

# SUPPORTING STATEMENT

## *AMERICAN TIME USE SURVEY*

### A. JUSTIFICATION

#### 1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The purpose of this request is for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to renew clearance for the monthly collection of time-use data through a revised American Time Use Survey (ATUS), which began full production in January 2003. A clearance is being requested for the revised ATUS because of changes to questions during the main part of the survey and changes to module questions located at the end of the interview:

- A Leave module sponsored by the Department of Labor (DOL) Women's Bureau has been proposed to run for 12 consecutive months, starting in 2011. This module includes questions about the use and access to paid and unpaid leave, the flexibility of work schedules, and subjective well-being. This module is contingent on funding.
- BLS is proposing to add questions to measure the amount of time Americans spend providing unpaid assistance to elderly adults in need of care. The additional questions will collect data on who is providing unpaid eldercare, how many unpaid hours Americans spend providing eldercare, and the types of eldercare activities they provide.
- BLS is proposing to drop the missed days questions. Data about the number of days a respondent was away from home in the previous month and the reasons why the respondent was away from home are under-used. BLS is not aware of any published research that uses the data collected by these questions.
- The Well-Being module questions sponsored by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) will end in December 2010, as planned.

The ATUS is the Nation's first federally-administered, continuous survey on time use in the United States. A nationally representative sample of persons from households completing their final month of interviews for the Current Population Survey (CPS) is drawn for ATUS. BLS contracts with the Census Bureau to conduct one interview with one person age 15 or over from each selected household. The primary focus of the interview is on activities done "yesterday" (from 4 a.m. on the day before the interview to 4 a.m. on the day of the interview), though additional questions are asked about work during the prior week.

Collection of time-use data fits well within the BLS mission, as outlined in Title 29, United States Code, Section 1:

***“The general design and duties of the Bureau of Labor Statistics shall be to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with labor, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word, and especially upon its relation to capital, the hours of labor, the earnings of laboring men and women, and the means of promoting their material, social, intellectual, and moral prosperity.”***

According to economist William Nordhaus, “Inadequate data on time use is the single most important gap in federal statistics,” (Nordhaus, 1997). Approximately 50 other countries collect, or soon will collect, time-use data. Such data are considered important indicators of both quality of life and the contribution of non-market work to national economies. They measure, for example, time spent caring for children, volunteering, working, sleeping, or doing leisure activities. Using time-use data in conjunction with wage data allows analysts to better compare production between nations that have different mixes of market and non-market activities. In the United States, several existing Federal surveys collect income and wage data for individuals and families, and analysts often use such measures of material prosperity as proxies for quality of life. Time-use data substantially augment these quality-of-life measures.

## **2. Purpose of the Survey**

The major purpose of the ATUS is to develop nationally representative estimates of how people spend their time. Many ATUS users are interested in the amount of time Americans spend doing non-market work activities. These include unpaid childcare and adult care, housework, and volunteering. The survey also provides information on the amount of time people spend in many other activities, such as commuting, religious activities, socializing, exercising, and relaxing. To produce these estimates, data are collected not only about what people did, but also about where and with whom each activity occurred, and whether the activities were paid work or work-related. This additional contextual information enables coders to assign codes that describe each activity with consistency.

Because the ATUS sample is drawn from a subset of households that completed interviews for the CPS, the same demographic information collected from that survey is available for the ATUS respondents. Comparisons of activity patterns across characteristics such as sex, race, age, disability status, and educational attainment of the respondent, as well as the presence of children and the number of adults living in the respondent’s household, are possible. The data are collected on an ongoing, monthly basis and six years of time series data are available, enabling analysts to identify changes in how people spend their time.

Also, the ATUS activity coding lexicon was designed to ensure that time-use information in the United States can be compared, at broad levels, with information from other countries.

To ensure the widest distribution of information, BLS releases annual and quarterly data to the public once a year in the form of published tables. Microdata sets are also available, and special analyses by BLS and outside analysts appear in the *Monthly Labor Review* (published by BLS) and in other publications. Six years of ATUS data have been published (2003-2008), and the data have received wide interest from a variety of users, including economists, sociologists, health researchers, journalists, and businesspersons. ATUS information has also been of interest to government policymakers, educators, lawyers, and others, as the survey information has numerous applications. In addition to appearing in many national newspapers, magazines, and television programs, ATUS data have been used in articles appearing in many academic journals. A list of publications, both BLS and non-BLS, using ATUS data is available on the ATUS Web site (<http://www.bls.gov/tus/papersandpubs.htm>).

The survey captures not only hours worked on a typical weekday or weekend day, but also shows the distribution of where work is being done—at home, at a workplace, or somewhere else<sup>1</sup>—and whether, over time, these distributions are changing. In addition to providing information about time spent in work activities, ATUS data have been analyzed to gain insight into commuting patterns and other behaviors associated with work.

Unpaid activities, such as raising children, volunteering, and doing housework, are not currently counted in the National Income and Product Accounts—even though they are critical to society and to national well-being. ATUS data provide more comprehensive information about these activities on a continuous basis. Analysts have used ATUS measures of time spent doing such activities to estimate the contribution they make to overall economic activity. The proposed eldercare questions will improve our knowledge about unpaid activities. Informal eldercare—a major source of assistance for the elderly in the community—is unpaid assistance, generally provided by a family member to an elderly parent or spouse. This type of unpaid care likely requires large expenditures of time on the part of those who provide it and could contribute substantially to the total amount of time spent in productive non-market activities.

For decades, economists have acknowledged that changes in GDP may reflect changes in institutional arrangements rather than actual changes in economic activity (Landefeld and McCulla, 2000). For example, under traditional methods used to value the Nation's output, the worker who decides he will wash and iron his own dress shirts rather than send them to the cleaners as he has previously done contributes to a decline in GDP, because the washing and ironing activity is no longer captured as a market transaction. However, ATUS respondents report

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<sup>1</sup> Interviewers for the ATUS assign one of 24 location codes to each activity reported by respondents.

on the ways they use their own time. The availability of this detailed information allows economists to more accurately value a household's final products by estimating the value of the time (labor services) used to produce final goods and services. Child and adult care, meal preparation, and home repair projects are just a few of the non-market activities that ATUS data can be used to evaluate. Bureau of Economic Analysis researchers have used these data as a critical input into prototype estimates of satellite accounts that measure the value of unpaid work, including volunteering, child care, and household activities (Landefeld, Fraumeni, and Vojtech, 2005).

International organizations and researchers have used the ATUS data to compare the United States to other countries. Both the UN and the OECD have published ATUS estimates in order to compare time use of Americans to those living in other countries.

Sociologists have used the data to examine social contact, such as how much time people spend with their children, colleagues, or family members. They also have examined the degree to which people are trading off time spent with family or in leisure activities to do market or non-market work.

The ATUS data may help Federal, State, and local government policy makers more fully understand noneconomic, as well as economic, effects of policy decisions, and to better determine when to develop new or change existing policies to address the needs of our society. For example, ATUS data were utilized in a USDA-authored Congressional report on low-income people's access to healthy food.

Health researchers have used ATUS data to explore the amount of time spent in activities that impact Americans' health, such as sleep, eating, meal preparation, and physical exercise. The data have also been used to analyze Americans' exposure to traffic accident risk.

BLS proposes adding questions about eldercare and simultaneously removing questions about missed days. Eldercare is a topic that aligns closely with the ATUS goal of collecting information about time spent in unpaid, productive activities, and it is a topic of interest to many researchers, particularly because the U.S. population is aging. Data about missed days, that is, the number of days a respondent was away from home in the previous month and the reasons why the respondent was away from home, are under-used. BLS is not aware of any publications that have used these data.

The data from the proposed Leave module will support the BLS mission of providing relevant information on economic and social issues. The data will provide a richer description of work, specifically the types of leave available to workers, the reasons for which workers are able to take leave, leave activity, and information about whether workers can adjust their schedules to balance personal

and work obligations instead of taking leave. The module will also provide more information on the relationship between use of leave and time use. Some information about leave is available from other surveys, such as the BLS National Compensation Survey, but these data are collected from establishments. The questions about workers' well-being will allow researchers to assess, for example, whether workers without access to leave are more likely to go to work despite poor health than workers with access to leave. The proposed ATUS Leave module will collect this information from individuals, allowing for the production of nationally-representative estimates for the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population and various subpopulations, such as by race, ethnicity, and sex.

### **3. Use of Information Technology**

The Census Bureau, which collects and processes the data for BLS, uses state-of-the-art methods to conduct interviews and record respondent information. Census Bureau interviewers conduct all interviews over the telephone, completing the respondent's time-use diary using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Using an automated call scheduler and hourly reports from the system, cases are presented to interviewers in order depending on respondents' designated interview days, pre-set appointment times, CPS information on the best time to call respondents, and other information.

The ATUS questionnaire is built in Blaise, a windows-based software package developed by Statistics Netherlands and adopted as the Census Bureau standard. The software's graphical user interface (GUI) enables the usage of data entry grids that accept many entries on one screen. ATUS respondents verbally report to the interviewer about the activities of the previous day—what they did, who was with them, where they were, and how long the activity lasted. The instrument enables interviewers to enter the information for each activity into the diary grid in any order, and it automatically computes the duration of an activity after each entry. This feature enables the interview to be flexible, making reporting easier for respondents. (See Attachment A for the main ATUS instrument; see Attachment B for the proposed eldercare questions, see Attachment I for the proposed Leave module questions.)

The ATUS activity coding system is also built in Blaise. Diary entries are imported into the Blaise coding instrument. Coders view on the screen three horizontal windows that display the activity to be coded, coding categories, and the respondent's diary and codes assigned. The software includes a "trigram search" feature that enables coders to type in an activity verbatim (e.g., "washed the car"), which generates a list of codes that contain 3-letter combinations in the search string. This feature helps coders find the correct code for ambiguous activities.

A debit card tracking system is in place to manage incentive payments to "no-telephone-number" households in the sample. (See Part A, section 9.)

#### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

No private or public institutions conduct time-use surveys at regular intervals. Two academic institutions, the Universities of Maryland and Michigan, have collected time-use data periodically since 1965, but their data collection methodologies changed across years, and no continuous survey was ever conducted in the United States prior to the ATUS. As a result, analysts must infer (or ignore) patterns that occurred between survey periods, making reliable trend analyses very difficult. Continuous data collection through the ATUS will allow analysts to determine if, and by how much, time-use patterns are changing over time.

Additionally, the ATUS sample size is large enough to enable demographic comparisons of time use not possible in earlier studies. Demographic analyses of previous time-use surveys conducted by academic institutions have been limited because sample sizes have only been large enough to yield valid statistical results at aggregate levels. The 1985 time-use survey conducted by the University of Maryland was the largest of the previous U.S. time-use surveys completed, yet it only had 5,300 respondents—about 40 percent of the approximate 13,200 annual ATUS respondents (Robinson and Godbey, 1997). The ATUS sample is also more demographically controlled than those in previous surveys. Because the sample is drawn from the CPS, households are stratified by demographic characteristics. Black and Hispanic households and households with children are oversampled to ensure their adequate representation in the ATUS estimates. (See Part B, section 1.)

The proposed eldercare questions will provide nationally representative data on the amount of time Americans spend providing care to older adults. Few studies have been done regarding this topic, and most focus on care giving to persons with disabilities, not just older adults. Additionally, most of these studies use a longer reference period and do not provide detailed time use information by activity. In 1998, the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey collected information about the total extra time spent providing help to a family member because of an impairment or a mental health problem using a one month reference period. The 2004 National Long Term Care Survey conducted by the National Institute on Aging and Duke University collected information on how many times caregivers helped a person with a disability in the last week, not the actual time spent in each activity. The 1999 BLS National Longitudinal Survey of Youth also collected time spent providing care to someone over the past week but limited it to time spent providing care to parents. The Panel Study of Income Dynamics and the University of Michigan are currently running a supplement that is the only other known U.S. study that collects caregiving information through a time use diary. However, this study is only being done on a sample of middle-aged and older married couples. The proposed eldercare questions will collect data from a

nationally representative sample of individuals in the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population ages 15 and over and will provide detailed activity information about the amount of time people spend providing care to older adults.

The proposed questions about leave will provide information about access to a broad range of types of paid and unpaid leave, workers' flexibility in re-arranging their work schedules, and recent leave activity. Because the ATUS interviews people nearly every day of the year, the proposed leave questions will collect data throughout the year and they will thus capture any seasonal patterns that might exist in leave activity. Data about leave currently are available from the BLS National Compensation Survey, but these data are collected from establishments and they do not include information about workers' demographic and household characteristics. The proposed module questions will provide information about workers' access to leave from workers' perspectives and by various characteristics such as their sex, ethnicity, race, and number of children. The BLS National Longitudinal Survey collects some information about leave from employed individuals, but these data are available only for specific cohorts and not the entire population. Information about flexible work schedules is available through the CPS Work Schedules and Work at Home Supplement, but the supplement has not been conducted since 2004. The proposed Leave module questions will collect data about leave and flexible work schedules from a sample of individuals who are representative of the U.S. civilian noninstitutional population ages 15 and over, which is something existing surveys do not do.

## **5. Involvement of Small Establishments**

The ATUS is a survey of individuals in households and does not involve small businesses or other small entities.

## **6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection**

The 13,200 ATUS interviews are spread across 12 months so that a large annual sample size can be achieved at the same time that the ability to examine seasonal patterns across years can be maintained. Less frequent collection would reduce the analytical value of trend analyses and would eliminate analyses of seasonal patterns in time use.

In addition, monthly data collection operations are more efficient to manage than larger-scale, less frequent operations. A stable, well-trained staff has been developed and cases are spread evenly across the work weeks and months. Each month's ATUS sample is introduced over 4 weeks (1/4 sample each week). Each case has up to an 8-week field period. Interviewing respondents about their time use for a 24-hour period in such a way that reports can be consistently and accurately coded requires significant training and practice. Likewise, experience

and familiarity with the coding rules and coding lexicon are extremely important to coders for producing accurate results. Less frequent data collection could seriously impact training costs and impede performance.

## **7. Special Circumstances**

The ATUS requires the use of an activity coding classification system not in use in any other Federal survey. A coding lexicon was developed to classify reported activities into 17 major categories, with two additional levels of detail. (ATUS coding lexicons can be found on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/tus/lexicons.htm>). BLS designed the ATUS lexicon by studying classification systems used for time-use surveys in other countries, drawing most heavily on the Australian time-use survey lexicon, and then determining the best way to produce analytically relevant data for the United States. The coding lexicon developed for the ATUS was extensively tested by Census Bureau coders and by coders at Westat (Westat, 2001) prior to the start of full production in 2003. Development of the ATUS lexicon is described in Shelley (2005).

No other special circumstances apply.

## **8. Federal Register Notice and Consultations Outside the Agency**

### ***Federal Register Notice***

Four comments were received as a result of the Federal Register notice published in 75 FR 37838 on June 30, 2010.

The comments focused on the proposed addition of the eldercare questions and the proposed leave module sponsored by the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau. They were generally positive or neutral in nature. With regards to the eldercare questions, one commenter stated, "These are important issues for millions of Americans and will become even more critical in the future as the population ages and as more workers find themselves with dual responsibilities to their families and their employers." Another commenter stated the following: "The Bureau of Labor Statistics' survey work presents a valuable opportunity to collect information that will help us better understand who family caregivers are and the benefits they provide to their care recipients and to society." Supportive statements were also received concerning the leave module, such as the following: "We agree that the ATUS is appropriate for exploring issues surrounding leave and flexibility, and very much look forward to exploring the findings from the module."

Comments specific to the eldercare questions:



Two commenters suggested adding the term “chronic illness” to the first sentence of the eldercare introduction. Cognitive testing of the introduction showed that respondents understood the term “condition related to aging” to include a wide range of ailments, such as chronic illness and disabilities related to aging. Interviewers will also be able to give respondents additional guidance with the following definition: “A condition related to aging is an ongoing ailment or physical or emotional limitation that typically affects older people. Examples may include becoming more frail; having difficulty seeing, hearing, or physically moving; becoming more forgetful; tiring more quickly; or specific medical ailments that are more common among older adults. It also refers to existing conditions that become progressively worse as one ages.”

The two commenters also suggested adding a question about whether or not the care recipient had been hospitalized in the past year as an indicator of the need for additional help. BLS staff believes that a number of questions would need to be asked in order to properly collect this information. For example, people can be hospitalized for many reasons, and thus it would be necessary to add several questions to determine if the hospitalization was related to the care recipient’s age-related condition or some other unrelated reason. In addition, what defines a hospitalization may not be straightforward. Therefore, collecting whether or not the care recipient has been hospitalized in the past year would also require several additional questions to get a meaningful answer. Adding additional questions to the survey and collecting detail about a care recipient’s hospitalization would expand the length and cost of the survey, as well as the burden on ATUS respondents.

Another commenter suggested adding a question to identify the relationship of the caregiver and the care recipient, which the proposed questions already include. The commenter also suggested adding a question to capture the length of time in weeks, months, or years that the care giver has been providing care to the care recipient. A question to capture this information is already included in the module; respondents may report the duration of care in a range of months or number of years for each care recipient identified.

A recommendation was made by one commenter to consider a way to collect eldercare activities over a longer period than one day and to collect eldercare activities done at night. The ATUS survey day consists of activities done over a 24 hour period, from 4 a.m. the previous morning to 4 a.m. on the diary day, so nighttime activities are captured in the ATUS diary. Adding questions to capture activities done over a longer period than yesterday would expand the length and cost of the survey, as well as the burden on ATUS respondents. It is not feasible to expand the survey at this time. An avenue for adding additional questions to the survey exists through sponsorship of a module; BLS can provide more information about module sponsorship upon request.

Comments specific to the leave module:

One commenter suggested that the response options in the paid leave access and paid leave usage questions include temporary disability insurance and long-term disability insurance. BLS considered collecting disability insurance leave during the module development. However, the expert review process resulted in a recommendation to drop disability leave from the questionnaire, as respondents may not be able to differentiate short-term disability, long-term disability, and sick leave benefits. Further, disability leave may have waiting periods or be paid at less than full pay, and the employee may be responsible for some portion of the plan cost. These provisions complicate the collection of this leave benefit. Based on the recommendations from the expert review process, BLS and the module sponsor decided not to collect disability insurance access and usage. Also, these types of plans rarely came up during cognitive testing when respondents were asked about other types of leave plans available to them. Respondents who report having a paid time off plan (PTO) will be asked if they have an additional sick leave plan.

The commenter also asked that the schedule adjustment questions be revised to include response options concerning the flexibility needs of employers to gain a complete understanding of the reasons for schedule adjustments. BLS discussed this with the module sponsor, who wished to focus these questions on the need for employee-initiated schedule adjustments. The purpose of these questions is to provide insight into how schedule adjustments may substitute for or complement leave, rather than to explore all of the possible reasons for schedule adjustments.

Two commenters expressed an interest in seeing the leave module questions added to a future supplement of the Current Population Survey. BLS is willing to discuss this possibility with a CPS supplement sponsor.

#### ***Survey Methods Research Community***

ATUS sponsored a brainstorming session with survey methodologists in June 2001. ATUS research was presented for comment at the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) conferences in 2000 and 2001 and at the International Field Directors conference in 2001. Research was also presented at the 2005 and 2008 FedCASIC; the 2005 International Field Directors conference; the 2005 American Statistical Association meetings; the 2005 ATUS Early Results Conference; the 2006 Panel of Income Dynamics Conference; the 2006 International Association for Time Use Research Conference; and, at the 2008 American Time Use Research Conference. Additionally, 2003-2008 ATUS survey methodology data files have been made publicly available to enable outside survey methodologists to perform analyses.

#### ***Federal Economic Statistical Advisory Council (FESAC)***

Plans for ATUS were

discussed at the June 2001, December 2001, and June 2006 FESAC meetings. ATUS staff members regularly solicit feedback and consultation from members of this group.

***National Academy of Sciences (NAS)***

Plans for ATUS were presented and reviewed at a NAS-sponsored conference on time use held in 1999 (NAS, 2000).

***MacArthur Foundation***

BLS and the MacArthur foundation jointly sponsored a conference in 1997 to discuss research applications of time-use data.

***Westat***

BLS has consulted with Westat on methods for programming the time-use data collection instrument and on the usability of the coding lexicon and the coding software.

***Business Research Advisory Council (BRAC) to the BLS***

BLS has consulted periodically with the BRAC on the ATUS.

***Labor Research Advisory Council (LRAC) to the BLS***

BLS has consulted periodically with the LRAC on the ATUS.

See Attachment C for names and contact information of people in the above organizations who have been in consultation with BLS on the ATUS.

***Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS)***

BLS consulted with COPAFS on the ATUS at the June 2004 quarterly meeting.

## 9. Payment to Respondents

A 2001 ATUS field test evaluated, among other operational design strategies, the effect of monetary incentives (debit cards) on response rates. Results of the evaluation showed that incentive payments significantly increased response, as well as encouraged faster response. For households for which the Census Bureau had a telephone number, a \$20 incentive payment increased response significantly, from 69 percent to 77 percent, and a \$40 incentive payment further increased response to 83 percent. (See Attachment D.) However, BLS determined that providing incentives to all respondents or only to refusals and noncontacts (after 4 weeks) would be cost prohibitive. Therefore, payments are not used as incentives to respondents in households for which the Census Bureau has a recent telephone number.

BLS does offer incentives to respondents from “no-telephone-number” households. Persons in these households either do not own a phone or have not given a phone number to the Census Bureau as of CPS month-in-sample 8 (final month). They account for about 5 percent of the CPS sample, and are more likely to be black, to have less education, and to have lower household incomes than members of households that provide phone numbers. The number of such cases is relatively small—approximately 1,320 potential cases each year. Because these households may differ from phone households on unobservable characteristics, including their time-use patterns, and because providing incentives to this small group is not cost prohibitive, BLS believes it is beneficial to expend additional effort and expense to secure their responses.

In the 2001 field test, designated persons in these no-telephone-number households (n=165), defined as those with no telephone or no telephone number, were sent a \$60 debit card with their other ATUS advance materials. Their letter encouraged them to call a toll-free number to complete the interview. After 4 weeks, 41 percent had called in and completed the interview. To contain costs in production, BLS uses a \$40 debit card as an incentive rather than the \$60 used in the field test. The \$40 amount was chosen for two reasons. In a field test debriefing, respondents most frequently selected \$20 as the lowest amount respondents should be paid to participate in the full survey. They chose \$50 as the highest amount. In addition, most ATMs disburse money in \$20 bills, so BLS only considered incentive payments in \$20 increments. The debit card is sent with the advance materials. However, the PIN number to activate the card is only given to the designated person upon completion of the interview. (See Attachment E.)

As mentioned above, the \$60 incentive given to no-telephone-number households in the 2001 field test yielded a 41 percent response rate in 4 weeks. Assuming response rates increase or decrease as incentive amounts increase or decrease as demonstrated by the incentive test for telephone households, BLS projected that a \$40 incentive to no-telephone-number households would yield a response rate lower than the 41 percent after 4 weeks. This has proven to be the case, as unweighted response rates for no-telephone-number households averaged about 32.0 percent in 2008, and weighted response rates averaged 31.3 percent in 2008.<sup>2</sup> BLS also sends incentives to individuals in households for which Census has non-viable (e.g., "number could not be completed as dialed") phone numbers.

In 2008, the survey's overall unweighted response rate by sample month was 54.6 percent, and the weighted response rate was 55.2 percent. During 2008 data processing, a small percentage of completed cases were eliminated for data quality reasons. As a result, the final unweighted response rate was 53.1 percent after processing, and the weighted response rate was 53.9 percent after processing. Response rates increased in 2009 to an unweighted preprocessing rate of 56.6 percent. Because response rates were lower in 2008 than the 69-percent rate achieved (using no incentives) during the 2001 field test, the BLS and the Census Bureau are continuing to cooperate to conduct a number of analyses of non-response in ATUS. In particular, BLS and Census have done or are doing the following to test and address response rate issues:

- Conducted in-depth critique and revision of advance materials
- Translated advance materials and refusal conversion materials to Spanish in order to better target Spanish speaking households
- Developed a "minor gatekeeper" advance letter and refusal conversion letter
- Assessed the feasibility of an incentive study
- Revised evening call operations at the Census interviewing center
- Implemented policy of conducting more research into phone numbers (when invalid)
- Increased interviewer motivation by setting weekly goals
- Conducted a comprehensive analysis of non-response bias (See Part B, section 4)
- Developed a Web site containing information for ATUS respondents (<http://www.bls.gov/respondents/tus/home.htm>)
- Evaluated returned mail (such as advance letters) to see if cases were movers and to better investigate wrong or incomplete addresses
- Developed an ATUS-specific "gaining cooperation" workshop to teach interviewers techniques to increase respondent cooperation, and incorporated this material into other training courses
- Implemented a quarterly newsletter to inform interviewers and improve interviewer morale

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<sup>2</sup> All response rates given are calculated using the American Association for Public Opinion Research's (AAPOR's) response rate 2 formula. For more information, see AAPOR's *Standard Definitions—Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*, 2008.

- Investigated incomplete cases to identify possible causes of noncontact or refusal (such as non-viable telephone numbers) and converted some cases to incentive cases
- Analyzing call attempt times to identify optimal call blocks
- Researching the feasibility of assigning cases that are likely refusals to refusal conversion specialists as soon as the case enters the field

## 10. Confidentiality of Data

The Census Bureau employees hold all information that respondents provide in strict confidence in accordance with Title 13, United States Code, Section 9. (See Attachment F.) Each interviewer has taken an oath to this effect, and if convicted of disclosing any information given by the respondent may be fined up to \$250,000 and/or imprisoned up to 5 years. In addition, Title 13 prohibits Census Bureau employees from disclosing information identifying any individual(s) in the ATUS to anyone other than sworn Census employees.

ATUS data are collected by the Census Bureau under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Section 8. Section 9 of the law requires that all information about respondents be kept strictly confidential, and that the information be used only for statistical purposes. Respondents are informed of their right to confidentiality under Title 13 in the ATUS advance letter and brochure, mailed approximately 10 days before the interview date. (See Attachments G and H.) The ATUS advance letter also advises respondents that this is a voluntary survey. (It should be noted that the CPS advance letter, which all ATUS respondents will have received in months 1 and 5 of CPS interviewing, makes no reference to future contacts for other surveys. In the 8<sup>th</sup> month (final) of CPS CATI interviews, interviewers tell respondents that “this is the last *regularly scheduled* interview for this household *for the Current Population Survey*. We may, however, need to contact you one more time in the near future to update some information. Households like yours that were interviewed this month may be called upon to participate in a follow-up survey. As with any CPS interview, we are required to keep all information about you and your household strictly confidential. We may use this information only for statistical purposes.” The CPS “thank you” postcard makes no mention of final or future contacts.)

All Census Bureau security safeguards regarding the protection of data files containing confidential information against unauthorized use, including data collected through Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI), apply to ATUS data collection.

The BLS Processing System design requires that ATUS data be securely transferred from the Census Bureau server to the BLS server. This process mirrors the process used to transfer Current Population Survey data.

## 11. Sensitive Questions

During the course of a 24-hour day, many people engage in activities—such as alcohol or drug use or sexual activities—that they may consider too personal or sensitive to report. To examine respondent concerns about the sensitivity of the diary and other survey questions, respondents were asked in the field test if they thought any of the questions were too sensitive. Ninety-two percent of respondents did not think that questions about their time use were too personal or sensitive. During full production, Census Bureau ATUS interviewers advise respondents before beginning the interview that they need not report anything they think is too personal. This instruction does not appear to lead to nonresponse. In 2007, well under one percent of the total number of activities captured was reported by respondents as “none of your business.” A potentially sensitive question is included before the diary, as part of the household roster update, about whether the respondent has any children who do not live with him or her (so that analysts may examine noncustodial parents’ time with their children).

## 12. Estimate of Information Collection Hour Burden

Starting with the sample introduced in December 2003, the ATUS sample was reduced by 35 percent. ATUS interviewers began attempting to contact one designated person in each of approximately 2,190 sample households per month, down from about 3,380 sampled households per month during the first year of production. Of the 2,190 households sampled each month, about 2,000 will actually be eligible for the ATUS at the time of contact. Since the sample reduction in December 2003, an average of 1,100 interviews was completed each month, or about 13,200 per year. A similar number is expected in future years. Each respondent is interviewed in depth about only one day's activities and is not contacted for repeat interviews. A complete interview consists of:

- a brief introduction
- a household roster and employment status update
- collection of time diary information
- three summary question series (on paid work, childcare, and volunteering) and the proposed summary question series about eldercare
- an update of additional information—on earnings, occupation and industry, layoff/job search, and school enrollment—collected in the CPS
- Leave module (12 months, starting in 2011), if funding is secured

The average length of time to complete the main ATUS interview, including the updates of demographic and labor force information as well as the time diary, is approximately 16 minutes. BLS proposes removing summary questions about missed days at the same time that summary questions about eldercare are added to

the survey. It is expected that this simultaneous change to the survey will result, on net, to no change in the survey's length. The proposed Leave module questions are estimated to take no longer than 5 minutes to complete, and if funding is received, they will run for 12 consecutive months, starting in 2011. BLS plans to run the Leave module questions in the calendar year 2011, which includes parts of FY2011 and FY2012, however, because these questions are dependent on funding, and it is uncertain whether funding will be available to start collection in January 2011, the start date of the Leave module may be delayed.

For FY 2010, the estimated number of burden hours is 4,345. This estimate includes an additional 5 minutes from running the Well-being module during 9 months of this period.

The burden hours for FY 2011 is expected to be 4,620. This is slightly higher than in FY2010 because a module of questions would run for the entire year. This accounts for an average length of 16 minutes for the core ATUS interview and an additional 5 minutes for a module. In the first 3 months of this fiscal year, the Well-being module questions will be asked; in the remainder of the year, and if funding is secured, the Leave module questions will be asked.

The number of burden hours for FY 2012 is expected to be 3,795. This accounts for the average core survey length of 16 minutes plus the 5-minute Leave module which will run only in the first 3 months of the fiscal year.

Based on these estimates of annual burden, the overall annualized dollar cost to the respondents for collection of ATUS data is expected to be about \$54,100 in FY 2010, \$57,500 in FY 2011, and \$47,200 in FY 2012. These estimates assume an hourly wage rate for all respondents of \$12.44, which equals the median hourly earnings for all wage and salary workers (paid hourly rates) in 2009.

Table 1 provides details on the estimated respondent burden for the ATUS collection for FY 2010. Table 2 provides details on the estimated respondent burden for the ATUS collection for FY 2011, and Table 3 provides details for FY 2012.

Table 1. Estimated Respondent Burden for FY 2010 (Hours and Dollars)

<b>Form</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average Time per Response</b>	<b>Estimated Total Burden (Hours)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Burden (Dollars)</b>
Full production	13,200	One Time	16 minutes for 3 months and 21	4,345	\$54,100



			minutes for 9 months		
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Table 2. Estimated Respondent Burden for FY 2011 (Hours and Dollars)

<b>Form</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average Time per Response</b>	<b>Estimated Total Burden (Hours)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Burden (Dollars)</b>
Full production	13,200	One Time	21 minutes for 12 months	4,620	\$57,500

Table 3. Estimated Respondent Burden for FY 2012 (Hours and Dollars)

<b>Form</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Average Time per Response</b>	<b>Estimated Total Burden (Hours)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Burden (Dollars)</b>
Full production	13,200	One Time	21 minutes for 3 months; 16 minutes for 9 months	3,795	\$47,200

### 13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Recordkeepers

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

Respondents to this survey are individuals and will not incur any capital start-up costs or costs related to total operation and maintenance and purchase of services agreements.

### 14. Cost to Federal Government

The total estimated cost to the Federal Government for the ATUS base program in each fiscal year will be about \$5.3 million annually.

The total estimated additional cost for fielding the Leave questions is \$0.1 million. This cost is being borne by the DOL Women's Bureau.

Costs associated with the ATUS cover survey management, questionnaire design, instrument development, training, data collection, incentive payments, data editing, preparation of the files for data users, and support for users of the data files.

### **15. Changes in Burden**

The estimated burden is 4,345 hours for FY 2010, 4,620 hours for FY 2011, and 3,795 hours for FY 2012. The estimated burdens account for the Well-being module ending after the first 3 months of FY 2011. The estimates also are based on the assumptions that funding is received for the Leave module and that these questions are asked for the calendar year 2011. If funding is not secured, the Leave module questions will not be added to the survey; if funding is delayed, the questions will not run for the calendar year 2011, but instead run for 12 consecutive months beginning when funding is received.

The addition of questions about eldercare is not expected to change the burden hours because summary questions about missed days will be removed when the eldercare questions are added. The expected result of doing these actions simultaneously is no net change in respondent burden.

The change in burden from FY 2011 to FY 2012 is due to the discontinuation of the Leave module questions in December 2011. This end date is contingent on data collection beginning in January 2011. The January 2011 start date depends on funding being secured by that time. If funding is delayed, the Leave module will be delayed and data collection may extend past December 2011. Discontinuation of the leave questions will subtract 5 minutes from the average interview length. This is projected to result in a *program change of – 825 hours* between FY 2011 and 2012.

The proposed changes are expected to result in no change in burden between FY 2010 and 2011, and a net decrease in burden of 825 hours between FY2011 and 2012.

### **16. Time Schedule for Information Collection and Publication**

The following is the schedule for ATUS data collection:

Full production and data collection with the Well-being module	Starting in January 2010, continuing monthly through December 2010
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Full production data collection, with the Leave module (if funding is secured)	Starting in January 2011, continuing monthly through December 2011
Full production data collection, with the eldercare questions and without the missed days questions	Starting in January 2011 and continuing monthly
Release of the ATUS estimates	Mid-2010 Mid-2011 Mid-2012

Cross tabulation, time-series, and multivariate analyses will be used to analyze the data.

The ATUS news releases will be published in electronic and paper formats. The electronic news release will be posted on the BLS Web site at [www.bls.gov/tus](http://www.bls.gov/tus). Paper copies will be mailed upon request. Additionally, public use data sets will be posted to the BLS Web site at [www.bls.gov/tus](http://www.bls.gov/tus) after publication of the news release.

**17. Request to Not Display OMB 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 the OMB survey control number for the ATUS.

**18. Exceptions to “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions”**

There are no exceptions to the “Certificate for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”