CE Individual Diary Survey (Web) User Guide

May 2014
CE-FLD 10283-3

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE). We understand that this task takes time; however, your information is very important to us and will be used for many purposes that affect all Americans. Among the most important, it is used to help calculate the Consumer Price Index, or CPI, which is a basic measure of the rate of inflation. For more information about the survey, visit: http://www.bls.gov/cex and http://www.census.gov.

By law (Title 13, U.S. Code), we must keep your information confidential; we use it for statistical purposes only. If you have comments regarding this survey, please send them to: *Division of Consumer Expenditure Surveys, 2 Massachusetts Avenue N.E., Room 3985, Washington, DC 20212.*

The CE Diary can be accessed at: https://respond.census.gov/ced

Username and Password

Logging in to the CE Diary requires a unique and secure Username that is assigned to **each** eligible member in your household. For security reasons, your password is enclosed in a separate envelope provided by your Field Representative.

Respondent Name: _____

Line Number: _____ **Username:** _____-_____

Start Date: _____ **End Date:** _____

Note: It will be helpful to create a shortcut from your computer desktop. This will make it easier to access your diary each day as you are entering expenses. See the instructions on the back of this user guide for how to create a shortcut.

Questions?

Field Representative's name: _____Telephone: _____

CE Help Desk: (877) 744-1522 or e-mail@address.placeholder
Monday-Friday 9am-10pm, Saturday 9am-7:15pm, Sunday 11am-9:15pm EDT

Start Date and Email Address

On this screen, you will enter your name, email address and select the start date to begin entering expenses. Your start date can be found on the front of this user guide. If your start date, for example, is July 15, 2014 you will record the expenses that you made from July 15, 2014 through July 28, 2014 (fourteen days). We only ask for your email address to send occasional email reminders regarding the survey.

Complete the CE Diary for the entire two weeks, enter EVERYTHING you spend money on each day – the products you buy, the services you use, the household expenses you have during the week – no matter how large or small they are. If you are the main household respondent, you will also enter expenses for household members who are not keeping a diary such as children under the age of 16 and those without internet access.

Change Password

If you would like, you may change your password by clicking on the "Change Password" link at the top right of the screen. Make sure your new password meets all of the requirements that are specified on the Change Password screen.

The next four screenshots show examples of how to record your expenses in each of the four CE Diary tabs.

Food and Drink Away from Home

In the first tab, you will enter food and drink expenses made by you that were consumed outside of the home. Usually these expenses are at restaurants, school or work cafeterias or vending machines.   They do not include expenses, such as groceries, that were intended for home consumption then ultimately consumed outside of the home (e.g. bringing lunch from home). Also include expenses for other household members that you would be reporting for.

Meal Type
Select whether the food or drink expense was for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack/other, by using the dropdown arrow.

Description
Enter the description of what you purchased. Note that you should use only one line per item unless items were included within a single-charge meal (e.g. steak dinner, sandwich and chips, popcorn and soda).

Where Purchased
Select the place that best matches the description of where your expense was made, such as: a full service restaurant; fast food, take-out, or concession; vending machine; or employer or school cafeteria.

Total Cost with tax and tip
Enter the amount of the expense in dollars and cents, including tax and tip.

Alcohol Included?
If alcohol was included with the meal purchase, check any or all of the wine, beer, or other checkboxes as appropriate.

Total Alcohol Cost
Enter the separate cost of the alcohol in dollars and cents on the same line as the rest of the meal, or simply leave blank if no alcohol was included with the meal purchase.

Date Purchased
Select the date when your expense was made using the dropdown arrow.

Recorded for another household member
Click in the checkbox if you recorded the purchase for another household member.

Food and Drink for Home Consumption

In the second tab, you will enter food and drink expenses that you made that were intended for home consumption or storage. Usually these expenses are at places like grocery stores, farmers' markets, and similar stores. For receipts with multiple items, enter each item separately.

What did you buy or pay for?
Enter the description of your food or drink expense. Note that we'll need you to be specific when recording your expenses in this section. For example, for bread, we need to know the type of bread, such as: white, wheat, rye, etc. If you bought meat, we need to know the cut of the meat, such as: whole chicken, chicken legs, chicken wings, ground beef, round roast, whole ham, spare ribs, bacon, etc.

Is this item?
Select whether the item was either: fresh, frozen, bottled/canned, or other using the dropdown arrow.

Total Cost without tax
Enter the amount of the expense in dollars and cents, without tax.

Check here if purchased for someone not in household
Click in the checkbox if the expense was made for someone not in your household.

Date Purchased
Select the date when your expense was made using the dropdown arrow.

Recorded for another household member
Click in the checkbox if you recorded the purchase for another household member.

Clothing, Shoes, Jewelry, and Accessories
In the third tab, you will enter all clothing, shoes, jewelry, and accessories expenses that you had.

What did you buy or pay for?
Enter the description of what you bought.

Total Cost without tax
Enter the amount of the expense in dollars and cents, without tax.

Was the item for...
Select whether the item was for a male or female, using the dropdown arrow.

Age
Select whether the item was for someone: under 2 years old, 2 – 15 years old, or 16 years and over, using the dropdown arrow.

Check here if purchased for someone not in household
Click in the checkbox if the expense was made for someone not in your household.

Date Purchased
Select the date when your expense was made using the drop down arrow.

Recorded for another household member
Click in the checkbox if you recorded the purchase for another household member.

All Other Products and Services

In the fourth tab, you will enter all other expenses made by you that are not included in the other three parts of the CE Diary.

What did you buy or pay for?
Enter the description of what you bought.

Total Cost without tax
Enter the amount of the expense in dollars and cents, without tax.

Check here if purchased for someone not in household
Click in the checkbox if the expense was made for someone not in your household.

Date Purchased
Select the date when your expense was made using the drop down arrow.

Recorded for another household member
Click in the checkbox if you recorded the purchase for another household member.

Helpful Tips

Receipts

If you have receipts for expenses, we encourage you to use them to aid in entering expenses. We find receipts to be a useful way to ensure that all expenses have been entered. We would prefer that you enter your own expenses, however you may give receipts (or a copy of them) to your field representative.

Logging Out of the CE Diary

To protect your privacy, the CE Diary will automatically log you out if there is inactivity for more than 15 minutes. You will need to re-enter your Username and Password to log back in each time. To prevent losing data you have entered, please remember to save yoru entries. You can also logout at any time by clicking on the "logout" button in the top right corner.

Adding rows

If you need additional space for more expenses, you can click on **Add Rows** at the bottom of any of the four CE Diary tabs.

Saving entries

When you navigate from one section of the CE Diary to the next, your expenses will automatically be saved. You may also click **Save** at the bottom left of the page at any time.

Clearing entries

For all sections of the CE Diary, you have the option to clear all entries for a row if necessary. Under the "Clear" column simply click on the red icon ✖ at the end of a given row to clear the data for that row.

Submitting your expenses

At the end of your two-week record keeping period, you will submit your expenses using the **Submit** button at the top right of the page. You may still access the CE Diary after you hit **Submit**. You'll just need to log back in.

Do NOT Record
- Expenses while you were away from home overnight
- Business or farm operating expenses
- Descriptions using abbreviations

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What should I do if I forget my Username or Password?
Call the CE Help Desk number listed on the front of this User Guide.

2. How detailed should my descriptions be?
For Food and Drinks Away from Home, briefly describe the meal (e.g. Coffee, Sandwich and Chips. Dinner at Italian Restaurant).
For all other expenses, including groceries, briefly describe the individual item(s).

3. How can I delete or make changes to an expense that I've saved?
Go to the Home Screen and tap on the "Edit" button next to the item.

4. What should I do when I use coupons, discount cards, or loyalty cards?
Enter the amount you paid, after any discounts.

5. How should I record multiple quantities?
If the items are identical, you can combine them in the same entry and enter the total cost of all the items.

6. How should I record pre-payments such as a subway fare card?
Record the expense when you pay for it, not when you use it.

7. How should I record credit card purchases?
Record the individual expense the day that you use your credit card to pay for something, not the day you pay your credit card bill.

8. What about gift certificates or gift cards?
If you buy a gift certificate to give to someone, enter it as a regular expense. If you buy something using a gift card, enter the full amount that you paid, including all payment methods.

9. What do I do about returns and exchanges?
If an item is bought and returned during the diary period, it can be selected on the Home Screen and deleted on the Edit Screen. If it was bought outside the period and returned during the period, do not make any entry. If an item is exchanged during the period, select the item on the Home Screen and make the necessary changes on the Edit Screen.

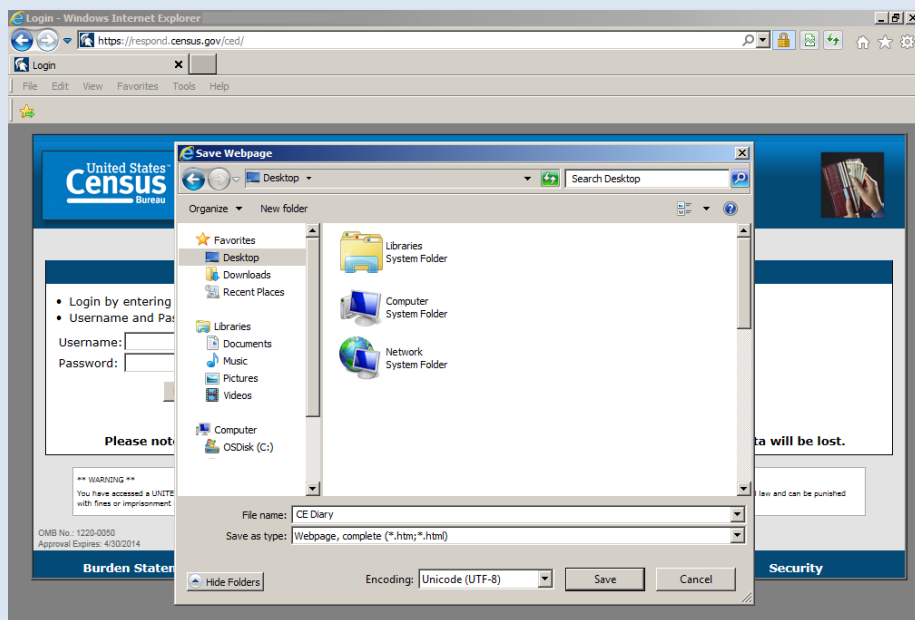**10. Should I record subsidized/reimbursed expenses?**
Only record any extra amount that you or someone in your household paid. Do not record any amount that someone not in your household has or will pay for.

Adding a CE Diary Shortcut to your Computer Desktop Screen

This will make it easier to access your diary each day as you are entering expenses. Although web browsers vary across brands and versions, the steps for creating a shortcut are usually similar. To create a shortcut to the CE Diary:

1. Open the web browser and enter the URL: https://respond.census.gov/ced

2. Once you have opened the website for the CE Diary, click on "File" in the upper left corner and select "Save as…"

3. You will see a screen open similar to the examples shown below, depending on your browser. The default File name will be "Login". You may want to change this to something more familiar like "CE Diary."

4. Make sure "Desktop" is selected as the save location.

5. When you close the browser and return to your desktop, you will see an icon for the shortcut with the name you specified. To quickly access your CE Diary in the future, simply double click on this shortcut.

Internet Explorer

Safari