

The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). The objective is to conduct focus groups to guide the development of relationship and marital status questions for the census and other demographic surveys. This research is necessitated by recent legal changes regarding same-sex marriage, civil unions, and domestic partnerships.

Exploratory focus groups will be conducted by a contractor to identify alternative terms, definitions, categories and/or questions that would most accurately measure relationship status and partnership situations. Between January 28 and March 25, 2010, 17 focus groups including 8-12 participants each will be conducted with same-sex and opposite-sex cohabiting couples in the following sites: Washington, DC; San Francisco, CA; Houston, TX; Boston MA; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Kansas; and Georgia.. These sites have been determined based on the number of lesbian and gay members of the population, and will provide diversity in terms of urban and rural location, geography, age, and ethnicity (2 groups in Houston will be conducted in Spanish). In addition, some of the groups will include both members of the cohabiting couple while others will include only one member. Another recruiting criteria will be presence of children in the household, since we expect this to affect the terminology that is used to define the relationship of the parents.

Focus group participants will be recruited by a marketing firm specializing in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) populations, using such methods as the firm's LGBT database, advertisements in LGBT print media, and other gay-oriented websites and resources. The sessions will be conducted at focus group facilities across the country, and the rural groups (in Georgia and Kansas) may be conducted in hotel facilities if focus group facilities cannot be located

Participants will receive follow-up telephone reminders about their appointments. They will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by people associated with the project. (Staff from the Census Bureau and an oversight group containing subject matter specialists may attend some or all of the sessions.) Participants will receive an honorarium of \$75.00 for their assistance with the focus groups.

Three experienced focus group moderators will conduct the sessions, which will be audio- and video-recorded with respondents' consent. A copy of the draft moderator's guide is attached.

We expect each focus group to take 2 hours. Thus, the total burden for this activity is 408 hours (12 participants X 2 hours X 17 focus groups).

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and study design is:

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