

2018 Police Public Contact Survey, a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey Cognitive Interviews

Request: The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We propose to conduct an iterative cognitive evaluation of the Police Public Contact Survey (PPCS), a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. As part of this current submission, we are seeking approval for cognitive interviews conducted by Census Bureau staff.

Purpose: The purpose of this cognitive research is to test added or revised questions in the Police Public Contact Survey. The survey questions are asked of each household member that is 16 years or older. The full questionnaire is attached (see Attachment I: 2018 NCVS PPCS Full Questionnaire).

We plan to cognitively test all items in the PPCS instrument using specific probes designed as part of the cognitive test (see Attachment II: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Protocol). The cognitive testing will evaluate the effectiveness of the survey screener questions intended to determine whether or not respondents have experienced certain types of self-initiated and police-initiated contacts with the police. We will do this by recruiting respondents who indicate that they have experienced at least one of the types of police contact of interest when answering the recruitment eligibility screener questions (see Attachment III: PPCS Cognitive Interview Recruitment Eligibility Screener). The results of the cognitive testing will inform the final revised PPCS instrument content that will be used in data collection in 2018.

Population of Interest: The planned cognitive pretesting evaluation will focus on assessing and improving the questionnaire content for the general population.

Timeline: There will be four iterative rounds of cognitive testing, with time for analysis and revisions to the protocol between rounds. Round 1 of testing will be conducted from the end of June 2017 through July 2017. Round 2 of testing will be conducted in August 2017. Round 3 of testing will be conducted from early September 2017 through the beginning of October 2017. Round 4 will be conducted from the end of October 2017 through the beginning of November 2017. Recruiting will begin mid-June 2017.

Language: Testing will be conducted in English only.

Method: From June 2017 to November 2017, staff from the Center for Survey Measurement will conduct four iterative rounds of cognitive interviews. We will conduct the interviews with a maximum of 50 respondents (15 respondents each in rounds 1 and 2, and 10 respondents each in rounds 3 and 4) using a paper version of the interviewer-administered instrument.

Sample: Our recruiting efforts will target respondents with the following characteristics who would be eligible for the survey supplement:

- Ages 16 years old or older
- At least one interaction with police that falls into any of the following categories:
 - o Have voluntarily contacted the police to report a crime, a non-crime emergency, or seek assistance
 - o Have been involved in a traffic accident in which the police arrived at the scene
 - o Have been stopped by police while driving or riding in a vehicle, or while sitting, standing, or walking in a public place
 - o Have been arrested during any contact with the police that is not in the three categories above

See Attachment III: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Recruitment Eligibility Screener.

Recruitment: Participants will be recruited using a combination of word-of-mouth, fliers posted at local community organizations such as recreation centers, advertisements on Craigslist.com, and broadcast messages distributed through the Census Bureau's daily online newsletter. For recruitment text, see Attachment IV: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Recruitment Advertisement. Interviews will be conducted at the Census Bureau's Response Research Laboratory and at locations convenient to interviewees in DC, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

Informed Consent: We will inform participants that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be accessed only by employees involved in the research project. The consent form will also indicate that the respondent agrees that the interview can be audio-taped to facilitate analysis of the results (see Attachment V: Consent Form- National Crime Victimization Survey, Police Public Contact Survey). Participants who do not consent to be audio-taped will still be allowed to participate.

Protocol: We will conduct our cognitive interviews using the think aloud method and quasi-retrospective probes. Using quasi-retrospective probes will allow the respondent to hear sections of the questionnaire uninterrupted before being asked probing questions about the survey questions they just answered. During probing, respondents will be asked about how they came up with their answers for questions, their comprehension of specific words and terms in the questionnaire, and about the level of difficulty of the questions.

Participants will first be asked a series of screener questions from the PPCS to determine if they have had any contact with the police in the past 12 months and, if so, what type of contact. All respondents will then be asked a series of retrospective probes about the series of PPCS

screening questions they answered. Participants who screen out of the survey, meaning they did not report any contacts with the police in the past 12 months, will then be asked a series of debriefing questions before ending the interview. Respondents who report one or more contacts with the police will screen in to the full survey, and answer each applicable section, with follow up probes asked between each section (see Attachment II: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Protocol).

Use of Incentive: Due to the length of the interview and the necessity to travel to test locations, we plan to offer an incentive of \$40 to offset the costs of participation, such as travel and parking.

Below is a list of materials to be used in the current study:

- I. Attachment I: 2018 NCVS PPCS Full Questionnaire
- II. Attachment II: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Protocol
- III. Attachment III: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Recruitment Eligibility Screener
- IV. Attachment IV: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Recruitment Advertisement
- V. Attachment V: Consent Form- National Crime Victimization Survey, Police Public Contact Survey

Length of Interview: For the cognitive interviews, we estimate that each interview (50 interviews) will take approximately one hour (50 hours total). The pre-approved generic screening questionnaire will take approximately ten minutes per person, and the additional screening questions specific to this research will take five minutes per person (see Attachment III: 2018 NCVS PPCS Cognitive Interview Recruitment Eligibility Screener).

We estimate that we will screen three people for each successful recruit for each of the 50 interviews. Therefore, we estimate a total of 150 people screened (38 hours). Thus, the total estimated burden for the first two rounds of this research is 88 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and the design of this research is listed below:

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