

Memorandum for: Reviewer of 1220-0175
cc: Dori Allard
From: Rachel Krantz-Kent
Date: March 25, 2013
Subject: "We've been trying to reach you" letter via FAX

This memorandum describes a proposal to send a "We've been trying to reach you" letter via FAX to cases for which American Time Use Survey (ATUS) interviewers are reaching FAX machines. The goal of the letter is to improve survey response.

Background information about ATUS calls to FAX machines

The ATUS is a CATI-based survey that draws its sample from households completing MIS-8 of the Current Population Survey (CPS). In the ATUS, interviewers call designated persons (DPs) using phone numbers provided during the CPS. Interviewers occasionally reach FAX machines while attempting to contact DPs. In this memo, the term "FAX cases" refers to sample units in which ATUS interviewers reached a FAX machine one or more times while trying to contact an ATUS DP.

In the 2011 ATUS, there were 260 FAX cases amounting to 1.1 percent of the survey's sample. Just 22 percent of FAX cases resulted in a completed interview and approximately 44 percent of FAX cases had final outcome codes indicating they were noncontacts or of unknown eligibility for the survey.

In 2011 and currently, many FAX cases are researched in an attempt to identify another phone number for the DP; however, other procedures for contacting these cases currently are not in place.

Proposal to send a "We've been trying to reach you" letter via FAX

ATUS would like OMB approval to send a letter via FAX to DPs associated with FAX cases. The purpose of the FAX letter is to inform ATUS DPs that U.S. Census Bureau interviewers have been trying to reach them for an important survey. The letter would provide a phone number the DPs can use to contact Census and it would request that the DPs call in to speak with an interviewer. The FAX letter would be addressed to a specific DP; however, it would not mention the ATUS. Reference to the ATUS intentionally is omitted to protect the DP's confidentiality should someone other than the DP view the FAX letter. Attachment A shows the proposed FAX letter.

Within the WebCATI system that manages ATUS calls, there is a FAX counter that enumerates each time a case has two consecutive calls that go to a FAX machine. The proposed FAX letter would be sent to a DP after the FAX counter associated with the DP's case reaches a count of one.

The cost and burden of implementing a FAX letter are expected to be negligible.

No change is proposed to the current procedure in which many FAX cases are researched to identify other phone numbers interviewers can use.

Enclosure:

Attachment A, Proposed FAX letter