

TPOPS-742-1 (L)
(12-2013)

A message from the Director, U.S. Census Bureau...

We are requesting your help with an important survey—the Telephone Point of Purchase Survey. The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this survey for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Your responses to the Telephone Point of Purchase Survey (TPOPS) help update the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI is the most important tool used to measure how fast prices are rising or declining. It directly affects wages, pensions, and the cost of goods and services. To measure that change, the CPI monitors prices at the places where you, and other people like you, shop. We identify those places through TPOPS.

Your participation in this survey is essential and is a service to your community; however, you may choose to decline to answer any particular question. Federal law authorizes the collection of this information (Titles 13 and 29 of the United States Code), and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA) requires us to keep all information you provide strictly confidential, and to use that information for statistical purposes only.

Sometime in the next few weeks, a Census Bureau representative will call you to ask about a few purchases your household may have made recently and the places where you made these purchases. We hope that you will consider the importance of your participation in this survey.

On the back of this letter are answers to questions you may have about TPOPS. If you would like more information about the survey, types of questions you will be asked, or how to verify that the person calling is a Census Bureau employee, please go to the CPI-TPOPS respondent website: <http://www.bls.gov/respondents/cpi/tpops/>

Thank you for your cooperation in this important survey. We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

John H. Thompson
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Census Bureau calling me? I thought they only operated every ten years.

In addition to the decennial census, we collect data on a monthly basis. We collect these data to provide up-to-date information on topics such as unemployment, spending, family income, housing, manufacturing, and business activities to track the country's economy.

What is this survey about?

The Telephone Point of Purchase Survey provides information on the stores and businesses where people shop and on the products they buy. This information updates the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or the "cost of living index."

How will the information be used?

In order for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to update the CPI, it is necessary to maintain an up-to-date list of the stores and businesses where people shop. The U.S. Census Bureau conducts TPOPS to provide statistical data needed to update this list. Your voluntary response is essential for ensuring that this survey's results are complete and accurate.

Why was I selected? Why not interview someone else?

Through a scientific sampling process, a phone number associated with your household was selected randomly from a list of phone numbers. We did not select you personally. Your household represents hundreds of other households in your region, so your participation in the survey is important.

What confidentiality protection do I have?

The confidentiality of the information you provide is assured to the full extent permitted by law in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 5 of Public Law 107-347). The information you provide will only be used for statistical purposes.

What laws authorize you to conduct this survey?

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved this survey and assigned it Control Number 1220-0044. Title 29, Section 2 of the United States Code authorizes the BLS to conduct household studies. Title 13, Section 8 of the United States Code authorizes the Census Bureau to conduct surveys for other federal agencies.

How long does the interview take?

You will be interviewed once a quarter for eight quarters; the typical interview lasts between 10 and 20 minutes.

If you have any comments regarding the burden estimates or any other aspect of this survey, including suggestions for reducing this burden, please send them to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Consumer Price Index, Room 3615, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, DC 20212. Additional contact information can be found at <http://www.bls.gov/respondents/cpi/tpops/>