

Rubric for Rating Supports for Federal Statistical Agencies

Notes:

- * *Ratings are based on information from 2023 through the first quarter of 2024.*
- * *Delineations are likely to evolve with subsequent reports as we gain more information.*
- * *See Supporting Materials: I for agency-by-agency ratings for support factors. See Table 5 in the body of the report for a summary for the principal statistical agencies; see the surrounding text for context.*

RESOURCE Ratings.

This category covers both budget and staffing for the 10 statistical agencies that can use their budget for salaries and expenses. For the other three—BJS, NCES, and NCSES—this category covers only their budget; see next category for a separate rating on those three agencies' staffing.

- **Weak:** Has lost more than 13% of its purchasing power since FY 2009, has had to make a significant number of program cuts and/or forgone critical updates, and unfunded mandates seem to tax other programs. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are severely challenged.
- **Challenging:** Has lost more than 5% of purchasing power since FY 2009, has unfunded mandates, and has had to make cuts or has not been able to make any critical updates. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are challenged.
- **Mixed:** Has not lost more than 5% of purchasing power since FY 2009 and additional unfunded mandates not overly taxing on other programs, but imminent cuts are likely without adequate increases. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are hampered.
- **Good:** Taking into account purchasing power increases, additional unfunded mandates/responsibilities, ending outdated/underused resources, and productivity gains, the agency's budget is sufficient for the agency to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities.
- **Strong:** Taking into account purchasing power increases, additional unfunded mandates/responsibilities, ending outdated/underused resources, and productivity gains, the agency's budget allows the agency to go beyond its Evidence Act responsibilities.

STAFFING Ratings. This category applies only to the three agencies whose staffing is determined through a parent agency account.

- **Weak:** Has a budget-to-staff ratio more than 5 times the median budget-to-staff ratio and a contractor-to-staff ratio of more than 5, with staffing levels resulting in program cuts, impaired agency agility, and innovation inhibitions. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are severely challenged.
- **Challenging:** Has a budget-to-staff ratio more than 2 times the median budget-to-staff ratio or a contractor-to-staff ratio of more than 2, with staffing levels resulting in program cuts, impaired agency agility, or innovation inhibitions. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are challenged.
- **Mixed:** Has a budget-to-staff ratio less than 2 times the median budget-to-staff ratio and a contractor-to-staff ratio of less than 2, with staffing levels resulting in program cuts, impaired agency agility, or innovation inhibitions. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are hampered.
- **Good:** Has a budget-to-staff ratio less than 2 times the median budget-to-staff ratio or a contractor-to-staff ratio of less than 2, with minimal evidence of staffing levels resulting in program cuts, impaired agency agility, or innovation inhibitions. The agency's efforts to meet its Evidence Act responsibilities are supported.
- **Strong:** An agency's staffing is commensurate with its budget and sufficient for the agency to meet its Evidence Act and other responsibilities.

PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY Ratings.

- **Weak:** Professional autonomy undermined in statute.
- **Challenging:** Vulnerable; no establishing legislation, or no statutory professional autonomy with recent meddling.
- **Mixed:** No/little professional autonomy protections in legislation.
- **Good:** Has professional autonomy protections in statute but not for all of the 10 components recommended here.
- **Strong:** Has the 10 professional autonomy protections recommended here in statute.

PARENT Agency Ratings. This category examines the parent agency relationship in terms of respecting professional autonomy and providing shared services, budget advocacy, engagement, and profile support.

- **Weak:** Many more negatives than positives
- **Challenging:** Somewhat more negatives than positives.
- **Mixed:** Has roughly the same number of positive aspects as negatives.
- **Good:** Somewhat more positives than negatives.
- **Strong:** Many more positives than negatives.