

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Public Employment & Payroll
(Electronic Questionnaires E-1, E-2, E-3, E-4, E-5, E-6, E-7, E-8, E-9, E-10)
OMB Control No. 0607-0452

Part B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

For the 2015 and 2016 annual surveys, data are collected for all 50 state governments and for a sample of local governments, including general-purpose governments (counties, municipalities, and townships), school districts, and special districts. For 2014, survey forms were mailed to 16,326 government entities.

The samples for the 2015 and 2016 annual surveys were selected based on the 2012 Census of Governments, with births added and deaths removed since the 2012 Census. Sample counts at the parent government level by type of local governments for the 2015 and 2016 surveys are similar to the counts for the 2014 survey cycle.

For the 2017 Census of Governments, data are collected for all 50 state governments and all local governments in the United States. There is no sampling for 2017. We expect to mail electronic questionnaires to approximately 99,442 government entities with a preliminary universe of 90,107 governments.

Type of Local Government	Estimate of Sample	2012 Universe
Counties	1,387	3,025
Municipalities	2,964	19,526
Townships	577	16,366
School Districts	2,306	13,566
Special Districts	3,089	37,697
Total	10,323	90,180

Historically, the unit response rate for the Public Employment & Payroll program has been in the 75-85 percent range. The unit response rate for the 2012 Census of Governments – Employment was 77.0%, while the unit response rate for the 2013 Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll was 81.4%.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

The 2017 Census of Governments: Employment is a census of all governments in the United States. There is no estimation.

The 2015 Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll and 2016 Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll are both based on a sample. The sample is designed and selected to include governments that comprise the bulk of employment and payroll activity. All units in the District of Columbia and Hawaii are selected with certainty. Units in the other states are selected without replacement with probability proportional to the size (PPS) of the unit. Some units have a size so large that they end up being selected with certainty. Units in the PPS portion of the sample were sub-sampled below a cutoff for cities, townships, and special districts. For births in the annual survey years, the Census Bureau takes all general-purpose governments and schools with certainty and selects a stratified simple random sample of special district governments. For the 2014 sample, the Census Bureau selected a stratified simple random sample of governmental units that had no activity (no employees or payroll) in 2012.

The Census Bureau will prepare estimates by state for local government employment and payrolls (full-time employment, full-time payroll, part-time employment, and part-time payrolls) and by government function in sample years. For national level totals, the Census Bureau will prepare estimates of total local government employment and payrolls by government function (e.g., elementary and secondary education, higher education, police protection, fire protection, etc.). Model-assisted methods will be used to determine state-by-type of governmental totals. Small-area estimation methods will be used to determine functional estimates.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

The Public Sector area consults with, and presents to, various public and professional groups that use the data. These groups endorse survey efforts and encourage participation by their members. Survey publicity appears in state organization publications distributed to member governments.

Beginning with the 2016 survey, mail procedures include the original request letter (Attachment 5), , packaged an endorsement flyer (Attachment 6), and an elected officials flyer (Attachment 7). The endorsement flyer details the importance, purpose, and modes for responding to the survey. The elected officials flyer highlights the need to include all paid elected or appointed officials on the questionnaire.

Approximately a week after the original request electronic questionnaire is mailed, it is followed by a reminder postcard (Attachment 8). Approximately three weeks after the original request electronic questionnaire, a reminder letter (Attachment 9) is sent. Staff conduct telephone follow-up to determine if appropriate individuals have received mail correspondence, to encourage response, and to obtain additional information about reported data. Staff also conduct follow-up via SharePoint email blast, which is an automated email sent to a group of governments using SharePoint software.

Central collection arrangements with 46 state governments and for school systems in four states ensure 100 percent response rates for units included in those responses.

Alternative ways for reporting data are available for respondents. Data may be reported by web instrument, submitting electronic files, or by telephone..

4. Tests of Procedures or Methods

The Census Bureau used these questionnaires successfully in the last Census of Governments, and the employment and pay portion successfully in the Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll. The Census Bureau has used the basic definitions and reporting instructions since the 1957 Census of Governments. Ongoing contact with survey respondents indicates that present methods of data collection are effective.

The Census Bureau conducted cognitive testing in early 2011 on the 2012 form changes to ensure government representatives understood the questions being asked on the forms. The cognitive testing also gave survey analysts a better understanding of the data available and terminology used by government representatives.

For 2012 and prior, form E-6 was sent to all local school systems regardless of function. As a result of cognitive testing and the Quality Improvement Program (QuIP) trips in June 2012, two new forms were introduced for the 2013 Annual Survey of Public Employment & Payroll. The E-8 form was designed for elementary and secondary school systems; the E-10 for college and other postsecondary education school systems. The E-6 now is only sent to governmental units which may have both functions of education. The units receiving the new E-8 electronic questionnaire are receiving a shorter electronic questionnaire in place of the existing E-6.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Statistical procedures:

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List of Attachments

1. 2016 Worksheets E-1 through E-10, web instrument screenshots, and purpose of survey
2. Letter of Support from BEA
3. 2015 Electronic Reporting Flyer (E-CT1) – NOT USED beginning in 2016
4. 2016 Central Collection Letter (E-CC)
5. 2016 Director's Letter and Division Chief's Letter (E-DLE and E-L1)
6. 2016 Endorsement Flyer (E-L1)
7. 2015 Elected Officials Flyer (E-EOF)
8. 2015 Reminder Postcard (E-RPE)
9. 2016 Reminder Letters (E-RLE, E-L2)