

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
**U.S. Age Search Service**  
**OMB Control No. 0607-0117**

**A – Justification**

**1. Necessity of Information Collection**

The U.S. Census Bureau requests clearance for an extension of the currently approved collection for the United States Age Search Service. The purpose of this service is to provide, upon request, transcripts of personal data from historical population census records. Information relating to age, place of birth, and citizenship is provided upon payment of the established fee to individuals for their use in qualifying for Social Security, old age benefits, retirement, court litigation, passports, insurance settlements, etc. The age and citizenship searching service provided by the National Processing Center and is a self-supporting operation of the U.S. Census Bureau. Expenses incurred in providing census transcripts are covered by the fees paid by individuals requesting a search of the census records.

The Fiscal Services Office/Personal Census Search Unit in Jeffersonville, Indiana, maintains the 1910-2010 Federal censuses for searching purposes. The census records maintained in this unit are confidential by an Act of Congress. Section 8(a) of Title 13 authorizes the collection of this data. The Census Bureau is prohibited by federal law from disclosing any information contained in the records, except upon written request from the person to whom the information pertains or to a legal representative.

The following forms are used:

a. *BC-600 and BC-600(SP) “Application for Search of Census Records”* (see attachments A and B).

Form BC-600 and BC-600(SP), “Application for Search of Census Records” is a public use form that is submitted by applicants requesting information from the decennial census records. The average annual usage of this form is 2,426. The application is also available in the Spanish language.

b. *BC-649(L), “Not Found” Form* (see attachment C)

The BC-649(L), which is called a “Not Found,” advises the applicant that search for information from the census records was unsuccessful. The form also advises the applicant that new or corrected information must be provided if further searches of the records are desired. A variety of footnotes are used to specify the nature of the item required in order to proceed with the search. The average annual usage of this form is 449.

*c. BC-658(L), "Insufficient Information Received to Proceed with Search" (see attachment D)*

The BC-658(L) is sent to the applicant when insufficient information has been received on which to base a search of the census records. The form requests that the applicant provide the exact address of the place of residence including the name of the street and the number of the house, or the names of the cross streets between which the house is situated, and the name of the head of the household with whom the person was residing on a particular census date. The average annual usage of this form is 10.

## **2. Needs and Uses**

The Census Bureau uses the collection to locate the census record for individuals who use these data as proof of age to qualify for social security, old age benefits, retirement, passports, etc.

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

Currently, the Form BC-600 is available for printing purposes only on the Census Bureau's Internet website. Consideration is being given to changing requirements in the future so as to allow online application and payment. The system is not currently set up for electronic payment and transmission of the application. Other required documents, such as death certificates, power-of-attorney, guardianship, or executor appointment papers, present an obstacle to an automated collection.

## **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

Since these forms deal with protected individual census information, there is no duplication of the information collected.

## **5. Minimizing Burden**

Only essential information needed to locate the census record is requested.

## **6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

Federal programs such as those of the Social Security Administration and the U.S. Passport Office would be affected if this service were provided less frequently or not provided at all. These Federal programs accept official census transcripts from benefit

applicants as proof of age and citizenship and would need to find other acceptable sources of this proof.

## **7. Special Circumstances**

There are no special circumstances.

## **8. Consultation outside the agency**

The Census Bureau published a *Federal Register* notice inviting comments about the plans for extending approved collection on July 26, 2018 on pages 35457 - 35458. We received only one comment unrelated to this collection. The comment was related to the collection of citizenship status in the 2020 Census, which we forwarded to the Decennial directorate.

Because this form is long-standing with no significant changes, it is deemed that additional consultations are not necessary.

## **9. Paying Respondents**

Respondents are not paid and do not receive gifts.

## **10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 guarantees the confidentiality of the information. Respondents are informed in the instructions that census information is confidential and may only be released to the person to whom the information pertains or to a legal representative.

## **11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

No sensitive questions are asked.

## 12. Estimate of Hour Burden

It is estimated that 2,426 persons will request a census search each year. The estimate is based on the number of requests in past years. The following forms will be used to process requests:

<u>Form</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u># of Burden Requests</u>	<u>Minutes to complete</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>
BC-600 & BC-600(SP)	“Application for Search of Census Records”	2,426	12	485
BC-649(L)	“Not Found”	449	6	45
BC-658(L)	“Insufficient Information Received to Proceed with Search”	10	6	1
TOTAL		2,885		531

## 13. Estimate of Cost Burden

The respondent requesting a census search is required to pay a Congressionally-mandated fee. Our current fee is \$65 per search. The total annual cost burden would be \$167,394. Respondents have the option of paying an additional fee of \$20 to have their request expedited.

## 14. Cost to Federal Government

There are no costs to the Federal Government. All fees are paid by the applicants.

## 15. Reason for Change in Burden

The number of annual responses has increased from 2,483 to 2,885. Burden hours will, therefore, increase to 531.

## 16. Project Schedule

Collection is not done on any schedule. Individuals may submit applications at any time. Results are not published or tabulated.

## 17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

The Age Search forms have been in existence for many years with few changes. Stock of Age Search applications can be found outside of the Census Bureau, for example,

libraries, genealogical institutes, and passport agencies. Display of the expiration date on the forms would require these institutes to needlessly replenish the supply of forms when the date expires. Therefore, we request that the expiration date not appear on the forms.

### **18. Exceptions to the Certification**

There are no exceptions.

#### List of Attachments

- A. BC-600 “Application for Search of Census Records”
- B. BC-600(SP) “Application for Search of Census Records”
- C. BC-649(L) “Not Found Form”
- D. BC-658(L) “Insufficient Information Received to Proceed with Search Form”