

May 13, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: Reviewer of 1220-0050

FROM: JAY RYAN, Chief
Division of Consumer Expenditure (CE) Surveys
Bureau of Labor Statistics

SUBJECT: Non-substantive Change Request for the
Consumer Expenditure Diary Survey (CED) –
Individual Diary Feasibility study

CE is involved in an ongoing effort to improve data quality, maintain or increase response rates, and reduce data collection costs. To further this effort, as cleared in the 2013 CE clearance package, CE plans to field an Individual Diary Feasibility study to test the effects of offering multiple modes as well as individual diaries on data quality.

The Individual Diary Feasibility study, using the research sample, will test the feasibility and impact of using both individual diaries and multiple modes to collect CE Diary expenditures. (See additional details below and in Attachment A – IDF Feasibility Test Overview.) All CU members in the research sample will be offered, sequentially, a mobile-optimized web option and then a web survey for recording expenditures.

Respondents in the test group will be given the mode offering and individual log-in credentials at visit 1; a user guide for the selected mode; and instructions on how to log in and complete the diary. (See Attachment B – CED User Guides.) While the CU will be asked the standard CAPI questions at the end of the visit ¹, there will be no second visit. Instead, the group will be reminded via telephone at the end of the 1st week to continue Diary recordkeeping. At the end of the diary period, the group will be visited in-person to thank them for their participation, to ask the standard production CAPI questions, to collect recall and/or receipts, and to be debriefed. (See Attachment C - CAPI Changes for ID Research Cases.) Expert review by staff members of both the CE program office and the BLS Office of Survey Methods and Research has been performed on these questions.

Several modifications were made to the study design based on recommendations from usability testing conducted on the CE Mobile Diary including simplifying the log-in process, consolidating and creating additional instructions, and increasing ease of navigation. (See Attachment D - CE Mobile Diary Phase II Testing Report.)

Additionally, the advanced letters have been modified to reflect the increase in burden hours. (See Attachment E - CE 803L 2013.)

The expected starting sample size for this study is 1,200 addresses, the study should yield 914 completed weekly diaries for CUs overall. The field period is scheduled for 5 months from August through December 2014.

BLS estimates that this feasibility study will require 2,135 burden hours. We base this estimate upon the following assumptions:

	Mins.	Sampl e	Total Hours
Estimated time to place diary	24	960	384
Estimated time to be screened for Research sample	2	960	32
Estimated time to complete electronic diary (first week)	85 ¹	457	647.42
Estimated time to complete electronic diary (second week)	85	457	647.42
Estimated time at diary pick-up	24	653	261.20
Additional time for IDFT research questions during pick-up	15	653	163.25
TOTAL			2,135

¹ BLS estimates that the web diary and/or mobile-optimized web diary will take 85 minutes to complete per week per consumer unit, based on results from the Individual Diaries Pilot Test where, on average, it took each respondent 40 minutes per week at 2.13 respondents per consumer unit.

Current OMB approval of the CE surveys is scheduled to expire March 31, 2016.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Jay Ryan at 202-691-5139 or e-mail at Ryan.Jay@bls.gov or Peggy Murphy at 202-691-6186 or e-mail at Murphy.Peggy@bls.gov.

Attachments

- Attachment A – IDF Feasibility Overview
- Attachment B(1) – CED Mobile User Guide
- Attachment B(2) – CED Web User Guide
- Attachment C – CAPI Changes for ID Research Cases
- Attachment D – CE Mobile Diary Phase II Testing Report
- Attachment E - CE 803L 2013
- Attachment F – Individual Diary Analysis Plan

