

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). The purpose of the research is to evaluate a specific set of proposed new questions about parents having children with multiple partners, six new screening questions (one fertility, three income and two employment screening questions), and an address verification and update form designed for the Survey of Income and Program Participation Event History Calendar (SIPP-EHC) questionnaire. The new items will be incorporated in the SIPP-EHC Wave 2 CATI/CAPI instrument for the 2012 SIPP-EHC field test.

These new questions involve subject matter changes and procedural changes associated with the redesigned survey. On the subject matter side, the SIPP-EHC will be the first national and first Census Bureau survey that collects information regarding multiple partner fertility of persons age 15 and over. Recent estimates suggest that by the year 2000, as many as one-third of all children born in urban areas of the U.S. were born into a family that included a biological half-sibling, or a sibling with whom they share only one parent (Carlson & Furstenberg 2006<sup>1</sup>). Despite the pervasiveness of parents having children with more than one partner in the U.S., there is no national survey that directly collects information from adults about their fertility with multiple partners. The new questions will: 1) identify the number of biological children that each adult household member has, regardless of where the children are living; 2) record the names and dates of birth of the children; and 3) determine whether the children have the same biological parents and with whom the children reside if they were not living with the respondent. If successful, the multiple partner fertility data will fill a critical gap in our knowledge of American families, permitting a more complete understanding of the prevalence of multiple partner fertility, the living arrangements of children who do not live with the both biological parents, the inter-household exchanges of resources and the socio-economic circumstances of SIPP-EHC sample households that include children from multiple partners.

On the procedural side, the new income, employment, and fertility screening questions are designed to improve the efficiency of the instrument and to reduce respondents' burden by skipping over questions that do not apply to the person for whom the questions are being asked.. The SIPP-EHC asks a significant number of questions targeted to the low-income population who receive assistance or transfer programs such as SNAP (Food Stamps), TANF, and WIC. The first set of income screeners (ANNINSCR and MTHINCSCR) asks whether a person or a household had income above or below a specific annual and monthly threshold; if the person or the household had income above the specified threshold, a follow-up question will be administered to determine whether the person or group may still have received any of the specific programs of interest. Additionally, a screener sequence for employment is designed to identify people who did not work at all during the reference period and to collect information about the reasons for not working and any time looking for work prior to entering the event history calendar. This will simplify the completion of the jobs section of the event history calendar for individuals who didn't work at all during the year. Lastly, the fertility screening question (ANYCHILD) will identify people who have children so that non-parents are not asked about programs available only to families and, likewise, the new multiple partner fertility questions will only be administered to eligible respondents.

The new address verification and update form is designed for the purpose of tracking the original sample persons (OSP) who are movers and reducing attrition rates due to the longer period between interview waves. As the SIPP transitions from three interviews per year to one interview per year starting from 2014, new methods need to be tested for staying in contact with respondents so they can be located for the following year's interview. This form will be used as part of a recontact experiment that will take place during the summer of 2011, following up with addresses from the 2011 SIPP Wave 1 EHC-CAPI field test. This test has been submitted for a separate OMB approval in 2010. The cognitive interviews will be conducted with a paper questionnaire using the concurrent think-aloud and retrospective probing method. All interviews will be tape-recorded with the participants' permission to facilitate analysis of the results. A copy of the cognitive interview protocol and instrument detailing the proposed set of new questions, income and employment screeners, and address verification and update form is enclosed.

From the end of January through mid-April, 2011, staff from the Census Bureau's Center for Survey Measurement (CSM) will conduct up to 20 cognitive interviews with respondents from the Washington DC Metro area. Interviews will be conducted primarily during office hours in the Census Bureau's cognitive laboratory. Participants will be recruited mainly from GED schools, Craigslist.com and word of mouth. Recruitment will target: 1) people who have at least two or more children (biological, step or adopted) who may or may not be living with them; and 2) people who moved recently or are planning to move in the next six months. Within these characteristics, we hope to recruit respondents with a variety of race/ethnicities and incomes to meet the various objectives of the research.

After they are recruited, interviewees will receive a follow-up telephone call to remind them of their appointments. Participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by employees involved in the research project. Subjects will receive a \$40 incentive for their participation.

The estimated time for completion of the interview is one hour. Thus, the total estimated burden for this test is at most 20 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding this data collection is:

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Reference:

Carlson, M., & Furstenberg, F. (2006).

The Prevalence and Correlates of Multipartnered Fertility among Urban U.S. Parents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 68, 718-732.