	\$30,360,000	\$6,320,000	\$510,000	\$123,000
1996	1,480,000	35,170,000	6,680,000	560,000	140,000
Median					
1994*	239,000	23,300,000	5,200,000	256,000	79,000
1996	254,000	25,500,000	4,800,000	293,000	90,000

Note: The 1994 budget information was available for 1,788 offices. The 1996 budget information was available for 2,121 offices.
*1994 budget information is adjusted for inflation and presented in 1996 dollars.

Half of all offices reported an annual budget for prosecutorial functions of \$254,000 or more in 1996 (table 4). The average budget for all offices was nearly \$1.5 million. Reported budgets ranged from \$21,000 to \$255 million. In 1994, when adjusted for inflation, the median budget for all offices was \$239,000, and the mean budget was \$1.4 million. There was no statistically significant change in the adjusted mean budget between 1994 and 1996.

Prosecutors' offices with districts serving population of 1 million or more, 1996

State	Office	Population
CA	Los Angeles	9,127,751
IL	Cook	5,096,540
TX	Harris	3,126,966
CA	San Diego	2,655,463
CA	Orange	2,636,888
AZ	Maricopa	2,611,327
NY	Kings	2,273,966
FL	11th Judicial Circuit	2,076,175
MI	Wayne	2,039,819
TX	Dallas	2,000,192
NY	Queens	1,980,643
WA	King	1,619,411
CA	Santa Clara	1,599,604
CA	San Bernardino	1,598,358
NY	New York	1,533,774
PA	Philadelphia	1,478,002
FL	17th Judicial Circuit	1,438,228
CA	Riverside	1,417,425
MA	Middlesex District	1,412,561
OH	Cuyahoga	1,401,552
NY	Suffolk	1,356,896
CA	Alameda	1,328,139
TX	Bexar	1,318,322
TX	Tarrant	1,305,185

NY	Nassau	1,303,389
PA	Allegheny	1,296,037
NY	Bronx	1,193,775
FL	6th Judicial Circuit	1,180,443
MI	Oakland	1,162,098
CA	Sacramento	1,117,275
MN	Hennepin	1,058,746
NV	Clark	1,048,717
OH	Franklin	1,013,724
MO	St. Louis	1,003,807

The 34 largest prosecutors' offices in the Nation serve 24% of the U.S. population. The median population served was about 1.4 million.

Thirty percent of all staff employed by prosecutors' offices nationwide worked in these 34 largest offices, including over 7,400 assistant prosecutors, 1,800 investigators, and 7,000 support staff. Virtually all (97%) of the staff employed in these 34 offices worked full-time.

Between 1994 and 1996 the mean budget when adjusted for inflation for

the 34 full-time large offices increased from \$30 million to \$35 million, an increase of 16%.

Approximately 438,000 felony cases were closed by the 34 largest offices. About 318,000 of the felony cases disposed of resulted in a felony or misdemeanor conviction. Prosecutors in the 34 largest offices handled over 20,000 trials disposed by jury verdict.

Overall, the 34 largest offices proceeded against 7,000 juveniles in criminal court. About half of the offices had written guidelines about proceeding against juveniles in criminal court and a specialized unit or designated attorney that handled such cases.

Nearly three-fourths of offices serving 1 million or more residents reported that an assistant prosecutor was threatened or assaulted.

Prosecutors' offices with a part-time chief prosecutor, 1996

In about 26% of the Nation's prosecutors' offices the chief prosecutor occupied a *part-time* position. These offices serve a population of approximately 16 million, representing almost 6% of the total U.S. population. The median population each office served was about 17,000.

In 1996 the total workforce in offices with a part-time prosecutor was 3,100, which accounted for 4% of the total employment for all prosecutors' offices in the country. The median staff size was three.

On average, offices with a part-time chief prosecutor had an annual budget

of \$90,000 in 1996. The sole source of funding for part-time offices was their county governments.

Half of the part-time offices closed 221 criminal cases or more in 1996. In at least half of the offices, 96% of the cases closed resulted in a conviction. Most (97%) of the cases closed by part-time offices were misdemeanor cases. There was a median of two felony jury trial verdicts.

In about a quarter of part-time prosecutors' offices, the chief prosecutor was threatened or assaulted. Twelve percent of offices reported that an

assistant prosecutor received a work-related threat or assault.

In 1996, 15% of part-time offices used DNA evidence during felony trials or plea negotiations. Part-time offices most often used DNA evidence in prosecuting cases dealing with sex offenses.

About 40% of part-time offices indicated having office e-mail, 32% access to the Internet, 29% electronic research capabilities and 11% access to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

Number of cases and convictions

In 1996 the median number of criminal cases closed by all offices was 900 (table 5). In at least half of all offices, 88% of cases resulted in a felony or misdemeanor conviction. The median number of felony cases closed for all offices was 250, with a median conviction rate of 89%. Half of all offices were involved with 8 or more felony jury trials that resulted in a verdict.

In half of the full-time large offices, each office closed over 11,000 felony cases and 30,000 misdemeanor cases. In at least half of the full-time large offices, 90% of felony cases and 77% of misdemeanor cases resulted in a conviction. Half of part-time offices reported a conviction rate of 93% or higher for felony cases and 98% or higher for misdemeanor cases. Full-time large offices were involved

Estimating the number of felony cases convicted in State courts

Estimates of the number of cases closed and convicted are based on information supplied by less than 50% of prosecutors' offices nationwide (tables 5 and 6).

The BJS National Judicial Reporting Program (NJRP), which compiles detailed information on sentences and characteristics of convicted felons every 2 years, provides better and more complete information on felony cases disposed in State courts nationwide. According to NJRP, State courts convicted 872,217 adults of a felony in 1994, a decrease from 893,630 in 1992.

For more details, see *Felony Sentences in State Courts, 1994*, NCJ 163391, and *Felony Sentences in State Courts, 1992*, NCJ 151167.

with a median of 491 felony jury trials that resulted in a verdict. The median annual number of felony cases closed by full-time medium offices was 2,928; by full-time small offices, 260; and by part-time offices 57.

Neither the number of felony cases closed nor the conviction rates per office changed significantly between 1992 and 1996 (table 6).

Table 5. Criminal cases closed and convictions by prosecutors' offices, 1996

Criminal cases closed	Median				
	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
All ^{a,b}	900	39,445	13,334	900	221
Percent convicted	88%	76%	81%	87%	96%
Felony ^c	250	11,197	2,928	260	57
Percent convicted	89%	90%	87%	89%	93%
Misdemeanor ^d	825	30,167	11,435	825	200
Percent convicted	91%	77%	76%	90%	98%
Felony jury trial verdicts	8	491	126	9	2

Note: Data on the total number of criminal cases closed were available for 991 offices; on felony cases closed, for 1,212 offices; and on misdemeanor cases closed, for 992. Conviction percentages for total criminal cases closed were available for 805 offices; for felony cases closed, 1,068 offices; and for misdemeanor cases closed, 830 offices. Data on felony trial verdicts were available for 1,345 offices.

^aCases refers to a defendant. A defendant with multiple charges was counted as one case.

^bClosed case means any case with a judgment of conviction, acquittal, or dismissal with or without prejudice entered by the court.

^cEach respondent categorized cases as felonies according to the State statute.

^dMisdemeanor cases refer to cases in which criminal defendants had no felony charges against them.

Table 6. Felony cases closed and convicted by prosecutors' offices, 1992-96

	Number of cases		
	1992	1994	1996
Mean^{a,b,c}			
Felony cases closed per office	966	1,018	1,088
Conviction rate per office	83%	86%	86%
Median			
Felony cases closed per office	203	250	250
Conviction rate per office	87%	87%	89%

Note: For 1992 data on the number of felony cases closed were available for 1,633 offices; the number of felony convictions for 1,533. For 1994 data on the number of felony cases closed were available for 1,252 offices and the number of felony convictions for 1,037 offices. For 1996 data on the number of felony cases closed were available for 1,212 offices and the number of felony convictions for 1,068 offices.

^aCases refers to a defendant. A defendant with multiple charges was counted as one case.

^bClosed case means any case with a judgment of conviction, acquittal, or dismissal with or without prejudice entered by the court.

^cRespondents categorized cases as felonies according to their State statute.

Table 7. Work-related threats and assaults received by members of prosecutors' offices, 1992-96

	Percent of all offices		
	1992	1994	1996
Threats or assaults received by members of prosecutors' offices*	28.4%	50.9%	49.0%
Chief prosecutor	17.4	30.6	30.3
Assistant prosecutor	6.4	27.6	26.0
Staff investigator	3.4	8.5	6.4

Note: Data in 1992 on overall work-related threats or assaults were available for 2,396 offices; in 1994, for 2,263 offices; and in 1996, for 2,270 offices.

*Member refers to the chief prosecutor, assistant prosecutors, and staff investigators.

Table 8. Work-related threats and assaults received by members of prosecutors' office, 1996

Member of office receiving work-related threat or assault	Percent of offices				
	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Chief prosecutor	30.3%	51.5%	34.8%	31.5%	24.9%
Assistant prosecutor	26.0	72.7	56.3	27.3	11.7
Staff investigator	6.4	24.2	13.3	7.8	0
Number of offices	2,268	33	158	1,498	579

Note: Zero indicates no cases in the sample.

Survey question: In 1996, did any member of the prosecutors' office receive any work-related threats or assaults?

Table 9. DNA evidence used by prosecutors' offices, 1996

Use of DNA evidence	Percent of offices				
	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Used at any time	49.2%	100.0%	97.6%	56.4%	15.3%
Stage of case					
Plea negotiations	41.1%	90.9%	84.1%	48.3%	9.8%
Trial	34.2	100.0	91.8	36.7	9.8
Type of offense					
Murder, manslaughter	27.5%	93.9%	87.5%	28.8%	4.2%
Sex offenses	42.7	100.0	96.4	46.5	15.3
Aggravated assault	4.2	36.4	13.7	4.2	0
Robbery	2.9	15.2	13.7	2.6	0
Burglary	2.7	21.2	12.6	2.3	0
Forensic laboratory performing DNA analysis					
FBI	11.2%	42.4%	32.1%	11.6%	2.9%
State-operated	36.1	39.4	72.6	43.1	8.5
Local agency	3.0	54.5	16.1	1.6	0
Privately operated	20.2	87.9	67.7	17.7	9.8
Number of offices	2,330	33	168	1,516	613

Note: Zero indicates no cases in the sample.

Survey questions: In 1996, did your office use DNA evidence during plea negotiations or during felony trials? For which type(s) of felony offenses did your office use DNA evidence during plea negotiations or trials? Which laboratory (ies) performed the DNA analysis?

Work-related threats or assaults against prosecutors' staff

Almost half of all offices in 1996 indicated that a staff member experienced a work-related threat or assault (table 7). This was unchanged from 1994. In 1992, 17% of offices reported that their chief prosecutor was threatened or assaulted; in 1996 the percentage rose to 30%.

Nearly 73% of full-time large offices reported that at least one assistant prosecutor had been threatened or assaulted, 56% of full-time medium offices, 27% of full-time small offices, and 12% of part-time offices (table 8).

DNA evidence

DNA evidence was used by 49% of all offices in 1996 (table 9). About 41% of prosecutors' offices indicated using DNA evidence during plea negotiations, and 34% indicated use during felony trials. Offices most often used DNA evidence in cases involving sex offenses (43%) and murder and manslaughter (28%).

Various laboratories performed the DNA analysis for prosecutors' offices. Thirty-six percent of offices reported using a State-operated forensic laboratory to analyze DNA evidence; 20% reported a privately operated forensic laboratory; and 11%, the FBI laboratory.

DNA evidence was used more often in full-time large and medium offices than in either full-time small or part-time offices. Regardless of office size, DNA evidence was primarily used in cases involving sex offenses. Full-time large offices relied more extensively on privately operated forensic laboratories for DNA analysis than other office types. Almost 73% of full-time medium offices reported using a State-operated forensic laboratory to conduct the DNA analysis, as did 43% of full-time small offices, 39% of full-time large offices, and 9% of part-time offices.

Table 10. Juveniles proceeded against in criminal court, by prosecutors' offices, 1996

Juveniles proceeded against in criminal court	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Total, 1996*	27,000	7,000	9,000	10,000	1,000
Median number, per office	5	93	24	4	3
Percentage of offices with specialized unit or designated attorney who handles juvenile cases	35.0%	50.0%	60.1%	34.2%	29.2%
Percentage of offices with written guidelines for handling juvenile cases	11.6%	55.9%	41.1%	9.5%	5.9%

Note: Data were available for 1,337 of the 1,773 offices proceeding against juveniles in criminal court. Data on a specialized unit or a designated attorney that handles juvenile cases proceeded against in criminal court were available for 2,313 offices. Data on written guidelines about handling juvenile cases in criminal court were available for 2,257 offices. *Juvenile cases proceeded against in criminal court include cases that reached criminal court by judicial waiver, statutory exclusion, direct filing by prosecutor's office, or any other mechanism available in the prosecutor's State.

Survey questions: In 1996, did your office proceed against any juveniles in criminal court? Does your office have a designated attorney(s) or a specialized unit that handles juvenile cases proceeded against in criminal court? Does your office have written guidelines about proceeding against juvenile cases in criminal court?

offices was 93; by full-time medium offices, 24; full-time small offices, 4; and part-time offices, 3.

A third of offices indicated that a specialized unit or designated attorney(s) handled juvenile cases prosecuted in criminal court. Over 60% of full-time medium offices had a specialized unit that handled juveniles proceeded against in criminal court, as did 50% of full-time large offices, 34% of full-time small offices, and 29% of part-time offices.

About 12% of all offices indicated having written guidelines about proceeding against juvenile cases in criminal court. Full-time large offices were more likely than any other office type to have written guidelines for proceeding against juveniles in criminal court.

Computerization

In 1996 about a third of all offices reported being part of an integrated computerized system with other criminal justice agencies. In 1994 a little more than a quarter of all offices indicated being part of such a system. In 1996, 23% of offices indicated being part of an integrated system with the courts, 16% with law enforcement, and 9% with district attorney offices statewide (table 11).

Over 76% of full-time large offices reported being part of an integrated system, 72% of full-time medium offices, 37% of full-time small offices, and 4% of part-time offices. Full-time offices were the most likely to be part of an integrated computerized system with the courts, followed by law enforcement agencies.

Table 11. Prosecutors' offices participation in an integrated computer system with other criminal justice agencies, 1996

	All offices	Percent of offices			Part-time offices
		Full-time offices (population served)			
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Part of an integrated computerized system with other criminal justice agencies	31.4%	76.5%	72.0%	37.0%	4.2%
Criminal justice agencies					
Law enforcement	16.2%	55.9%	44.0%	17.5%	2.9%
Courts	22.6	70.6	61.9	26.4	0
Pretrial service	1.2	14.7	7.7	0.7	0
Public defender	1.5	14.7	17.2	0	0
Corrections	4.2	17.6	19.6	3.9	0
Statewide district attorney offices	8.6	14.7	13.7	10.9	1.3
Number of offices	2,297	34	168	1,482	613

Note: Zero indicates no cases in the sample.

Survey question: Is your office part of an integrated computerized system with other criminal justice agencies?

Juveniles proceeded against in criminal court

In 1996 three-fourths of all offices reported proceeding against juveniles in criminal court (not shown in a table). In 1994, 59% of all offices indicated handling juvenile cases transferred to criminal court.

Overall, an estimated 27,000 juveniles were proceeded against in criminal court by prosecutors' offices in 1996 (table 10). Half of all offices indicated having proceeded against 5 or more juveniles in criminal court. The median number of juveniles proceeded against in criminal court by full-time large

Nearly 46% of all offices indicated having electronic research capabilities such as Westlaw or Lexis-Nexis, 40% indicated having office e-mail, 36% having access to the Internet, 31% access to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and 4% a web site on the Internet (table 12).

About 47% of full-time large offices reported having a web site on the Internet, 30% of full-time medium offices, and 2% of full-time small offices. Over 70% of full-time large and medium offices indicated access to the NCIC.

Table 12. Computer use in prosecutors' offices, 1996

	Percent of offices				
	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
1,000,000 or more		250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000		
Use of computer					
Office e-mail	39.8%	91.2%	75.0%	33.3%	43.2%
Access to the Internet	35.5	76.5	61.9	33.1	31.8
Web site on the Internet	4.3	47.1	29.8	2.3	0
Electronic research capabilities	45.6	97.1	77.4	47.7	29.0
Access to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC)	31.4	79.4	73.2	34.0	11.1
Number of offices	2,331	34	168	1,516	613

Note: A zero indicates no cases in the sample.

Survey question: Does your office have any of the following?

Appendix table A. State court prosecutors' offices, 1994

	All offices	Full-time offices (population served)			Part-time offices
		1,000,000 or more	250,000 to 999,999	Under 250,000	
Number of offices	2,343	33	181	1,446	683
Median					
Population served, 1992	29,480	1,411,209	506,593	40,320	16,196
Total staff size, 1994	8	370	100	10	4
Budget for prosecution, 1994	\$226,000	\$22,000,000	\$4,900,000	\$242,000	\$75,000
Staff					
Assistant prosecutors	2	152	36	3	1
Managers	0	15	2	0	0
Legal services personnel	0	13	3	0	0
Victim advocates	1	9	4	1	0
Staff investigators	0	46	7	0	0
Support staff	2	114	30	3	1
Number of offices (staff)	2,343	32	175	1,403	683
Criminal cases closed (median number of felonies and misdemeanors)	985	36,749	10,371	1,095	586
Percent convicted	87%	83%	73%	87%	88%
Felony cases closed	250	10,565	3,000	264	20
Percent convicted	87%	89%	86%	86%	90%
Misdemeanor cases closed	649	26,000	7,718	820	379
Percent convicted	88%	77%	70%	90%	88%
Threats or assaults received					
Chief prosecutor	30.6%	42.4%	31.8%	33.7%	23.1%
Assistant prosecutor	27.6	63.6	49.2	35.9	2.7
Staff investigator	8.5	39.4	17.1	10.8	0
Number of offices (threats)	2,343	33	181	1,446	683
Part of an integrated computerized system with other criminal justice agencies	26.4%	78.1%	70.4%	27.7%	9.5%
Criminal justice agencies included :					
Law enforcement	19.2%	53.1%	53.6%	21.8%	2.8%
Courts	15.3	71.9	57.2	16	0
Pretrial service	1.8	21.9	12.5	0.9	0
Public defender	2.7	12.5	18.1	1.9	0
Corrections	4.2	31.3	30.3	2.4	0
Statewide district attorney's office	--	--	--	--	--
Number of offices (computerization)	2,262	32	171	1,411	648

Note: For classifications and definitions see the notes on the tables for 1996.

Data on total number of criminal cases closed in 1994 were available for 1,092 offices; the number of felony cases closed for 1,252 and the number of misdemeanor cases closed for 1,093.

Conviction percentages for total criminal cases closed were available for 928 offices, for felony cases closed, 1,037 offices, and for misdemeanor cases closed 913 offices.

--Not collected in 1994.

Appendix table A: Accounting for changed full-time office categories, 1994

The full-time office categories used for the 1996 NSP report differ from those used for the 1994 NSP report. The 1994 categories were changed because they resulted in an overestimation of the number of offices representing districts with a population of 500,000 or more. In 1994 the BJS survey estimated that there were 127 offices serving districts with a population of 500,000 or more. The actual number was 107 offices.

To correct for the overestimate, the categories were changed for the 1996 report. Appendix table A presents the 1994 NSP data with the 1996 categories to enable comparisons between the two years.

Appendix table B: Known and estimated number of prosecutors' offices in 1996

In any sample survey, the weighted data from respondents provide an estimate that may differ from the true value. According to categories of population that prosecutors' offices served, the survey's estimated distribution of the number of offices in 1996 varied slightly from the actual count of those offices.

Appendix table B. Population served by prosecutors' offices, 1996

1996 population served	Number of prosecutors' offices		Difference between estimate and actual number
	Actual	1996 National Survey of Prosecutors estimate	
1,000,000 or more	34	34	0
250,000 to 999,999	191	180	-11
50,000 to 249,999	714	714	0
Under 50,000	1,404	1,415	11
Total number of offices	2,343	2,343	

Note: The actual number of prosecutors' offices is based on a master list compiled by BJS for sampling purposes. The 1996 county population value assigned to each office came from the U.S. Bureau of the Census web site, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/countytop.html>

Methodology

The chief prosecutors surveyed are a nationally representative sample of those that prosecute felony cases in State courts of general jurisdiction. Questionnaires were mailed to 308 chief prosecutors from the approximately 2,343 who try felony cases in State courts.

Sampling frame

The sampling frame and sample used for the 1996 NSP is the same as that employed for the 1994 NSP. To construct the 1994 NSP sampling frame, a list of all prosecutorial districts that handle felony cases was compiled from the approximately 3,100 counties and independent cities in the U.S. (total = 2,343). Except for Connecticut, prosecutorial districts can comprise one or more counties and independent cities. To compile the list, statutes for the 50 States and the District of Columbia were reviewed to see how each State selects prosecutors and how prosecutors are organized (such as by county, judicial district, or geographical district). A file was created that contained the listing of the 2,343 prosecutorial districts, 1992 population figures, and 1992 UCR Part I adult

arrest data by county. The file was sent to the Bureau of the Census to draw a stratified systematic sample.

Sample

The 2,343 prosecutorial districts were grouped together into 6 strata, depending on the number of Part I adult arrests in 1992. Within each stratum, districts were selected for the sample based on 1992 population. A sample of 308 districts was chosen that is expected to yield a coefficient of variation of about 2 percent for sample estimates related to population size. The creation of prosecutorial districts eliminated the possibility that an individual prosecutor would be selected more than once. Each prosecutor had only one chance to be in the sample.

Ideally, statistics computed using sample survey responses have an "analysis weight" for conversion of sample results to statistics applicable to the entire population. In the NSP context, the entire population is that of felony prosecutors in State courts.

The analysis weight that was applied to the data provided by the sampled office was based on the inverse of the probability of selection for NSP. Each

Stratum definition by number of arrests	1996		
	Number of actual units	Number of sampled units	Number of respondents
1 = 4,800 or more	94	94	89
2 = 2,700 to 4,799	71	41	38
3 = 1,100 to 2,699	186	50	43
4 = 450 to 1,099	329	46	39
5 = 150 to 449	511	36	29
6 = fewer than 150	1,152	41	34
	2,343	308	272

Appendix table C. Selected estimates and standard errors, 1996 survey

	Estimate	One standard error
Total number of —		
Personnel	70,526	1,683
Assistant prosecutors	24,040	527
Juvenile cases proceeded against in criminal court	26,568	3,390
Felony cases closed	1,318,000	57,782
Mean of —		
Population served	116,160	2,531
1996 budget for prosecution	\$1,478,272	\$55,601
Felony cases closed	1,088	93
Percent of offices —		
Using DNA evidence in plea negotiations or felony trials	49.2%	4.4%
With a staff member receiving a work-related threat or assault	49.0%	4.9%
Part of an integrated computer system with other criminal justice agencies	31.4%	3.6%

of the 94 offices in stratum 1 was selected with certainty resulting in the weight of 1. Some statistical nonresponse adjustment was made for the 28 offices in strata 3 to 6 that did not respond to the 1996 survey.

Sampling error

Because the data in this report came from a sample, a sampling error (standard error) is associated with each reported number (Appendix table C). In general, if the difference between two numbers is greater than twice the standard error for that difference, there is a 95-percent confidence of a real difference that is not simply the result of using a sample rather than the entire population. All the differences discussed in the text of this report were statistically significant at or above the 95-percent confidence level.

Data collection

The 1996 survey was conducted through a mailed questionnaire, consisting of 14 questions that encompassed 123 items of information. The questionnaires were mailed to the survey participants by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in June 1997. Follow-up continued until December 1997. Of the 308 prosecutors' offices in the survey, 272 completed the questionnaire (2 offices providing only partial information). For the five offices in Stratum 1 and three offices in Stratum 2 that did not complete the 1996 NSP questionnaire, staffing information obtained from the 1994 NSP was used as estimates for 1996 staffing. For the 1994 NSP, 269 offices completed the survey, and for the 1992 NSP, 262 offices.

Overall, the survey response rate was about 88%. Several kinds of requested information were difficult for prosecutors' offices to provide, such as workload statistics, data related to number of juvenile transfers, and budget information. About 40% of survey respondents did not provide information on the number of felony cases closed and 54% did not provide information on misdemeanor cases closed. Of the 240 office respondents that reported proceeding against juveniles in criminal court, 12% were unable to provide the number of cases handled. In 1996 budget figures for prosecutorial functions were missing in 11% of survey responses.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Jan M. Chaiken, Ph.D., is director.

BJS Bulletins present the first release of findings from permanent data collection programs such as the National Survey of Prosecutors.

Carol J. DeFrances, Ph.D., and Greg W. Steadman of BJS wrote this report. Carma Hogue of the Bureau of the Census designed the sample. Andrew Press of BJS, James Polley, IV, of the National District Attorney's Association, and prosecutor coordinators from various States assisted with data collection. Todd Minton, Dorothea Proctor, and Donna Oliphant of BJS assisted with data entry. Kevin J. Strom provided statistical review. Jane Sigmon, Ph.D., and Elaine Nugent of the American Prosecutors Research Institute, and James Polley, IV, reviewed the report. Tom Hester produced and edited the report. Yvonne Boston did the final edit and prepared the report for printing. Tina Dorsey produced the Internet version. Marilyn Marbrook, administered final production.

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Data from the National Survey of Prosecutors, 1996 (ICPSR 2433) can be obtained from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the University of Michigan, 1-800-999-0960. The report, data, and supporting documentation are also available from the BJS web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>