

In an effort to move our economic programs towards a paperless collection strategy, Local Finance and Pensions (0607-0585) will be undertaking a “push” strategy effective with the 2015 survey year (mailed in October 2015). This strategy entails eliminating paper forms in the initial and follow-up mailings for the Annual Survey of Local Government Finances and the Annual Survey of Public Pensions, and attempts to push respondents to report online. The letter directs respondents to go online to the Census Bureau’s Centurion online collection instrument at [respond.census.gov/alfin](http://respond.census.gov/alfin) or [respond.census.gov/aspp](http://respond.census.gov/aspp). Once online, the respondent can log in to report. Additionally, the respondent can print a blank worksheet to assist in compiling the requested information and print out a worksheet populated with their responses once they have submitted the report. The web site contains contact information for any additional assistance the respondent may need.

We will monitor overall response, and if rates fall below a threshold determined from historical trends then forms will be included in the next scheduled mailing for all cases. We will also monitor response by geographic level to ensure that if total response remains acceptable, no individual geographic area falls behind historical response trends. If any specific geographic area falls below the established threshold, then forms for that particular industry will be included in the next scheduled mailing.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Randy Moore, Chief of Local Finance Statistics Branch, Economy Wide Division, at 301-763-7231 or Phil Vidal, Chief of Pension Statistics Branch, Economy Wide Division, at 301-763-1749.

A list of the items included in the originally approved OMB package is below along with the impact this change request will have on each item:

- Attachment 1 – Cover and Follow-up Letters
  - LF-DL, LF-DL2, LF-RL, LF-DLE, LF-RLE
    - The cover letter (LF-DL) was modified to incorporate a new template that highlights the uses of our data, the OMB number, our authority to conduct the survey, and the burden estimate.
    - References to responding by mail were removed.
    - Consolidated to only one version of the initial “DL” letters and one version of the reminder “RL” letters (there had previously been separate versions for

electronic and non-electronic reporters). LF-DL (attached) and LF-RL (attached) will be used to replace all of these letters now.

- In addition to being used as a follow-up letter, the text of LF-RL will be used for email follow-up response as well.
- o AP-DL, AP-RL, AP-DLE, AP-RLE, AP-DL2
  - The cover letter was modified to incorporate a new template that highlights the uses of our data, the OMB number, our authority to conduct the survey, and the burden estimate.
  - References to responding by mail were removed.
  - Consolidated to only one version of the cover “DL” letters and one version of the follow-up “RL” letters (there had previously been separate versions for electronic and non-electronic reporters). AP-DL (attached) and AP-RL (attached) will be used to replace all of these letters now.
- o SF-DL, SF-DL2, LF-DLCC - Not impacted by the change in collection strategy.
- o AP-DL2N, AP-RLN – Will not be utilized in 2015 and thus not impacted by the change in collections strategy.
- Attachment 2 – Supplemental Data Letters – Not impacted by the change in collection strategy.
- Attachment 3 – Pensions Systems Canvas Letter - Not impacted by the change in collection strategy in 2015.
- Attachment 4 – Forms
  - o F-11, F-12, F-13, F-28, F-29, F-32
    - Will no longer be included in mail packages.
    - A worksheet version of these forms (attached) have been created to assist the respondent in gathering response information. The worksheet has watermarks indicating that it should not be returned as a response.
  - o F-5, F-13 – Not impacted by the change in collection strategy.
  - o F-12S – Not being utilized in 2015 and thus not impacted by the change in collection strategy.
- Attachment 5 – Electronic Response Flyers (attached)
  - o Removed the statement that login information would be printed on the form.
  - o Replaced other references to ‘form’ with ‘worksheet’
- Attachment 6 – Advance and Follow-up Postcards

- o Advance postcards (LF-AP, AP-AP, ) are no longer being used.
- o Follow-up Postcards (LF-RP, LF-RPE, AP-RP, AP-RPE)
  - Consolidated LF-RP and LF-RPE into only LF-RP (attached)
  - Consolidated AP-RP and AP-RPE into only AP-RP (attached)
  - Changed references to receiving forms in the mail since they are no longer included in the mail package.
  - Minor change in wording to encourage online response.
- Attachment 7 – State and Local Government Flyer – No longer being used as a part of the new collection strategy.
- Attachment 8 – Pension System Flyer - No longer being used as a part of the new collection strategy.
- Attachment 9 - Urban Institute Letter – Not impacted by the change in collection strategy.
- Omb83-i\_053014 - Not affected by the change in collection strategy.
- Supporting Statement A – Not affected by the change in collection strategy.
- Supporting Statement B – Minor change to section 3 ‘Methods to Maximize Response’. This document (attached) has been revised to include follow-up emails for the Annual Survey of Local Government Finances as a method that will be used as a part of the new collection strategy. Also, the contacts were updated with the new Chief of the Local Finance Statistics Branch.