

**Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission**  
**American Housing Survey**  
**OMB Number 2528-0017**

**A. Justification**

**1. Necessity of Information Collection**

We request clearance for the proposed questions to be used on the 2017 American Housing Survey (AHS). We will collect data for the majority of the sample between May 1 and August 25, 2017. This request is a revision to the currently approved data collection request for the AHS under OMB Number 2528-0017.

The 2015 AHS began a new longitudinal panel. The sample design has three primary components: an integrated national sample, an independent metropolitan areas sample, and a bridge sample of housing units from the previous panel. Furthermore, the integrated national sample includes three parts: (1) 34,392 national cases representative of the US and nine Census divisions, (2) 5,202 subsidized renter oversample cases, and (3) 45,285 oversample of the top 15 metropolitan areas in the US. The total integrated national sample will be approximately 84,879. For 2017, the independent metropolitan areas sample will consist of an additional 10 metropolitan areas and will include 29,993 records (approximately 3,000 per metropolitan area). The bridge sample consists of 5,956 housing units surveyed in 2013 and 2015.

Starting in 2009, the AHS questions were classified into “core” modules and “rotating topical” modules in order to minimize respondent burden and satisfy widening needs for data content. Questions in the core modules are asked in each survey and typically undergo only minor revisions between surveys. Questions in the topical modules are asked on a rotating basis.

Title 12, United States Code, Sections 1701z-1, 1701z-2(g), and 1701z-10a provide authority to collect this information.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses the information from the AHS to prepare the *Worst Case Needs* reports to Congress. HUD was directed to prepare this report series by U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee in 1990 (Committee Report to accompany H.R. 5158, The VA-HUD Appropriations Act for FY 1991 (S. Rpt. 101-474)). HUD also uses these data to prepare other special reports for Congress and its committees concerning the effect of legislation on the housing stock.

The 2017 data collection procedures and questionnaire content are similar to the 2015 survey with the following exceptions:

- a. Removal of the Pre-Interview Module Completed by the Field Representatives (FRs): FRs will no longer consult public records and observe the housing unit and neighborhood to answer questions prior to the AHS interview.

- b. Removal of Four Rotating Topical Modules from the 2015 AHS: The Arts and Culture, Housing Counseling, Healthy Homes, and Food Security topical modules will not be included in the 2017 survey.
- c. Reinstatement of the Disaster Planning Topical Module: The Disaster Planning module collects data on how prepared a household is for an emergency situation or disaster such as a fire, flood, or earthquake. In close consultation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the module has been revised since its last deployment in 2013. In addition to revised questions on finding disaster information, flood insurance, and availability of emergency supplies, there are new questions to identify connections between disasters and reasons for moving. We will no longer ask whether the building number can be read from the street.
- d. Partial Reinstatement of the Doubled-Up Topical Module: In 2013, the Doubled-Up Households module collected data on people who had to temporarily move-in with other households and the reasons people left their previous homes to move-in with other households. These questions will not be reinstated. Returning for 2017 are questions that asked whether respondents moved in with other households due to lack of financial means or other support and where people would stay if they left the household.
- e. Introduction of Two New Topical Modules: To continue the strategy of rotating topical modules in order to minimize respondent burden and satisfy widening needs for data content, two new topical modules have been added to the survey, Commuting and Eviction modules. These modules collect data on how people get to work, how long it takes, and any associated costs, and the causes and effects of evictions. The Eviction module was derived directly from the Milwaukee Area Renters Study. Please refer to the attached items booklet for the questions in these modules and the entire AHS questionnaire.
- f. Sample Split for Rotating Topical Modules: A split of the survey sample will be used to maximize the number of rotating topical modules that can be included in the 2017 AHS. Fifty percent of the sample will be asked the Commuting module. The other 50 percent will be asked the Disaster Planning module.

The 2017 data collection will include a supplemental sample of approximately 29,993 housing units will be selected from 10 metropolitan areas. The ten metropolitan areas were selected from HUD's "Next 20" group, as described in HUD's report, "Metro Area Selection Strategies & Decisions for the 2015 AHS & Beyond."

We also request clearance for the reinterview questions to be used in conjunction with this survey. We will conduct a second interview at approximately 7 percent of the total addresses in the survey for the purpose of interviewer quality control. Reinterview questions ask respondent whether they recall general details from the original interview. The 2017 reinterview instrument will contain five questions. However, each respondent will

only be asked four questions. Respondents will receive 3 of the same questions and the fourth and fifth questions will be divided between sample groups. We included in this clearance the cost and respondent burden estimates for the reinterview.

## 2. Needs and Uses

Both HUD and outside entities use the core modules of the AHS extensively. The core modules capture information about building and unit characteristics, housing quality, fuel and electricity costs, resident mobility and recent movers, rent and mortgage expenses, household demographic characteristics, income, and repairs and remodeling frequency and expenses. The following subsections describe the internal and external uses of the core modules and expected uses of the rotating topical modules.

### a. HUD's Internal Needs for the Core Modules

HUD has numerous needs for the AHS to support Congressional reporting requirements, programmatic needs, and ongoing research.

The needs include, but are not limited to:

1. Worst Case Housing Needs: Congress requires HUD to produce the Worst Case Housing Needs report every two years. This report is based almost entirely on the AHS.
2. Worst Case Housing Needs of People with Disabilities: HUD produces a supplemental report to the Worst Case Housing Needs report providing national estimates and information on the critical housing problems that confront low income renting families that include people with disabilities.
3. Characteristics of HUD Assisted Renters and Their Units: HUD produces a report detailing the housing conditions of HUD-assisted renters. This report is based entirely on the AHS responses of units that match to HUD administrative records of subsidized housing.
4. Housing Program Monitoring: AHS data is used to evaluate, monitor, and design the HUD programs to improve efficiency and effectiveness. From a HUD policy perspective, the AHS data have proved valuable in analyzing the potential effects of program design and redesign proposals. Past data have enabled HUD, for instance, to determine under what conditions a moderate income, multifamily construction program might be needed and feasible; to examine the effect of low vacancy rates on housing maintenance and quality; and to evaluate how housing assistance programs help welfare recipients.
5. National Housing Market Program of Research: HUD PD&R continuously monitors the state of the nation's housing market. The AHS contributes to this effort by

providing estimates of vacancy, financing types, homeowner equity, and housing values, to name a few.

6. Regional and Local Housing Market Research: HUD PD&R use the AHS data as one source of data for creating Comprehensive Housing Market Analyses and other local housing market intelligence reports. These reports help HUD field economists evaluate feasibility and market impacts of proposed multifamily assisted housing project investments.
  7. Affordable Housing Program of Research: HUD PD&R uses the AHS to conduct research on the number of affordable rental units in the housing stock and the degree to which rents are affordable to low- and moderate-income families and to very-low-income families.
  8. Housing and Demographics Program of Research: HUD PD&R uses the AHS to conduct research on demographic distributions by types of housing units. Of particular interest are housing choices by low-income female householders, minorities, first-time home buyers, the elderly, and households nearing retirement.
- b. Core Modules Uses External to HUD

National and local policy analysts, program managers, budget analysts, and Congressional staff use the AHS data to advise executive and legislative branches about housing conditions and the suitability of policy initiatives. Academic researchers and private organizations also use the AHS data in efforts of specific interest and concern to their respective communities.

Data from the AHS is the major source of estimates of the space-rental value of housing (a component of personal consumption expenditures) and of the rental income of persons (a component of both personal income and national income). The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) uses the AHS data in preparing metropolitan income and product accounts. The specific data that the BEA uses are those defining farm or nonfarm location, type of housing unit, occupancy status, tenure of the occupant, and the expenditures related to housing (rent, utilities, mortgage, and so on). Another use of the AHS data is to evaluate the housing program benefits reported on the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy issues an annual report "Annual Energy Review" using the heating fuel data collected in AHS (<http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/annual/>).

Data from the AHS are the primary input into Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies estimate of the size of the remodeling market (<http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/research/remodeling-futures>).

- c. Rotating Module Needs and Potential Uses

New data are being collected in the 2017 survey on how people commute to work and commuting costs, the causes and effects of evictions, disaster and emergency preparedness, and recent delinquent payments and notices for mortgage, rent, or utility bills. We will collect this data in the following four modules.

1. Commuting Module: The Commuting module collects data on the householder's journey to work, time and distance traveled, number of days worked per week, modes of transport, and costs of commuting during a typical work week. HUD added this module so it could develop better estimates of housing costs that include commuting costs.
2. Eviction Module: The Eviction questions expand on the reasons for moving, which we already ask of respondents that have moved into the unit within the past two years. The module collects data on the causes, process, and effects of eviction. There are questions on the types of warnings or notices received, what led to the move, i.e., raised rent, property condemned, etc., and whether children had to switch schools because of the move. The content of these questions was taken from Matthew Desmond's Milwaukee Area Renters Study (MARS). Matthew Desmond, a sociologist out of Harvard University, has done extensive fieldwork on housing and poverty, targeting low-income renters. The AHS eviction questions will be limited to respondents who moved from a place that was either rented or occupied without payment of rent. HUD will use this information to produce national estimates of eviction – something that does not currently exist.
3. Disaster Planning Module: The Disaster Planning module was last included in the 2013 AHS. The module collects data on how prepared a household is for an emergency situation or disaster such as a fire, flood, or earthquake. This module includes questions about whether the household has emergency supplies such as water, food, or a generator. There are questions about whether a household would have the financial means to relocate during an evacuation, where they would stay, and whether they have enough reliable vehicles to carry all household members, pets, and supplies. For specific geographic areas prone to tornado activity, the module asks whether there is a room or shelter designated to withstand a tornado.

This module is closely related to HUD Subgoal 4D, "Facilitate disaster preparedness, recovery, and resiliency." It provides HUD and local planners with information that connects household emergency plans with their housing, demographic, and income characteristics.

HUD's Office of Disaster Preparedness will be able to utilize the data to access disaster preparedness for HUD-assisted households. HUD expects that the National Disaster Housing Task Force (NDHTF) members will use the data, as will the local planning agencies in the supplemental metropolitan areas. Interest in this module was expressed by the Mid-America Regional Council, the South Florida Regional Planning Council, Reconnecting America, the City of Des Moines, the National

Association of Home Builders, and the Jacob France Institute of the University of Baltimore.

4. Delinquent Payments and Notices Module: The Delinquent Payments and Notices topical module is comprised of a subset of the questions from the 2013 AHS Doubled-Up Households module. The original Doubled-Up Households module was created as a rotating topical module that collected data on people who had to temporarily move in with other households in the last year; why people left their previous homes to move in with other households; and, in what is now the Delinquent Payments and Notices module, whether people had to move due to lack of financial means or other support and where they would stay if they left the household.

This module is related to HUD's Strategic Goal 2, "Meet the Need for Quality Affordable Rental Homes." In particular, Subgoal 2A is "End homelessness and substantially reduce the number of families and individuals with severe housing needs." Doubling up is widely seen as a precursor to homelessness.

HUD expects The Department of Education to be interested in the data produced by this module. Children in temporary doubled-up conditions are considered homeless for the purposes of education policy, and efforts are made to ensure that these children attend the same schools as their housing situation changes. The United State Interagency Council on Homelessness and the National Alliance to End Homelessness Research Institute each has expressed strong interest in the findings from this module.

Information quality assessment is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality assurance is also integral to 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**

#### **a. Data Collection**

The U.S. Census Bureau began conducting all the AHS interviewing with computers with the 1997 AHS enumeration. A Census Bureau FR conducts the interview via a Blaise CAPI instrument. The same survey instrument is used for all interviews. However, the instrument code includes skip patterns and makes use of dependent interviewing techniques, which means that a few questions will not have to be asked in future enumerations to decrease respondent burden for households in sample.

The AHS has not collected data via the Internet or through the Electronic Data Interchange because of the significant investment in time and research needed to

establish these types of electronic reporting in an ongoing survey. However, the Census Bureau is planning the use of an Internet survey for the 2019 AHS.

b. Data Dissemination

The Census Bureau currently makes summary tables and micro data collected by the AHS available to the public on the new Census Bureau Internet Web site developed in collaboration with HUD at: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs>

The Census Bureau plans to make the 2017 AHS summary data available on via the newly developed AHS Table Creator Tool (<http://sasweb.ssd.census.gov/ahs/ahstablecreator.html>).

The data being disseminated and released are not individually identifiable and will have been cleared for release/dissemination by the Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board.

#### 4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

a. Duplication in the Core Modules

HUD consulted with other government agencies and determined that the AHS is the only data source with both detailed information on the physical condition of the housing inventory and of rents of housing units. Although housing data are collected as part of the American Community Survey (ACS) (Census Bureau), Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES) (Bureau of Labor Statistics), and the Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS) (Department of Energy), these surveys provide neither the longitudinal data over a period of years or the detailed information available from the AHS. The CES collects housing cost data but does not collect detailed information on vacant units. The RECS does not collect mortgage or detailed housing cost data. Neither the ACS nor the RECS have detailed information on the physical condition of housing units or information on vacant units. Thus, these datasets could not serve as substitutes for the measures produced by the AHS that detail worst case housing needs.

The purposes of the AHS and the other surveys cited above also differ according to the agency's goals and objectives. Certainly the HUD surveys involve personal/household behavior with respect to housing and community development issues. But human behavior in general is conditional on fundamental familial, demographic, housing, and economic variables. As a general rule, HUD is not interested in the levels of individual variables, but in the relationships among variables. Therefore, they must observe the values of the variables for the same individuals in the same sample to capture covariance structure. (All multivariate statistical procedures rely on the covariance structure.) The AHS asks about the same fundamental variables but goes further and asks numerous detailed questions about other aspects of housing consumption, finance, and moving. In order to understand human behavior and detailed housing information, HUD needs to know how the fundamental housing variables affect or are related to the more detailed

housing variables. It would make no sense to collect detailed information about housing cost burdens and mortgage financing if we had no idea about fundamental housing attributes such as size, value, or rent of the housing unit.

b. Duplication in the Rotating Topical Modules

HUD undertook considerable effort to determine if the rotating topical modules would be duplicative of existing surveys. HUD's conclusions are below:

1. Commuting Module: The Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE) does include questions about both housing costs and commuting costs. The CE could be used to make similar estimates. However, the AHS estimates can be tied to housing conditions, something not currently achievable with the CE.
2. Eviction Module: No other federal survey includes these questions or similar questions.
3. Disaster Planning Module: Much of the content is based on the FEMA guidelines for disaster preparedness, <http://www.fema.gov/plan-prepare-mitigate>. While the content of the Disaster Planning modules is very similar to FEMA guidelines and other disaster preparedness surveys, FEMA and other entities administer their surveys at the local level (e.g., cities, counties). To the best of HUD's knowledge, there is no national-level survey on Disaster Planning. Therefore, while there is duplication in some content, the AHS truly is a unique data source for Disaster Planning data because it provides a national-level data. With national-level data, comparisons can be made between various geographic areas and socioeconomic groups of interest to HUD.
4. Delinquent Payments and Notices Module: The most current research report to make an attempt to estimate the population of doubled-up households is:

Mykyta, Laryssa and Macartney, Suzanne. June 2012. Sharing a Household: Household Composition and Economic Well-Being: 2007-2010. *Current Population Report* U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed July 7, 2012 at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p60-242.pdf>

The aforementioned report used data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). HUD PD&R feels that the SIPP-based analysis has shortcomings that make it difficult to accurately measure the doubled-up household population. First, SIPP does not address the issue of risk of housing loss. They focus instead on doubled-up households at the time of the interviews and shifts over different interview waves rather than on housing loss and out-movers. Second, SIPP questions do not directly allow for an assessment of "economic" doubled-up households, which is of the most interest to HUD. Instead, SIPP permits analysis of the presence of "additional adults," describing their basic demographic characteristics and shifts in numbers over



time, plus changes in overall household economic well-being and eligibility for means-tested public benefits given a change in household composition.

## 5. Minimizing Burden

We have designed the AHS questions to obtain the required information, while keeping respondent burden to a minimum. The data are collected only from individual households, not small businesses or other small entities. For unoccupied units, data are collected from a “knowledgeable respondent,” who could be a landlord, property manager, rental agent, real estate agent, or neighbor.

## 6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

As a longitudinal survey, we interview our samples periodically to provide intermittent readings between decennial censuses. The length of time between interviews is two years on the AHS. Less frequent enumerations would reduce HUD’s ability to detect changes in worst case housing needs. Without this ability, the Administration and Congress would be unable to formulate policy on housing assistance.

## 7. Special Circumstances

- requiring respondents to report information to the agency more than quarterly; **Not Applicable.**
- requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; **Not Applicable.**
- requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document; **Not Applicable.**
- requiring respondents to retain records other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years; **Not Applicable.**
- in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results than can be generalized to the universe of study; **Not Applicable.**
- requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB; **Not Applicable.**
- that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or **Not Applicable.**
- requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law. **Not Applicable.**

We collect the data in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines, and there are no special circumstances.

## 8. Consultations Outside the Agency

a. Federal Register Comments

Attached is a copy of the *Federal Register Notice* required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d). The Notice was published on August 31, 2016. HUD received no comments.

b. Consultations Influencing the 2017 AHS Core Modules

The content of the 2017 AHS Core Modules are the result of many years of consultation and testing starting with the development of the 1984 AHS questionnaire. For the original 1984 AHS questionnaire approximately 250 prospective data users were consulted who represented diverse areas of interest. The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) suggested modifications to the original questionnaire to improve BEA's estimates and to improve the clarity and consistency of the questions.

HUD and the Census Bureau routinely consult with outside groups who are frequent users of the AHS, including the National Association of Home Builders and the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS). Because of the depth of their experience with the AHS, these groups often make recommendations concerning minor changes to AHS questions. The Neighborhood Quality Module was added to the core and the number of questions in the module was reduced after consultation with NAHB. In consultation with JCHS, questions on the date of completion and the source of financing for remodeling jobs were added to the Home Improvement and Remodeling Module. We also worked with JCHS to combine some of the Home Improvement job categories to reduce respondent burden. The Energy Information Administration (EIA) at the Department of Energy was consulted in the development of utility cost allocation models, which are used to model utility costs using household and housing characteristics and climate data in the 2017 AHS.

c. Consultations Influencing the 2017 AHS Rotating Topical Modules

The process of developing the 2017 AHS rotating topic modules included consultations with several outside groups.

1. Commuting Module: HUD consulted with Census Bureau experts on commuting.
2. Eviction Module: HUD consulted with Harvard Department of Sociology and the University of Wisconsin Survey Center.
3. Disaster Planning Module: The questions were composed by HUD after consultation with outside organizations, particularly the National Disaster Housing Task Force (NDHTF) and other experts within FEMA. Much of the content is based on the FEMA guidelines for disaster preparedness, <http://www.fema.gov/plan-prepare-mitigate>.

4. Delinquent Payments and Notices Module: The questions were developed by a panel of experts assembled by HUD PD&R's and modified by AHS personnel at HUD and Census. The panel of experts included representatives from the Urban Institute, the University of Pennsylvania, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Westat, the National Alliance to End Homelessness Research Institute, Abt Associates, and Wayne State University.

## **9. Paying Respondents**

The AHS does not give respondents payments or gifts.

## **10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

The Census Bureau collects these data in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and OMB Circular A-108. The Census Bureau will send each sample address a letter (AHS-26/66(L)) in advance of the interview containing the information required by this act.

The Advance Letter informs the respondents of the voluntary nature of this survey and states that there are no penalties for failure to answer any question. The letter explains why the information is being collected, how it will be used, and that it will take approximately 40 minutes to complete the interview. The letter displays the OMB control number and date of expiration.

As part of the introduction for personal-visit households, the Census Bureau FRs will ask the respondents if they received the Advance Letter. If not, the FRs will give the letter to the respondents and allow them sufficient time to read the contents. We also display the toll-free phone number of the regional office for which the FR works as a way for the respondent to authenticate her/his employment with the Census Bureau. For interviews conducted by telephone, FRs will read to the respondents a condensed version of the advance letter that includes the information required by the Privacy Act.

After the interview is completed, the FRs will give the respondents a "Thank You" Letter (AHS-28/68(L)). Both the Advance Letter and the Thank You Letter state that all information respondents give to the Census Bureau employees is held in strict confidence by Title 13, United States Code. Each FR has taken an oath to this effect and is subject to a jail term, fine, or both, if he/she discloses any information given him/her.

The data collected under this agreement are confidential under Title 13, U.S.C., Section 9. Should HUD staff require access to Title 13 data from this survey to assist in the planning, data collection, data analysis, or production of final products, those staff members are required to obtain Census Bureau Special Sworn Status (SSS). They must demonstrate that they have suitable background clearance and they must take Title 13 Awareness Training.

Any access to Title 13 data at HUD is subject to prior approval by the Census Bureau's Data Stewardship Executive Policy Committee upon assurance that the HUD facility and information technology security meet Census Bureau requirements.

### 11. Justification for Sensitive Questions –

Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

The survey does not include any questions of a sensitive nature.

### 12. Estimate of Hour Burden

We estimate the respondent burden hours to be about rounded 62,524 hours. Please refer to the table on the following page for more detailed information.

Information Collection	Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Responses Per Annum	Burden Hour Per Response	Annual Burden Hours	Hourly Cost Per Response	Annual Cost
Occupied Interviews	86,392	once	once	.66	57,019	\$0	\$0
Vacant Interviews	12,325	once	once	.33	4,067	\$0	\$0
Non-interviews	17,399	once	once	0	0	\$0	\$0
Ineligible	4,723	once	once	0	0	\$0	\$0
Reinterviews	8,458	once	once	.17	1,438	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,297</b>				<b>62,524</b>		<b>\$0</b>

### 13. Estimate of Cost Burden

HUD assumes a wage rate of \$7.25 per hour reflects the level of expertise required to answer the AHS question. This wage rate is equivalent to the Federal minimum wage. Using this wage rate, the annualized cost estimate to respondents for burden hours is \$453,299.

### 14. Cost to Federal Government

HUD estimates the 2-year survey cycle costs to the government for the 2017 AHS, including 10 metropolitan areas, to be \$63.6 million.

Cost Items	FY 2016	FY2017	Total
Professional Staff	\$11,000,000	\$11,000,000	\$22,000,000

Field Data Collection		\$40,72,4720	\$40,72,4720
Technology	\$0	\$866,000	\$866,000
TOTAL	\$11,000,000	\$52,590,720	\$63,590,720

The figures above are based on the following factors.

- For professional staff, the estimates are based on actual money spent in FY 2016 and budgeted “not-to-exceed” amounts for FY 2017. Professional staff include survey methodologists, statisticians, computer programmers and other IT support, communications specialists and managers.
- For field data collection, projected costs reflect “not-to-exceed” amounts. The projected costs are provided by the Census Bureau’s field case management cost projection model. The cost projection model uses information on costs from prior surveys (including, but not limited to, the AHS), specifications for the current AHS, and current local and regional labor rates.
- Technology costs include purchase and maintenance of laptops. This estimate is provided by the Census Bureau and reflects a cost-sharing portion of the Census Bureau’s annual technology costs CAPI-based surveys. All surveys using CAPI share in the cost of technology.

## 15. Reason for Change in Burden

We expect the respondent burden to decrease, because the sample size in 2017 is smaller than in 2015.

The sample will be split into two groups. Fifty percent of the sample will be asked the Commuting module. The other 50 percent will be asked the Disaster Planning module. This will maximize the number of rotating modules that can be included while not increasing overall response burden.

## 16. Project Schedule

The Census Bureau has scheduled the majority of 2017 field enumeration for the AHS survey to begin May 1 and end August 25, 2017. The entire reinterview data collection will span May 15 through September 8, 2017. The projected release date of the National and Metropolitan public use files (PUFs) is summer 2018. When processing the data, the Census Bureau usually implements basic data edits to ensure consistency. In some cases, statistical models are used to allocate for missing values, such as values for income, utility cost, etc. Allocated values can be identified by analysts with the help of variables that are included in the data set that tag such edits. We also create new variables by collapsing or combining questions in the survey. We expect to reduce time slightly through continued streamlining and technological advances.

HUD and the Census Bureau will issue press releases and/or product announcements when releasing the PUFs, as well as reports containing a summary of the data collected as agreed upon with HUD. The summary tables will provide selected statistics at the national level involved. The Department of Commerce or HUD may release other publications. Custom tables will be made available through the AHS Table Creator.

The data being disseminated and released are not individually identifiable and will have been cleared for release/dissemination by the Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board.

#### **17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date**

The OMB number and expiration date will be included on the AHS-26/66(L) Advance Letter. Because the questionnaire is an automated instrument, the respondent will not see the OMB number and expiration date.

#### **18. Exceptions to the Certificate**

There are no exceptions.

## **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

### **B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

#### **1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

The 2017 AHS sample will consist of 120,828 sample housing units. The table below describes the different parts of the sample.

<b>Sample Part Description</b>	<b>Exact Sample Size (number of housing units)</b>
National cases representative of the U.S.	34,392
Top 15 metro oversample that include approximately 3,000 units each. Some metros will have a bit less than 3,000 housing units while some will have a bit more than 3,000 housing units	45,285
Subsidized-renter oversample	5,202
Bridge sample	5,956
10 metropolitan areas that include approximately 3,000 units each. Some metros will have a bit less than 3,000 housing units while some will have a bit more than 3,000 housing units	29,993
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120,828</b>

Please refer to the attached 2017 AHS Sample Design and Weighting document for detailed statistical methodology.

## **2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

We expect that a majority of interviews will be conducted through personal visit. However, we will conduct a phone match to retrieve phone numbers that match the sample addresses and attempt to collect the data by telephone interview, when possible.

## **3. Methods to Maximize Response**

Based on the 84.36 percent weighted response rate of the 2015 AHS (84.69 percent unweighted), the Census Bureau expects the 2017 AHS response rate to be 84 percent. If an occupant is reluctant to participate, the FR informs the regional office staff, who sends a follow-up letter explaining the survey in greater detail and urging the occupant's cooperation. A Census Bureau FR or his/her supervisor will contact the occupant again.

## **4. Testing Procedures**

The Census Bureau conducted a test of the interview forms and procedures in September 1983 and again in 1994 and 1995. Based on the results of the tests, HUD made modifications and changes.

In 2004, HUD and the Census Bureau conducted a major review of the survey questions for neighborhood quality, income, utility costs, and renter subsidies, making changes to each to improve the quality of this information. In October 2004, we tested these changes in a live hot house test held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In 2010, questions in the updated Mortgage module were cognitively tested by the Center for Survey Measurement (CSM) at the Census Bureau. We determined that more work needed to be done on the module, so we reverted to the 2009 AHS version and flow of questions where the 2011 version fell short.

In 2014, HUD and the Census Bureau conducted an exhaustive review of the core questionnaire content. We revised questions, changed the order, and eliminated some questions based on nonresponse rates and respondent burden. Because of these changes, questions in some of the core modules, e.g., Breakdown, Neighborhood Quality, Equipment, Home Improvement, Recent Movers, Income, and Mortgage, needed to be tested for implementation in the 2017 questionnaire.

In 2016, along with minor revisions to the core content, questions in the new rotating topical modules, Commuting, Disaster Planning and Evictions, were cognitively reviewed by CSM. The Census Bureau and HUD reviewed and discussed all of CSM's recommendations.

## **5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

HUD consulted the following individuals on the statistical data collection and analysis operation:

Tamara Cole  
Associate Directorate for Demographic Programs  
U.S. Census Bureau  
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