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## Cognitive Interview Guide CPS-VS

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### *Materials to Take to Interviews*

- Cognitive Interview Guide
- Handouts/Showcards
- CPS and CPS-VS Supplement Questions and Debriefing

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Office of Survey Methods Research. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. We know you are busy and we appreciate your time and willingness to help.

We are testing new content for the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of households. It provides a comprehensive body of data on the labor force, employment, unemployment, persons not in the labor force, hours of work, earnings, and other demographic and labor force characteristics. They are looking to make changes to their supplement on Veterans, which collects data on the labor force, employment, and unemployment statistics for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces by period of service and service-connected disability.

Before new survey questions are asked, it's important to test them out with the help of people such as yourself, to make sure that they make sense, are easy to follow, and that everyone understands them in the same way. Outcomes from our discussion will enable us to improve the questions and the instructions to capture the most accurate data possible. There are no right or wrong answers; we're looking for your reactions and honest feedback. Your name will not be included in the report, and nothing that you say will be attributed directly to you.

### **II. CONFIDENTIALITY and INFORMED CONSENT FORMS**

Read Attachment F

Are you ok with this?

### **III. RESPONDENT INFORMATION**

The CPS is a household survey, so we need to know who is in your household. Please tell me the first name or an initial of everyone who lives in your household and what that person's relationship is to you, starting with yourself.

*For each person in the household:*

- How old are you/is she/he?
- What is the highest level of school completed or highest degree you/he/she have/has received?
- (if >=17) Have you/Has she/he ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

- (If served) When did you/he/she serve?
  - o SEPTEMBER 2001 OR LATER
  - o AUGUST 1990 TO AUGUST 2001
  - o MAY 1975 TO JULY 1990
  - o VIETNAM ERA (AUGUST 1964 TO APRIL 1975)
  - o FEBRUARY 1955 TO JULY 1964
  - o KOREANWAR (JULY 1950 TO JANUARY 1955)
  - o JANUARY 1947 TO JUNE 1950
  - o WORLDWAR II (DECEMBER 1941 TO DECEMBER 1946)
  - o NOVEMBER 1941 OR EARLIER
- (If served) Are you/Is he/Is she now in the Armed Forces?

HH Member	Relationship	Age	Highest Edu	Vet/PEAFWHN	Current AF
	Self				

#### IV. LABOR FORCE AND SUPPLEMENT INTERVIEW

*\*Interviewer take note how long it takes participant to complete the supplement*

Please answer the following questions about [yourself/FILL with Veteran's name if proxy response]. Please imagine that you are at home and you are talking to me, the CPS interviewer, over the telephone.

LF1 Last week, did [you/NAME] do any work for pay?

- 1 - Yes GOTO LF2
- 2 - No GOTO LF3
- 3 - Retired GOTO LF3
- 4 - Disabled GOTO LF3
- 5 - Unable to work GOTO LF3

LF2 (IF LF1 = YES)

What kind of work (do you/does NAME) do, that is, what is (your/his/her) occupation?  
*Record verbatim response*

LF3 (IF LF1 = NO, RETIRED, DISABLED, UNABLE TO WORK)

What are all of the things you have done to find work during the last 4 weeks?

- 1 - Contacted employer directly/interview
- 2 - Contacted public employment agency
- 3 - Contacted private employment agency
- 4 - Contacted friends or relatives
- 5 - Contacted school/university empl center
- 6 - Sent out resumes/filled out application
- 7 - Checked union/professional registers



- 3 - Navy GOTO S7  
 4 - Marine Corps GOTO S7  
 5 - Coast Guard GOTO S7
- S7 Was your LAST period on active duty a result of a call-up from the Reserve or National Guard?  
 1 - Yes GOTO S8  
 2 - No GOTO S7
- S8 IF LAST PERIOD WAS RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD (S6 = 1)  
 Was that the Reserve or National Guard?  
 1 - Reserve GOTO S11  
 2 - National Guard GOTO S11
- S9 (IF LAST ACTIVE DUTY WAS NOT RESERVE NATIONAL GUARD S8 = 2)  
 Was any of your active service the result of a call-up from the Reserve or National Guard?  
 1 - Yes GOTO S11  
 2 - No GOTO S10
- S10 (IF NO RESPONSES SO FAR INDICATE RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD S5 or S7)  
 Have you ever been a member of the Reserve or National Guard?  
 1 - Yes GOTO S10  
 2 - No GOTO S12
- S11 Are you currently a member of the Reserve or National Guard?  
 1 - Yes GOTO S12  
 2 - No GOTO S12
- S12 (IF NOW IN THE ARMED FORCES = NO)  
 Earlier it was reported that you are no longer in the Armed Forces. Did you separate from the Armed Forces more than 10 years ago, that is before December 31, 2010?  
 1 - Yes GOTO S13  
 2 - No GOTO S13
- S13 What was your rank at separation?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO D1
- D1 Has the Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Defense determined that you have a service-connected disability; that is, a health condition or impairment caused or made worse by military service?  
 1 - Yes GOTO D2  
 2 - No GOTO T1
- D2 What is your current service-connected VA disability rating?  
 1 - 0 percent GOTO D3  
 2 - 1-29 percent GOTO D3  
 3 - 30-49 percent GOTO D3  
 4 - 50-69 percent GOTO D3  
 5 - 70-99 percent GOTO D3

- 6 - 100 percent                      GOTO D3
- D3     Do you currently receive a monthly payment for a service connected disability from either the VA or a branch of the military service?  
 1 - Yes GOTO D4  
 2 - No GOTO D4
- D4     (IF DISABILITY RATING D2 = 1-5)  
 Do you receive Individual Unemployability from the VA, or has the VA found you to be unemployable?  
 1 - Yes GOTO D4a  
 2 - No GOTO D5
- D4a1   (IF RECEIVE INDIVIDUAL UNEMPLOYABILITY, D4 = 1)  
 Are you working anyway?  
 1 - Yes GOTO D4a2  
 2 - No GOTO D5
- D4a2   (IF WORKING ANYWAY D4a1=1)  
 For what reasons are you working?  
*Enter verbatim response*
- D5     Did your service connected disability ever prevent you from getting or holding a job in the past?  
 1 - Yes GOTO D6  
 2 - No GOTO T1
- D6     Does this disability currently keep you from getting or holding a job?  
 1 - Yes GOTO D7  
 2 - No GOTO T1
- D7     (IF CURRENTLY NOT EMPLOYED AND DUE TO DISABILITY D8=1)  
 What was the last year during which you worked at a job or business?  
*Enter year*                      GOTO T1
- E1     (IF REPORTED DON'T KNOW TO YEAR LAST RELEASED ACTIVE DUTY S5)  
 Earlier it was reported that you are no longer on active duty. Were you released from active duty more than 10 years ago, that is before December 31, 2010?  
 1 - Yes OR YEAR OF RELEASE MORE THAN 10 YEARS AGO - GOTO T1  
 2 - No GOTO E2
- E2     Since LAST leaving active duty, have you ever used any employment services to assist with preparing for or finding a job?  
 1 - Yes GOTO T3  
 2 - No GOTO T6
- E3     (IF USED ANY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE T1=1)  
 Which services did you use? Please select all that apply.  
*Read each item on the list.*  
 1 - Veterans Administration website or center                      GOTO E4

- 2 - State workforce or employment website or office GOTO E4  
 3 - Non-profit organization – please specify GOTO E4  
 4 - Other – please specify GOTO E4
- E4 (IF USED VA T3=1)  
 Which types of VA employment services did you use at least once? Please select all that apply.  
 1 - Web-based services GOTO E5  
 2 - Telephone services GOTO E5  
 3 - In-person services GOTO E5
- E5 (IF USED STATE T3=2)  
 Which types of State employment services did you use at least once? Please select all that apply.  
 1 - Web-based services GOTO E6  
 2 - Telephone services GOTO E6  
 3 - In-person services GOTO E6
- E6 (IF USED ANY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE E2 = 1 AND NOT STATE E3 ne 2)  
 You reported not using your state’s employment office. Why did you choose not to?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO E7
- E7 Since LAST leaving active duty, have you tried to obtain ANY formal job training or job-related schooling?  
 1 - Yes GOTO T8  
 2 - No GOTO T12
- E8 What type of training or schooling was it?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO E9
- E9 (IF TRIED E7 = 1)  
 Did you find training or schooling that met your needs?  
 1 - Yes GOTO E10  
 2 - No GOTO E12
- E10 Were you able to complete the training or schooling?  
 1 - Yes GOTO E12  
 2 - No GOTO E11
- E11 What was the main reason you weren’t able to complete the training or schooling?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO E12
- E12 How useful would additional training, school, or an apprenticeship be for finding new employment or improving your current employment situation?  
 1 – Very useful GOTO E13  
 2 – Somewhat useful GOTO E13  
 3 – Not at all useful GOTO E13
- E13 (IF TRAINING USEFUL E11 = 1 or 2)  
 Currently, would you prefer training, school, or an apprenticeship?  
 1 - Training GOTO T1  
 2 - School GOTO T1  
 3 - Apprenticeship GOTO T1

- T1 Did you retire from the Armed Forces?  
1 - Yes GOTO T1a  
2 - No GOTO T2
- T1a Did you retire due to a medical reason, length of service, or some other reason?  
1 - Medical reason GOTO T2  
2 - Length of service GOTO T2  
3 - Other reasons – please specify GOTO T2
- T2 What was your military occupational specialty, or MOS, at separation?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO T2a
- T2a Do you consider this your primary MOS?  
1 - Yes GOTO T3  
2 - No GOTO T2b
- T2b (IF NOT PRIMARY MOS T2a = 2)  
What was your primary MOS?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO T3
- T3 Did you apply for civilian employment, before or immediately upon separation?  
1 - Yes GOTO T4  
2 - No GOTO T3a
- T3a Did you not want a job, return to a previous job, or something else?  
1 - Not want a job GOTO T4  
2 - Return to a previous job GOTO T4  
3 - Something else – please specify GOTO T4
- T4 How soon after separation were you offered a civilian job that you eventually accepted?  
*Do not read list aloud; select best response*  
1 - Before separation GOTO T4a  
2 - Within 2 weeks GOTO T4a  
3 - Within 2-4 weeks GOTO T4a  
4 - Within 1-3 months GOTO T4a  
5 - More than 4 months GOTO T4a  
6 - Have not been offered a civilian job GOTO T6
- T4a (IF EMPLOYED and OFFERED A CIVILIAN JOB T3 = 1)  
Is this the same job you have now?  
1 - Yes GOTO T5  
2 - No GOTO T5
- T5 (IF OFFERED A CIVILIAN JOB T3 = 1)  
Compared to your expectations, how long did it take to find that job?  
1 - Much longer than expected GOTO T5a  
2 - Somewhat longer than expected GOTO T5a

- 3 - About as long as expected GOTO T5a  
 4 - Somewhat faster than expected GOTO T5a  
 5 - Much faster than expected GOTO T5a
- T5a (IF OFFERED A CIVILIAN JOB T3 = 1)  
 Compared to your expectations, how high [are/were] the wages for that job?  
 1 - Much higher than expected GOTO T5b  
 2 - Somewhat higher than expected GOTO T5b  
 3 - About the same as expected GOTO T5b  
 4 - Somewhat lower than expected GOTO T5b  
 5 - Much lower than expected GOTO T5b
- T5b (IF OFFERED A CIVILIAN JOB T3 = 1)  
 Compared to your expectations, how long [are/were] the work hours for that job?  
 1 - Much longer than expected GOTO T6  
 2 - Somewhat longer than expected GOTO T6  
 3 - About as long as expected GOTO T6  
 4 - Somewhat faster than expected GOTO T6  
 5 - Much faster than expected GOTO T6
- T6 What was the main reason you moved to the first town or city you moved to after separation?  
 1 - Change in marital/relationship status GOTO T6A  
 2 - To move into own apartment or house GOTO T6A  
 3 - Other family-related reason GOTO T6A  
 4 - New job or job transfer GOTO T6A  
 5 - To look for work or lost job GOTO T6A  
 6 - To be closer to work or school GOTO T6A  
 7 - Other job-related reason GOTO T6A  
 8 - Wanted to own home, not rent GOTO T6A  
 9 - Wanted a better quality apartment or house GOTO T6A  
 10 - Wanted a better neighborhood GOTO T6A  
 11 - Cheaper housing GOTO T6A  
 12 - Other housing-/neighborhood-related reason GOTO T6A  
 13 - Disaster loss (fire, flood, hurricane, etc) GOTO T6A  
 14 - Eviction/foreclosure GOTO T6A  
 15 - Always lived here (never moved) GOTO T6A  
 16 - Other reason (specify) GOTO T6A
- T6a Is that the same town or city where you live now?  
 1 - Yes GOTO T5  
 2 - No GOTO T6b
- T6b (IF NOT SAME TOWN T6a = 2)  
 What was the main reason you moved to the town or city where you live now?  
 1 - Change in marital/relationship status GOTO T7  
 2 - To move into own apartment or house GOTO T7  
 3 - Other family-related reason GOTO T7  
 4 - New job or job transfer GOTO T7  
 5 - To look for work or lost job GOTO T7  
 6 - To be closer to work or school GOTO T8  
 7 - Other job-related reason GOTO T7



- 8 - Wanted to own home, not rent GOTO T7  
 9 - Wanted a better quality apartment or house GOTO T7  
 10 - Wanted a better neighborhood GOTO T7  
 11 - Cheaper housing GOTO T7  
 12 - Other housing-/neighborhood-related reason GOTO T7  
 13 - Disaster loss (fire, flood, hurricane, etc) GOTO T7  
 14 - Eviction/foreclosure GOTO T7  
 15 - Always lived here (never moved) GOTO T7  
 16 - Other reason (specify) GOTO T7
- T7 (IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED)  
 Do you feel 'underemployed', that is, do you believe that a different job would be a better fit for your skills, education, and experience?  
 1 - Yes GOTO T8  
 2 - No GOTO T8
- T8 (IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED)  
 Do you use the technical skills that you acquired in your military occupation in your current civilian job?  
 1 - Yes GOTO T9  
 2 - No GOTO T9
- T9 Overall, do you feel that your military service has improved your ability to work as a civilian?  
 1 - Yes GOTO T10  
 2 - No GOTO T10
- T10 At what age do you plan to retire from the workforce?  
*Enter number* GOTO G1
- G1 Are you currently receiving any military or government benefits?  
 1 - Yes GOTO G2  
 2 - No GOTO G2
- G2 What benefits?  
*Enter verbatim response* GOTO G3
- G3 Did you receive any GI Bill benefits?  
 1 - Yes GOTO G4  
 2 - No GOTO G4
- G4 (IF RECEIVED GI G3 = YES)  
 How have you used the benefits or how do you plan to use them? Select all that apply.  
 1 - For self GOTO G5  
 2 - For a child GOTO G5  
 3 - For a spouse GOTO G5  
 4 - For another dependent GOTO G5
- G5 Earlier it was reported that your highest level of education is [FILL]. Was that degree awarded before or after you separated from the military?

- 1 - Before separation GOTO G6
- 2 - After separation GOTO G7

G6 Was the degree awarded before you entered military service?

- 1 - Before entered military GOTO G7
- 2 - After entered military GOTO G7

G7 (IF MARRIED AT SOME POINT, PEMARTL ne NEVER MARRIED)

Earlier it was reported that you are married or have been married in the past. Were you married at any time while you were serving in the Armed Forces?

- 1 - Yes GOTO G8
- 2 - No GOTO G8

G8 During or at any time after your military service, did your spouse or ex-spouse experience any trouble finding or keeping a job that he or she wanted, or enrolling in school or training?

- 1 - Yes GOTO DONE
- 2 - No GOTO DONE

DONE That's the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your responses.

## V. DEBRIEFING

Thanks for your answers so far. Now I want to go talk about some of the questions individually, so we can get your feedback on the questions and understand what you were thinking when you answered them.

- What did you think of the questions?
- What was your reaction to the questions?
- Did any of those questions stand out to you for any reason?
- [Proxy] Do you think that you were generally able to answer the questions correctly for [Fill Veteran's name]?
- [Proxy] Which questions were most difficult to answer for [Fill Veteran's name]?

### Time in Military (Section S)

Let's look at the first few questions about your time in the military (show handout) -

- Did any of those questions stand out to you for any reason?
- Did you have any difficulties in answering these questions?
  - If yes, which questions? Why?
- [Proxy] Do you think that you were generally able to answer the questions correctly for the other people in your household? Which ones were most difficult?
- Probe on difficulty providing Reserve/National Guard status.
- Probe on difficulty talking about last period of active duty.
- Probe on difficulty providing length of active duty.

### Disability (Section D)

Next, let's look at the section on disability (show handout) -

- Did any of those questions stand out to you for any reason?
- Did you have any difficulties in answering these questions?

- o If yes, which questions? Why?
- [Proxy] Do you think that you were generally able to answer the questions correctly for the other people in your household? Which ones were most difficult?
- Probe on reasons for still working - are there any other examples we are missing?
- How easy or difficult was it for you to provide your current connected VA disability rating?
- Probe on whether familiar with the term “Individual Unemployability”.

### Employment (Section E)

Next, let’s look at the questions about civilian employment (show handout) -

- Did any of those questions stand out to you for any reason?
- Did you have any difficulties in answering these questions?
  - o If yes, which questions? Why?
- In this section, we ask about “state workforce system”, what does this term mean to you?
- Do you think we are missing any reasons for someone to visit a state workforce or employment service office?
- Do you think we are missing any other potential strategies you may have used to find a job?
- Probe on what types of training/schooling they obtained or did not obtain.
- We asked about web-based services, telephone services, and in-person services, can you provide some examples of specific services you were thinking of when answering this question?
- Probe on if the strategies were useful for identifying, applying, getting, and/or obtaining training.
- [Proxy] Do you think that you were generally able to answer the questions correctly for the other people in your household? Which ones were most difficult?

### Transition (Section T)

Next let’s look at the questions about benefits (show handout) -

- Did any of those questions stand out to you for any reason?
- Did you have any difficulties in answering these questions?
  - o If yes, which questions? Why?
- [Proxy] Do you think that you were generally able to answer the questions correctly for the other people in your household? Which ones were most difficult?
- How difficult or easy was it for you to provide your MOS?
- Did your MOS change at any point of your service in the military?
- Probe on transition timeline, whether the categories offered were reasonable
- Probe on questions about expectations for length of time to find a job, wages, work hours – are these the right concepts for assessing overall satisfaction? How should we ask about these concepts?
- Probe on reasons for moving.
- Probe on meaning of the terms “underemployed” and “technical skills”.

### Benefits and Post-Separation (Section G)

Next let’s look at the questions about benefits (show handout) -

- Did any of those questions stand out to you for any reason?

- Did you have any difficulties in answering these questions?
  - If yes, which questions? Why?
- [Proxy] Do you think that you were generally able to answer the questions correctly for the other people in your household? Which ones were most difficult?
- Probe on whether difficult to report when degree awarded.
- Probe on who they transferred the GI benefits to, make note if it is multiple people.
- Probe on which military or government benefits they are thinking of.
- Probe on difficulties a military spouse could encounter.

## **VI. WRAP UP AND CLOSING**

And now to wrap up -

- Overall, what is your impression of the survey? Did you think it was worded clearly for someone like you to answer?
- What did you think about the flow of the survey?
- Were there any questions in this survey that you think some people might find sensitive?
- Were there any questions in this survey that you think some people might find difficult?
- Is there anything you would like to see changed or improved in the survey?
- Is there anything that we have not already discussed that you would like to share?

Those are all of the questions that I have for you today.

Thank you for your time.