

Supporting Statement
2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey

A. Justification

1. Necessity of Information Collection

The U.S. Census Bureau requests approval to conduct the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS). The Census Bureau will conduct this survey for the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (NYCHPD). Pursuant to the Local Emergency Housing Rent Control Act of 1962 (as amended) as well as Sections 26-414 and 26-415 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, a survey is required in order to determine the supply, condition, and vacancy rate of housing in the city. The NYCHPD must take this survey every three years. The Census Bureau has conducted this survey for the city since 1962, most recently in 2011 under the authority of Title 13 USC, section 8b.

Census Bureau field representatives will conduct personal visit interviews for a sample of housing units in the City, the vast majority of which are rental units in multi-unit rental structures (apartment buildings). Single-family rental or owner-occupied units (houses), however, are not excluded from the sample. We will interview residents (occupied units) or other knowledgeable people such as a building manager, superintendent, or rental or real estate agent (vacant units) to gather information on vacancy rates, housing costs, and the income of residents. About ten percent of the sample will be reinterviewed for quality control purposes.

At the request of the sponsor, NYCHPD, we made the following changes to the survey instrument, Form H-100: a) reduced the number of possible rent subsidy options for renter-occupied units, b) added three new housing condition questions, c) reduced the number of health-related items, and, d) eliminated the maintenance questions for owner-occupied units. As a result, we have checked that the average interview time will remain about the same as these changes overall will result in a negligible difference.

2. Needs and Uses

The 2014 NYCHVS will be an up-to-date and comprehensive data source required by rent regulation laws as well as a source of data needed to evaluate the city's housing policies. Specifically, the city will look to the 2014 survey to provide accurate and reliable estimates of the rental and homeowner vacancy rates, to measure improvements in housing and neighborhood conditions, and to provide data on low-income, doubled-up, and crowded households at risk of becoming homeless. The city will use the results to develop programs and policies that aim to improve housing conditions for their citizens.

Conducting the NYCHVS and producing important statistics is consistent with the Census Bureau's mission of providing quality data on housing, population, and the economy (in this case for the City of New York). Survey results are also compared to other Census Bureau surveys, such as the Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey, American Community Survey, and Decennial Census. Discrepancies in data between censuses and surveys, can sometimes lead to improved data collection procedures, improved editing, and ultimately higher quality data for all surveys.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of the information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to the information collections conducted by the Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

3. Efforts to Minimize Burden

The completed questionnaires will be checked-in, and accounted for utilizing the latest computer technology. Each form will be assigned a unique identification number, which allows it to be tracked throughout all phases of the operation. This will substantially reduce the level of unnecessary personal visit follow-up, thereby reducing respondent burden.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

This survey was most recently conducted in 2011. No similar information in this detail and level of reliability has been collected since that time by New York City or the Census Bureau.

Any other available existing information cannot be used because the city is required by law (see Section A.1) to conduct its own periodic survey to determine the vacancy rate. Any other such information would not include the "rent-regulation" status of each unit. The city has to know this in order to enact its policies.

5. Methods to Minimize Burden on Small Businesses

The 2014 NYCHVS is primarily a household survey; however, some rental agents, managers, superintendents and realtors may need to be interviewed for vacant units.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This survey is not applicable to Federal programs and policies.

7. Special Circumstances

This survey does not have any special circumstances as all guidelines are met.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

The notice required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d) appeared in the Federal Register on February 1, 2013, Volume 78, page 7393. No comments were received in response to the notice.

All other outside consultation for this survey is with the NYCHPD. Based upon their recommendations, we have developed the questions to collect on Form H-100. Additionally, the NYCHPD will make recommendations on the interviewer instruction manuals to be developed and on many other aspects of the survey. The reinterview form, H-108 is used for internal analysis purposes only. The city had no recommendations on the content of the H-108.

The NYCHPD consults independently of the Census Bureau with other New York City government agencies, outside individuals and organizations concerning the NYCHVS.

a. Persons Consulted

Dr. Moon Wha Lee is the primary representative for the

NYCHPD. The Census Bureau has been in contact with him and members of his staff concerning the 2014 survey since March 2012. He can be reached on (212)863-7940.

Additionally, Matthew M. Wambua, Commissioner, NYCHPD, also has first-hand knowledge of the survey requirements and can be reached on (212)863-6100.

b. Major Problems

There are no points of contention between the Census Bureau and the NYCHPD. Everything to be done will be by mutual agreement and spelled out in a formal contract.

c. Other Public Contacts

There have not been any other public contacts regarding the survey. All consultation is with the NYCHPD.

9. Payments to Respondents

There are no plans to pay survey respondents.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Respondents are informed that the information they provide will be held in strict confidence, and that participation in the survey is voluntary. A letter, H-100(L), is sent to every selected housing unit prior to the survey. It explains, in addition to the confidential nature of the data, that a field representative will visit to conduct the survey and how long the interview will require. The letter will also be available in Spanish.

Title 13, Section 9, United States Code assures that no information that could identify any individual person or household will be released to any other government agency (Federal, state, or local) or to any private organization or individual. All information from the survey will be used strictly for statistical purposes.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

This survey does not contain any questions that are of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of Respondent Burden

We will conduct the survey by personal interview, using Form H-100. The average time for an occupied unit interview is 30 minutes. We expect about 5 percent of the 18,800 sample units to be vacant, resulting in a 10-minute interview with building managers, real estate or rental agents, or superintendents. Additionally, as a means of quality control, we will reinterview the agent/landlord at all vacant units and the resident at 5 percent of occupied units using Form H-108, which requires 10 minutes to complete. These estimates are based on previous experience conducting the survey.

	H-100	
	Occupied <u>Units</u>	Vacant <u>Units</u>
Regular Phase	17,850	950
Avg. Time/Unit	30 min	10 min
Hours	8,925	158
	H-108	
Reinterview	895	950
Avg. Time/Unit	10 min	10 min
Hours	<u>150</u>	<u>158</u>
Survey Totals	9,075	316 = 9,391 hours

13. Cost to Respondents

There is no monetary cost to respondents for replying to the survey.

14. Cost

This survey will be conducted at no cost to the Federal Government. The total initial estimated cost, \$7,805,000, is funded completely by the sponsor.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

The estimated respondent burden is slightly higher than the estimate from the 2011 NYCHVS due to anticipated additional

sample for new construction units built between October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2013. For 2011, we sampled primarily from the 2010 Decennial Census Address files and supplemented that with newly constructed units built between April 1, 2010 - September 30, 2010.

16. Project Schedule

The enumeration is scheduled to begin in mid-January 2014. The units selected for reinterview will be enumerated shortly after the initial interview. We expect that all interviewing will conclude by May 30, 2014. The Census Bureau does not publish the results of the NYCHVS in a formal manner as it does for other surveys. NYCHPD will receive specified tabulation outlines by December 30, 2014, and a public use microdata file containing non-identifiable individual records by January 10, 2015. Other interested parties may obtain survey results through the Internet.

17. Display of OMB Approval Information

The Census Bureau will print the OMB approval number and expiration date on each outgoing letter, form H-100(L). This information also appears on the H-100 and H-108, however, these forms are not typically viewed by the respondent.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Survey forms, respondent letter, fact sheet, and "Laws of New York"

