

# Memorandum

---

Subject: Request for a non-substantive change in recruitment approach of households/individuals living in gated communities or locked buildings by the National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (OMB Control No. 0536-0068) Date: June 11, 2012

From: Mark Denbaly,  
ERS COTR for the National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey Reply to  
Attn. of:

To: Jennifer Park,  
Statistical and Science Policy,  
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs,  
Office of Management and Budget

The National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (OMB Control No. 0536-0068) is a nationally representative survey designed to collection information from a sample of 5,000 households about the foods they acquire over a seven-day period. Data collection began in April 2012 and is scheduled to end in October 2012.

As of June 5, 2012, 5,052 sampled addresses had been released to the field: 1,440 from the SNAP frame and 3,612 from the address-based sample (ABS) frame. Of the total, 7.1% were found to be not eligible for screening, 48.7% are “pending,” 30.4% have reached a status of “complete,” 12.8% refused to answer the screener, and initial (Phase 1) efforts to contact households have ended for 0.8%. About 1.8% of total pending households lives in a gated community or locked building.

Our current recruitment protocols require field interviewers to obtain the name of the management company and contact information (if possible), when a field interviewer is unable to gain access to a gated community or locked building. Interviewers send this information to their field supervisors. If a phone number is available, or can be obtained through a web search, supervisors will attempt to contact the management companies by telephone. If a phone number is not available, field supervisors submit the management company addresses to a tracking system.

Advance letter has been proven to be an effective technique to reduce nonresponse in various modes of data collection including mail survey, face-to-face survey, and telephone survey. We believe that an advance letter to the management company for gated communities or locked buildings where sampled households reside will stimulate survey cooperation from these companies. As the result, it will lead to an increase in both screen and response rates for households in gated communities. We propose that effective on June 15, an advance letter (Attachment – letter to gated community management) will be sent to management companies from our central office on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month during our fielding. This request is for this proposed modification for recruitment protocol of households/individuals living in a gated community or locked building.

We estimate that 444 ( $24,675 * 1.8\% = 444$ ) of the 24,675 total released samples/households for the survey will live in either gated communities or locked buildings based on data derived from our current data fielding. We expect that about 80% of the management companies for these gated communities/locked buildings will respond to our request for cooperation. The estimated average response time is 10 minutes per respondent. For those companies (89) who will not respond to our request, we estimate that it will take about 2 minutes on an average for them to read the advance letter. The implementation of this proposed recruitment protocol change will result in a total of 62.18 hours in annual response burden increase. Thus, we request to increase

the total annual hour burden for the National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (OMB Control No. 0536-0068) from previously approved 43,897 hours to 43,959 hours.

CC: Pheny Weidman, ERS  
John Kirlin, ERS  
Nancy Cole, MPR