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Questions?

If you have any questions or comments regarding any aspect of the survey, send them to the Division of Consumer Prices and Price Indexes (OMB #1220-0163), Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington DC 20212, (202) 691-6991, or e-mail: CPI_info@bls.gov.

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the questionnaire and has assigned 1220-0163 as the control number. Without OMB approval and this number, we would not be able to conduct this survey.

The Consumer Price Index Housing Survey: Your Input is Important



We need your help to measure inflation

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), an agency of the Department of Labor, is the principal statistical data gathering organization of the Federal Government in the areas of labor and economics. We are asking for your voluntary participation in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Housing Survey. The CPI Housing Survey is used to measure price changes for what people pay to live in their rental houses or apartments. Your cooperation in this important survey will help provide the “big picture” of the U.S. economy.

What is the CPI?

The CPI is the nation’s chief measure of inflation at the retail level. It measures changes over time in the cost of buying a fixed market basket of goods and services needed for day-to-day living. Calculated and published by BLS, the CPI is used by business, labor, and government for making informed economic decisions. It is widely used to adjust payments under collective bargaining agreements and other contracts. The Federal Government uses the CPI to adjust Social Security payments, personal income taxes, and other program payments for the effects of inflation.

Housing accounts for more than 40 percent of the CPI

The Housing portion of the CPI has three components: Shelter; Fuel and Other Utilities; and Household Furnishings and Operations. Together, they account for more than 40 percent of the CPI. Shelter is the largest of these components and accounts for approximately 30 percent of the CPI. BLS measures the changes in shelter costs primarily from information collected in the CPI Housing Survey, in which you have been asked to participate.

Your home was chosen at random

The CPI is continuously updated to maintain its accuracy and relevance in today’s economy. One sixth of the addresses in the Housing Survey are replaced annually, using a random sampling procedure. Your home was selected to represent a large number of similar housing units in the CPI. This address was chosen—neither you nor your household as individuals were selected. If you move, we will interview the new resident at this address in the future.

All information is confidential

All the information you give to the BLS data collector for this survey is confidential. BLS staff are sworn to maintain the confidentiality of all responses. **No one else has access to your responses. All information is presented only in the form of statistical summaries. You will not be personally identified.**

We ask for just a little of your time

BLS collects information on the changes in housing costs by visiting selected homes on a predetermined schedule. We will contact you either by telephone or by personal visit just twice a year. On rare occasions, other BLS employees may re-interview you as part of our Data Quality Assurance Program. Such an interview should take an average of 5 to 12 minutes.

The CPI is released monthly

The CPI is available on the BLS-CPI homepage at: www.bls.gov/cpi shortly after release of the data around the 15th of each month. In addition, CPI information is available in the BLS periodical: *CPI Detailed Report* at: www.bls.gov/cpi/cpi_dr.htm.

Thank you!

By participating in the **CPI Housing Survey**, you help make the CPI possible.



Confidentiality and burden concerns

Confidentiality statement:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, its employees, agents, and partner statistical agencies will use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and will hold the information in confidence to the full extent required by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 5 of Public Law 107-347) and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your informed consent.

Voluntary nature:

This survey is authorized by law 29 U.S.C.2. Your voluntary cooperation is needed to make the results of the survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.

Public burden statement:

The survey interview can be completed in an estimated 7 – 12 minutes.

- To determine address eligibility – 7 minutes
- If eligible, to complete the interview – 5 minutes
- Follow-up just twice per year – 7 minutes