

**Department of Commerce  
United States Census Bureau**

**Paperwork Reduction Act Program**

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**Information Collection Request  
Current Population Survey, Fertility Supplement  
OMB Control Number 0607-0610**

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United States Census Bureau  
OMB Information Collection Request  
Supporting Statement Part A  
Current Population Survey (CPS) Fertility Supplement  
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**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary**

The Fertility Supplement is sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau, and is conducted biennially in conjunction with the June Current Population Survey (CPS). Attachment A illustrates the questions proposed, including questions on fertility (Items SF1 and SF2) and marital and cohabitation status (SF3a and SF3b) of females 15 to 50 years of age.

Title 13 United States Code, Sections 8(b), 141, and 182; and Title 29, United States Code, Section 2 authorize the collection of most of the information in this survey.

The CPS advance letter presently in use (Attachment B) is generic for all CPS collections, and cites the legal authorities stated above.

**2. Purpose and Use of Information Collection**

The data collected from this supplement are used primarily by government and private analysts to project future population growth, to analyze childbearing patterns, and to assist policymakers in making decisions that are affected by changes in family size and composition. Past studies have documented profound changes to historical patterns that have occurred in fertility rates, family structures, premarital births, and the timing of the first birth. The data collected from the “marital and cohabitation status items” will be used by government and private analysts to analyze mothers’ living situations at the time of the first birth; the data will also fill a need for information that is not available in other Census Bureau surveys.

The CPS characteristics, such as family income, household relationships, and labor force status, when matched with fertility data, can produce estimates of potential needs families may have for governmental assistance. For example, these needs include aid to families with dependent children, childcare, and maternal health care for single-parent households. The fertility data also assist researchers and analysts who explore such important issues as premarital childbearing and postponement of childbirth because of educational or occupational responsibilities and goals. As a result of the rapid changes in the economy, the June Fertility supplement offers analysts with a key indicator of family economic resources, namely, the employment status of women with

infant children.

Item SF1 establishes the number of children ever born, and Item SF2 asks in what year the **first** child was born. Fertility Items SF1 and SF2 have been a part of the June CPS Supplement annually or on a regular basis for over 40 years. Questions on marital and cohabitation status (SF3a and SF3b) have been asked biennially since 2012, and provide additional information about mothers' living arrangements at the time of the first birth.

Discontinuance of the Fertility Supplement would interrupt a data series, which is built upon previous surveys first collected in June 1971. Without current fertility data, data for the most recent female cohorts (age 18-24) would be missing in fertility projections. The statistics and projections from these data are useful for legislators in the public sector and businesses that make policy and resource decisions about childcare, development, and changes in family life.

Information quality 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 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**

We deem the use of personal visits and telephone interviews, using computer-assisted telephone interviewing and computer-assisted personal interviewing, the most appropriate collection methodology given existing available information technology. We are examining the Internet as a reporting option, but have not yet determined whether the Internet is feasible for a complex demographic survey such as the CPS.

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

The Census Bureau has consulted with other government agencies, such as the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) to develop the Fertility Supplement. The Census Bureau has investigated other Census Bureau surveys and determined that the data in this supplement are not collected in any other survey that could provide the user with comparable accuracy in detailed fertility patterns.

The American Community Survey (ACS), in an effort to reduce respondent burden, contains one fertility question that asks whether the women gave birth in the last year, which can only be compared to the previously collected 2008 and 2010 CPS June

Fertility Supplements. This provides needed data at state and local levels for planning purposes in examining the potential needs of mothers with newborns. However, the absence of a question on children ever born on the ACS means that we do not know parity of the birth--i.e., whether it was a first birth or higher order birth. In addition, the June Fertility Supplement can provide analysts with the ability to track childlessness over time, which provides an important measure of how family life has changed and resources needed by families differ by the childbearing experiences of American women. The American Community Survey does not provide these data.

The Fertility Supplement begins with two birth-related items. First, there is a question on how many children a woman has ever had, followed by the year of the first birth. This is followed by items on marital and cohabitation status at the time of first birth. Since the 2010 June Fertility Supplement, similar estimates of births in the last year as in the ACS (i.e., births that have occurred since the previous June), provided us with the birth order of the child and a duration specific estimate of when the woman last had a birth. In the June 2012 report (Attachment B2), the ACS question on women who had a recent birth permitted us to examine labor force patterns of women who had a birth in the last 12 months (see page 10) and were in the labor force (see Table 3). This is similar to the data we used to have in the CPS Fertility Supplement. The CPS Fertility Supplement data, however, will provide a look at completed fertility, changes in childlessness over time, and the living arrangement of the woman at the time of her first birth. None of these estimates can be made using ACS data.

The Fertility Supplement is the only source of data that provides a comprehensive set of historical analysis as described in item A2. No other data set collects these measures as regularly and as often as CPS, providing a long historical series of estimates.

Refer to Attachment B1 for a recent table using 2018 fertility data. For additional information published using the CPS Fertility Supplement, access the following link: <https://www.census.gov/topics/health/fertility.html>

Refer to Attachment B2 for the latest report published using estimates from the CPS data on fertility.

## **5. Minimizing Burden**

The collection of fertility information does not involve small businesses or other small entities.

We designed the supplemental questions to obtain the required information with minimal respondent burden. Further, there are no legal issues that influence respondent burden.

**6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

The June Fertility Supplement is conducted to determine current fertility rates for women in different socioeconomic groups and to project future population growth. If the collection of information was conducted less frequently, the fertility data would not be sufficiently monitored to accurately measure fertility events of women as they enter the ages when marriage and childbearing typically begin. Less frequent reporting would result in a distortion of segments of the population whose fertility backgrounds change most rapidly.

In addition, there would be no consistent measure of fertility characteristics of women who are graduating from school and entering the labor force.

**7. Consistency with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines**

The data will be collected in a manner consistent with the OMB guidelines.

**8. Consultations Outside the Agency/Comments in Response to the Federal Register**

The following person has been in frequent consultation since October 1997 concerning the development of this supplement:

Lynne Casper  
University of Southern California  
Department of Sociology  
3620 Vermont Avenue  
Kaprielian Hall, Room 352  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-2539

The result of these consultations is the final set of questions. In addition, a statement soliciting comments for improving the CPS data is prominently placed in all the Census Bureau publications that cite the CPS data.

We include a similar statement in the technical documentation that accompanies the microdata files. Finally, we published a notice of our intent to ask the fertility questions in the October 18, 2019, edition of the Federal Register (see 84 FR 55903, pages 55903-55904). We received one comment in response to the notice, stating a desire for increased efficiency and lower costs to taxpayers by combining the fertility questions with other federal surveys or the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will consider this comment for future collections, however, no action is taken at this time. The CPS advance letter (see attachment C) provides respondents with an address at the Census Bureau to which they can submit general comments on the survey and specifically those comments regarding respondent burden.

**9. Paying Respondents**

The Census Bureau does not make any payments or provide any gifts to individuals participating in the CPS and its monthly supplements.

**10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

The Census Bureau will comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the OMB Circular A-130 requirement in terms of notification to the respondent. Each sample household receives an advance letter approximately one week before the start of the CPS initial interview (see Attachment C). The letter includes the information required by the Privacy Act of 1974, explains the voluntary nature of the survey, and states the estimated time required for participating in the survey. Interviewers must ask if the respondent received the letter and, if not, provide a copy and allow the respondent sufficient time to read the contents. Also, interviewers provide households with the pamphlet, *The U.S. Census Bureau Respects Your Privacy and Protects Your Personal Information*, which further states the confidentiality assurances associated with this data collection effort and the Census Bureau's past performance in assuring confidentiality (see Attachment D).

All information given by respondents to Census Bureau employees is held in strict confidence under Title 13, United States Code, Section 9. Each Census Bureau employee has taken an oath to protect the confidentiality of respondents' data and is subject to a jail penalty and/or substantial fine if he or she discloses any information given to him or her.

**11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

The Fertility Supplement does not include any questions of a sensitive nature.

**12. Estimate of Hour Burden**

The estimated respondent burden is 500 hours. This is based on an average one-minute interview for each of the 30,000 women in the supplement universe.

The actual respondent burden is dependent upon the size of the household and the characteristics of its occupants. One respondent answers for the entire household.

**13. Other Costs to Respondents**

There are no costs to the respondents other than that of their time to respond.

**14. Cost to Federal Government**

The estimated cost of the School Enrollment Supplement, borne by the Census Bureau, is \$140,000.

**15. Reason for Change in Burden**

The change in burden hours is due to the reinstatement of the collection.

**16. Project Schedule**

We will conduct the CPS, of which this supplement is a part, during the week of June 14-20, 2020. Processing of this supplement will commence in July. The public use file will be released in the spring of 2021. Final reports will follow later that same year.

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

The Fertility Supplement is administered as part of the CPS monthly interview in June every two years. However, the supplement (as well as all the CPS supplements) bears an OMB control number and expiration date different from the basic CPS interview. The OMB control number for the CPS basic interview is included in the advance letter we give respondents (see Attachment C). Because of these complexities and the anticipated respondent confusion involved with expressing a separate control number and expiration date to respondents for the supplement questions, we request a waiver of the requirement to display the OMB control number and expiration date for the CPS Fertility Supplement.

**18. Exceptions to the Certification**

There are no exceptions to the certification.