

National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979

be the voice of your generation



Dear [Respondent Name],

As a participant in the NLSY79, you've helped make this study one of the most cited surveys in the country! This amazing accomplishment could not have been achieved without your continued cooperation and participation. And for that, we thank you.

After so many years of participation, you might ask “what exactly have I accomplished?” There is no easy, short answer to this question, and that is a testament to the large impact you have had. Over the years, this study has been used in more than 7,000 journal articles, theses, Ph.D. dissertations, and conference presentations. In addition, the NLSY79 has been cited in media outlets such as the Washington Post, the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, and the Los Angeles Times. Helping researchers better understand the needs of your generation has allowed our society to make informed decisions on policies that affect the labor market and the economy. As you reach retirement age and potentially leave the paid labor force, the NLSY79 will permit researchers to study key questions related to the causes and consequences of retirement and age-related health issues.

We follow the federal laws that govern the confidentiality of survey respondents, as well as additional policies and procedures that ensure your answers are safeguarded. Please see the back of this letter for more information about privacy and confidentiality. The average interview lasts about 80 minutes and you can schedule your appointment online as well as get extra cash with our **Early Bird** program! (See enclosed card for details.) To receive your gift faster, we offer electronic payment options through online or mobile banking and PayPal.

Because of your participation, just a little over an hour every two years, you've had a direct impact on the way our society understands some of the most critical issues impacting our country. Thanks for your contribution!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Groen
Director, National Longitudinal Surveys

WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT? Thanks to your help, policymakers and researchers will have a better understanding of the work experiences, family characteristics, health, financial status, and other important information about the lives of people in your generation. This is a voluntary study, and there are no penalties for not answering questions. However, missing responses make it more difficult to understand the issues that concern people in your community and across the country. Your answers represent the experiences of hundreds of other people your age. We hope we can count on your participation again this year.

WHO AUTHORIZES THIS STUDY? The sponsor of the study is the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The study is authorized under Title 29, Section 2, of the United States Code. The Center for Human Resource Research at The Ohio State University and NORC at the University of Chicago conduct this study under a contract with the Department of Labor. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the questionnaire and has assigned 1220-0109 as the study's control number. This control number expires on 09/30/2020. Without OMB approval and this number, we would not be able to conduct this study.

WHO SEES MY ANSWERS? We want to reassure you that your confidentiality is protected by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002, the Privacy Act, and other applicable Federal laws, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, its employees and agents, will, to the full extent permitted by law, use the information you provide for statistical purposes only, will hold your responses in confidence, and will not disclose them in identifiable form without your informed consent. All the employees who work on the survey at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and its contractors must sign a document agreeing to protect the confidentiality of your data. In fact, only a few people have access to information about your identity because they need that information to carry out their job duties.

Some of your answers will be made available to researchers at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other government agencies, universities, and private research organizations through publicly available data files. These publicly available files contain no personal identifiers, such as names, addresses, Social Security numbers, and places of work, and exclude any information about the States, counties, metropolitan areas, and other, more detailed geographic locations in which survey participants live, making it much more difficult to figure out the identities of participants. Some researchers are granted special access to data files that include geographic information, but only after those researchers go through a thorough application process at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Those authorized researchers must sign a written agreement making them official agents of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and requiring them to protect the confidentiality of survey participants. Those researchers are never provided with the personal identities of participants. The National Archives and Records Administration and the General Services Administration may receive copies of survey data and materials because those agencies are responsible for storing the Nation's historical documents.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE INTERVIEW TAKE? Based on preliminary tests, we expect the average interview to take about 80 minutes. Your interview may be somewhat shorter or longer depending on your circumstances. If you have any comments regarding this study or recommendations for reducing its length, send them to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Longitudinal Surveys, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, DC 20212.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION? To learn more about the survey, visit www.bls.gov/nls. To search for articles, reports, and other research based on the National Longitudinal Surveys, visit www.nlsbibliography.org.

