

October 7, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR: REVIEWER of 1220-0189

FROM: Jennifer Coleman
Division Chief, National Compensation Survey
Office of Compensation and Working Conditions
Bureau of Labor Statistics

SUBJECT: Non-substantive Change Request for the
Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS)

Clearance is being sought for the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS) program to test the impact of a standardized contact letter on response rates.

The Information Collection for the ORS was initially approved by the of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on August 28, 2018. This clearance package covers the second three years of ORS collection, starting in 2018 and ending in 2021.

The current clearance does not include standardized introductory survey contact letters. The current practice is for field economists and regional office management to determine when to send an introductory letter to a respondent, and the language of such letters varies. BLS proposes testing the impact of mailing a standardized letter before or right after first field economist contact to determine what impact the letter will have on response rates.

The test involves sending a standardized contact letter to 380 private establishments. No other aspect of information collection is modified. Adding a standardized mailing will not impact approved respondent burden because the approved clearance hours already include time for explaining the survey to respondents. The letter is intended to reduce the amount of time the field economist spends providing this information in a non-standardized format, while providing the respondent more time to consider whether to participate and who would be the appropriate contact. Response rates for the group that receives the standardized mailing will be compared to response rates from the remaining sample of 360 private establishments. From this testing and evaluation, BLS will have information to determine if a standardized letter should be added to the collection process and included in the ORS clearance.

Attachment A is the text of the standardized letter that will be used in the test.

If you have any questions about this non-substantive change request, please contact Corinne Herr at 717-475-0399 or e-mail at Herr.Corinne@bls.gov, or Jennifer Coleman at 202-691-7128 or e-mail at Coleman.Jennifer@bls.gov

Attachment A: Standardized letter template for testing.