

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity of the Information Collected

The purpose of this request for review is for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to obtain clearance for the Volunteer Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). This supplement will be conducted annually and is next scheduled to be conducted in September 2011. The Supplement questions are shown in Attachment A and are almost identical to the previous supplement conducted in September 2010. As part of the CPS, the Supplement will survey individuals ages 15 and over from a nationally representative sample of approximately 60,000 U.S. households. The BLS is continuing this project at the request of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The CPS has been the principal source of the official Government statistics on employment and unemployment for over 60 years. Collection of labor force data through the CPS helps the BLS meet its mandate as set forth in Title 29, United States Code, Sections 1 through 9 (Attachment B). Data from the Volunteer Supplement are regularly used by government entities, educational institutions, charitable organizations, private individuals, and others for a wide variety of purposes.

2. Needs and Uses

The Volunteer Supplement provides information on the total number of individuals in the U.S. involved in unpaid volunteer activities, the frequency and intensity with which individuals volunteer, the types of organizations that facilitate volunteerism, activities in which volunteers participate, and the prevalence of volunteering more than 120 miles from home or volunteering abroad. A question on charitable donations allows investigation of the relationship between volunteering and giving—specifically, if giving and volunteering tend to be done by the same individuals or if people tend to do only one or the other. This information may help the sponsor and other organizations develop programs to increase participation in giving and volunteering among the specific groups in which participation is low and to maintain participation in groups where it is high.

Because the Volunteer Supplement is part of the CPS, the same detailed demographic information collected in the CPS is available about respondents to the Supplement. Thus, comparisons of volunteer activities are possible across respondent characteristics including sex, race and ethnicity, age, and educational attainment. It is intended that the Supplement will be conducted annually, if resources permit, in order to gauge changes in volunteerism.

In his January 2002 State of the Union address to the nation, President Bush called for all Americans to devote 4,000 hours of volunteer service during their lifetimes. To gauge the effectiveness of its efforts to promote and facilitate volunteer activities, the USA Freedom Corps asked the BLS to design supplementary questions on volunteering to be attached to the CPS on an annual basis. The CPS Volunteer Supplement provides estimates of the volunteer population in the U.S. and the types of volunteer activities and organizations in which these individuals are participating. The BLS has found wide interest in volunteer data among economists, sociologists, journalists, government policy makers, nonprofit organizations, and the general public.

The BLS published a summary of the findings from the initial September 2002 data collection in a news release issued in December 2002, and in a *Monthly Labor Review* article published in August 2003. The news release for the September 2010 Supplement (the most recent) was published in January 2011: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/volun.pdf>.

3. Use of Information Technology

The Census Bureau conducts the actual collection of the CPS data, which includes designing the sample, conducting the interviews, training and monitoring the interviewers, and conducting a continuing quality control program. The Census Bureau uses methods designed to keep respondent burden as low as possible. These interviewing methods, which include the use of computer-assisted interviewing, were improved as part of a complete redesign of the CPS implemented in January 1994. The redesign was preceded by years of wide-ranging discussions, research, and large-scale field tests aimed at long-range improvements in the survey. The CPS and all of its supplements, including the Volunteer Supplement, are collected 100 percent electronically by using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) and Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI). Since January 2007, the data collection instrument has been run on Blaise, a Windows-based survey processing system developed by Statistics Netherlands and licensed by Westat in the United States. The questions in the Volunteer Supplement were designed to obtain the required information with minimal respondent burden.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

Other than the CPS Volunteer Supplement, there is currently no other comprehensive Federal data source on volunteer activities in the U.S. The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) provides some information on volunteer activities done “yesterday” (the day before the interview); however, it is not a substitute for the CPS. The CPS supplement on volunteering has the clear advantages of a larger sample size, a longer reference period, and more timely release of data than the ATUS.

From 1988 to 2001, Independent Sector—a private, nonprofit group—conducted a periodic survey of about 4,000 adults in the U.S. The survey was titled, “Giving and Volunteering in the United States.” Survey questions focused on the level of giving and volunteering of individuals, and the organizations that benefited from those activities. Public attitudes and motivations for volunteering were also explored in the survey.

5. Minimizing Burden

The data are collected from households; their collection does not involve any small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

As the only current, comprehensive, Federal data collection on volunteers, the CPS Volunteer Supplement is needed to measure the number of volunteers and identify the types of organizations in which they are involved. The Corporation for National and Community Service needs these data to gauge the success of current and future efforts.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The CPS data are collected in a manner that is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Consultation Outside the Agency/Federal Register notice

The following person has been in continuous consultation with the BLS concerning the development of the survey:

Bureau of the Census

Lisa Clement
Demographic Surveys Division
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In addition to the above, a statement soliciting comments for improving CPS data is prominently placed in all Census Bureau publications that cite CPS data. A similar statement is included in the technical documentation that accompanies the microdata files. Finally, the advance letter (Attachment C) provides respondents with an address at the Census Bureau to which they can submit general comments on the survey, specifically those regarding respondent burden.

Federal Register Notice

No comments were received as a result of a Federal Register Notice published in 76 FR 14106 on March 15, 2011.

9. Paying Respondents

The Census Bureau does not make any payments or provide any gifts to individuals participating in the CPS.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The Census Bureau will collect the supplemental data in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and OMB Circular A-130. Each sample household will receive an advance letter (Attachment C) approximately one week before the start of the initial CPS interview. The letter includes the information required by the Privacy Act of 1974, explains the voluntary nature of the survey, and states the estimated time required for participating in the survey. Field representatives must ask each respondent if he/she received the advance letter and, if not, must provide a copy of the letter to each respondent and allow sufficient time for him/her to read the contents. Also, interviewers provide households with the pamphlet "How the Census Bureau Keeps Your Information Confidential," which further states the confidentiality assurances associated with this data collection effort (Attachment D). All information given by respondents to Census Bureau employees is held in strict confidence under Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 (Attachment E). Each Census Bureau employee has taken an oath to that effect and is subject to a jail penalty and/or substantial fine if he/she discloses any information given to him/her.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

No sensitive questions are asked in this supplement.

12. Estimate of Respondent Burden

The estimated respondent burden for the September 2011 Volunteer Supplement is 5,300 hours. This is based on an average respondent burden of approximately 3 minutes for each of the approximately 106,000 individuals about whom data is collected in the supplement. About 63,000 respondents will supply the data for themselves and others in their households. These estimates are based on the number of respondents and responses in recent volunteering supplements. The actual respondent burden is dependent upon the size of the approximately 55,000 households that complete CPS interviews and the characteristics of their occupants.

The overall annualized dollar cost to the respondents for collection of the supplement data is \$66,250. This estimate assumes a wage rate for all respondents of \$12.50 an hour, the median hourly earnings for workers paid by the hour in 2010.

13. Estimate of Cost Burden

- a. Capital start-up costs: \$0
- b. Total operation and maintenance and purchase of services: \$0

There are no costs to survey respondents other than the time it takes to respond to the questionnaire. Respondents answer questions based on personal experience, which requires no record-keeping or other expenses.

14. Cost to the Federal Government

The total estimated cost of the September 2011 supplement is \$666,000. This cost is to be borne by the Corporation for National and Community Service and represents the charge by the Census Bureau (\$645,000) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (\$21,000) for conducting the Volunteer Supplement. It includes programming the questionnaire, developing interviewer training materials, collecting data, processing survey microdata, and developing public use files.

15. Changes in Respondent Burden

Total respondent burden for the collection of the September 2011 Volunteer Supplement will be unchanged at 5,300 hours. Minor updates were made to the questionnaire, but these changes will not affect respondent burden. Volunteers are predicted to need about 8 minutes to complete the supplement, while non-volunteers will only need about 1 minute.

16. Time Schedule for Information Collection and Publication

The September 2011 CPS, of which this supplement is a part, will be conducted during the week of September 18-24, 2011. Processing of this supplement will begin in October 2011. The results of the survey will be published in the Volunteering in the United States news release, which will be issued in early 2012. Past news releases can be found on the BLS website at http://www.bls.gov/schedule/archives/all_nr.htm#VOLUN.

The September 2012 CPS, of which this supplement is a part, will be conducted during the week of September 16-22, 2012. Processing of this supplement will begin in October 2012. The results of the survey will be published in the Volunteering in the United States news release in early 2013.

The September 2013 CPS, of which this supplement is a part, will be conducted during the week of September 15-21, 2013. Processing of this supplement will begin in October 2013. The results of the survey will be published in the Volunteering in the United States news release in early 2014.

17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

The Census Bureau does not wish to display the assigned expiration date of the information collection because the instrument is automated and the respondent, therefore, would never see the date. The advance letter sent to households by the Census Bureau contains Census's OMB clearance number for the CPS and Census's version of the failure to comply notice. (See attachment C) Copies of this advance letter are stockpiled by the Census Bureau for use as needed; changes to the letter would make the current inventory of letters unusable.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification.