

2018 Census Test Group Quarters Enumeration eResponse Debriefings

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 debriefings of respondents who use the eResponse data collection system. eResponse is a new application of the Census Bureau's Centurion data collection system that will be field-tested in the 2018 Census Test Group Quarters Enumeration (GQE) prior to its use in the 2020 Census. eResponse will be used by the staff at group quarters facilities (GQs) to provide information about their residents from electronic records, as an alternative to individual and paper form-based enumeration of residents. This evaluation will be conducted by staff in the Center for Survey Measurement (CSM).

Purpose: The purpose of the debriefings is to evaluate the effectiveness and utility of the eResponse system. eResponse consists of a secure web site by which GQ respondents can download an Excel spreadsheet reporting template containing instructions for providing requested information in the desired format. Respondents will transfer data about the group quarters and its residents from electronic records into the spreadsheet template and upload it to submit their responses. The web site will review uploaded data for errors and provide feedback so that respondents can make corrections and resubmit corrected data. Screenshots from the eResponse website, the spreadsheet reporting template, the GQE invitation letter, and the eResponse User Guide are included as attachments (see Enclosures 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively).

We will conduct interviews with 2018 Census Test GQE respondents who use the eResponse system to accomplish the following objectives:

- Evaluate the instrument's performance in terms of efficiency, meeting users' expectations, and user satisfaction
- Identify areas of the instrument that are problematic for users and features that are difficult to understand
- Explore the context of group quarters enumeration with regard to respondents' response processes, the nature of their records, etc.
- Provide recommendations for improvements to the design of the instrument that will enhance its usability
- Evaluate the effectiveness of instructions for using the system contained in the GQE invitation letter and user instruction guide and look for ways to improve the instructions

Results from the interviews will be summarized in a report, along with recommendations for improving the eResponse system.

Population of Interest: The Census Bureau enumerates residents of GQs as part of the decennial census. A GQ is a place where people live or stay in a group living arrangement that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the

residents. This is not a typical household-type living arrangement, and people living in group quarters are usually not related to each other. GQs include such places as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled-nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, and workers' dormitories. For this study, the GQs themselves are the population of interest, not the persons who reside in them.

Timeline: Interviews will be conducted in August-September 2018.

Language: Interviews will be conducted in English only.

Method: We will conduct debriefings with respondents and other staff from up to 20 GQs in Providence County, Rhode Island (the location of the 2018 Census Test). We will conduct the interviews at the GQs or at separate administrative offices that support the GQs, depending on where the respondents work. We may also conduct a small number of interviews by telephone, such as in cases where respondents are not be able to meet in person during the research team's trip to their area.

Sample: We will select GQs purposively to obtain a sample that is diverse with regard to characteristics hypothesized to be related to differences in response preparation processes and capabilities, such as:

- Type of facility (university housing, nursing home, correctional facility, etc.)
- Type of ownership (government, private, etc.)
- Number of residents enumerated

In addition, we will select cases with a variety of response outcomes related to data quality, such as:

- Cases with no apparent errors
- Cases with item nonresponse
- Cases whose anticipated number of residents enumerated is outside the expected range
- Cases that demonstrate other types of errors as determined by subject matter experts

We will also identify a few GQs whose respondents told the Census Bureau during an advance contact operation that they would report via eResponse but who did not respond via that option, to identify any problems that may have prevented them from using the system.

Recruitment: Once we have identified GQs that meet our criteria, we will attempt to contact their respondents by telephone, explain the nature of our research, ask them to participate in our study, and attempt to schedule an appointment to visit their work place. Thus the sample of participants will be the subset of selected respondents whom we are able to contact and who agree to participate in the study. When interviews are scheduled, respondents will receive a confirmation email, and may receive a reminder email or phone call prior to the interview.

Protocol: We will conduct respondent debriefings in which the goals are to obtain, as much as possible, factual information about respondents' experiences with using eResponse, as well as

their opinions and suggestions for improving the system. We will ask respondents to describe the steps they followed in using the system, retrieving requested data, entering data into and uploading the reporting template, etc. To identify potential areas for improvement, we will attempt to evaluate how well the various features of the system worked for respondents. We will also ask about the nature of their electronic records related to the enumeration (structure, naming conventions, etc.) and about the purposes and uses of such records, to evaluate how well the required data format corresponds to GQ records and investigate possibilities for better aligning the information request with their records. The protocol to be used in this study is included as an attachment (see Enclosure 1).

Consent: We will inform participants that their response to the debriefing is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be accessible 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 Enclosure 6). Participants who do not consent to be audio-taped will still be allowed to participate.

Use of Incentive: We will not be providing monetary incentives to participants in this study.

Enclosures: The materials to be used in this study are enclosed with this letter and include:

- Enclosure 1 – Cognitive Interview Protocol
- Enclosure 2 – eResponse online instrument screenshots
- Enclosure 3 – eResponse spreadsheet reporting template
- Enclosure 4 – 2018 Census Test GQE invitation
- Enclosure 5 – eResponse User Guide

- Enclosure 6 – Consent Form

Length of interview: We expect the interviews to last up to two hours, and we expect to interview two respondents from each GQ on average. We expect to contact staff persons at up to 40 GQs in order to find 20 who are willing to participate in the interviews, and we expect to spend up to 5 minutes on each recruiting call. **The total estimated burden for this study is 83.3 hours.**

Research Activity	Number of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden Hours
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Screening	40 GQs	5 minutes	3.3 hours
Debriefing Interviews	40 individuals (at 20 GQs)	120 minutes	80 hours
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Total			83.3 hours

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

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