

1 SUPPORTING STATEMENT

FORM BC-170, CENSUS EMPLOYMENT INQUIRY

A. Justification

A.1 Necessity of Information Collection

The Census Bureau requests continued Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for the BC-170A, BC-170B, and the BC-170D, Census Employment Inquiry. The BC-170 is used to collect information such as personal data and work experience from job applicants. Selecting officials review the information shown on the form to evaluate an applicant's eligibility for employment and to determine the best qualified applicants to fill Census jobs.

The BC-170 is used throughout the census and intercensal periods for the special census, one time or recurring survey operations and other decennial pretests. Applicants completing the form BC-170D for a census related position are applying for temporary jobs in office and field positions (clerks, enumerators, crew leaders, supervisors). In addition, the BC-170A may be used when applying for temporary/permanent office and field positions (clerks, field representatives, supervisors) on a recurring survey in one of the Census Bureau's six Regional Offices (ROs) throughout the United States. The Form BC-170B is used for special censuses for temporary field and office positions (enumerators, clerks, crew leaders). The variations of forms by purpose is to collect specific data needed based on the nature of the operation.

The use of this form is limited to only situations which require the establishment of a temporary office and/or involve special, one-time or recurring survey operations at one of the ROs. The form has been demonstrated to meet our recruitment needs for temporary workers and requires significantly less burden than the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Forms that are available for use by the public when applying for Federal positions.

The Census Bureau proposed using a revised employment form, however based upon program needs we have decided not to use the revised form at this time. We will use the existing form for our recruitment needs in 2015 and explore revising the employment inquiry form in the future.

All three forms are attached (Attachments 1, 2 and 3).

This collection is authorized by Title 13, United States Code, Section 23 a and c.

2. Needs and Uses

Job applicants complete the BC-170 (A, B, and D) before, or at the time, they are tested. Selecting officials will review the information shown on the form and determine the applicant's employment suitability. Failure to collect this information could result in the hiring of unsuitable and/or unqualified workers.

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. Use of Information Technology

The BC-170A and the BC-170B are currently available for interested applicants to complete the form on line and to print the application for submission. Investigation is currently underway to make the BC-170D available on line via the Internet for public access and submission with a targeted completion before September 30, 2017.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

The BC-170 (A, B and D) is intended to facilitate speedy hiring and selection in situations requiring large numbers of employees for assignments of a limited duration or on recurring surveys. Accordingly, the use of the BC-170 will be limited to only situations, which require the establishment of a temporary office and/or involve special, one-time or recurring survey operations. This will avoid undue paperwork.

5. Efforts to Minimize Burden

The proposed form has been demonstrated to meet our needs for hiring temporary workers and requires significantly less burden than the OPM Optional Forms that are available for use by the public when applying for a Federal position.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

Completion of this form is a one-time collection.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

The Census Bureau's Human Resources Division has consulted with the Office of Human Resource Management, Department of Commerce, on an ongoing basis since 1984. Since that time, several revisions have been suggested and incorporated. Currently, the Census Bureau's Human Resources Division has approval from the Department of Commerce to use this form for employment purposes.

A notice was published in the Federal Register on May 14, 2014 (volume 79, pg. 27572). One comment was received generally opposing the collection.

9. Paying Respondents

We do not pay applicants or provide them gifts for applying for a federal position.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The confidentiality of information contained on the BC-170 will be maintained according to the provisions of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C., 552a. The applicants are provided a copy of the Privacy Act Statement which appears on first page of each of the forms. Completion of the forms is required by applicants in order to receive consideration for employment.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The BC-170 contains questions of a sensitive nature relating to criminal charges and indebtedness to the Federal government. These questions are necessary to determine the applicants' suitability for census jobs.

12. Estimate of Hour Burden

Respondents complete the BC-170 only once. We expect about 65,000 responses per year. Based on past experiences, the BC-170 on average takes about 15 minutes to complete. The annual burden would be 16,250 hours.

13. Estimate of Cost Burden

The only cost to the respondent is his/her time for completing the BC-170.

14. Cost to Federal Government

Estimated cost for printing and keying the BC-170 is \$157,500. This cost was estimated based on the current cost of printing the form. The cost is budgeted for and paid for by the Bureau of the Census.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

The increase in reporting burden is due to the projected work on the Special Census, the 2015 Census Test or other pre-tests and the re-design of the current survey workload, which will increase the number of positions and applicants.

16. Project Schedule

As mentioned earlier, the BC-170 (A, B and D) is used throughout the census and intercensal periods for the special censuses, pretests, and dress rehearsals for short-term time limited appointments. In addition, it is estimated that the Census Bureau will be conducting many special censuses for state and local governments annually continuing through 2018. Recruiting will be an ongoing program throughout the current survey data collection operations as well as the decennial pretests.

17. Request not to Display Expiration Date

Since the BC-170 is used frequently and does not change often we request permission to not display the expiration date on the form to avoid needless reprinting.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions.

Attachments:

1. Form BC-170A
2. Form BC-170B
3. Form BC-170D