

**Addition of Questions to the Current Population
Survey – Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

Request for OMB approval

04-2020

Supporting Statement Section A

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) requests an emergency 180-day approval of an emergency Information Collection Request (ICR) to add five questions to the Current Population Survey (CPS) to collect data on the effects on the labor force of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. These CPS data will be collected monthly for 180 days. If BLS decides that the questions should remain in the CPS for a period longer than 180 days, a formal extension of this clearance will be sought through a revision to the currently approved Basic Labor Force: OMB Control Number 1220-0100 (which expires on January 31, 2021).

These questions will allow policy makers to evaluate how the job market is changing over time during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, these data will be tied to the key measures produced by the CPS, including the national unemployment rate and the labor force participation rate. These are among the first labor market indicators to appear each month, so having these questions about the effects from the COVID-19 pandemic included in the CPS will provide a timely picture of the changes occurring during this time.

Economic data will be used to inform policy decisions related to Americans affected by the pandemic.

Five questions are proposed for addition to the CPS:

1. At any time in the LAST 4 WEEKS, did (you/name) telework or work at home for pay BECAUSE OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC?
 2. At any time in the LAST 4 WEEKS, were (you/name) unable to work because (your/his/her) EMPLOYER CLOSED OR LOST BUSINESS due to the Coronavirus pandemic?
 3. Did (you/name) receive any pay from (your/his/her) EMPLOYER for the hours (you/he/she) DID NOT work in last 4 weeks?
 4. Did the Coronavirus pandemic prevent (you/name) from looking for work in the LAST 4 WEEKS?
 5. At any time in the last 4 weeks, did you or anyone in your household need medical care for something other than Coronavirus, but not get it because of the Coronavirus pandemic? Please include all adults and children in the household.
- 5a. Who was that? (Asked if “yes” is the response to question 5)

Note that the second question when asked in the May CPS will be slightly different in that it will exclude the word “pandemic.” This word will be added to the question prior to fielding in June and will appear in the question thereafter. For more details about these questions, see Attachment A.

These changes apply to the CPS Basic Labor Force: OMB Control Number 1220-0100. This control number expires on January 31, 2021.

The CPS is a nationally representative household sample survey that is conducted monthly for the BLS by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data from the CPS, including key metrics such as the national unemployment rate and the labor force participation rate, are among the first economic indicators to appear each month.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The purpose of adding questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic to the CPS is to facilitate the understanding of changes to the labor market during the COVID-19 pandemic. For information about the purpose and use of the questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, please see the attachment. BLS plans to produce tabulations of these data crossed by a variety of demographic and labor force characteristics.

For additional information on the purpose and uses of CPS data, see the currently approved Information Collection Request (ICR) for the CPS Basic Labor Force (OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. ICR 201706-1220-002).

3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

The questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic will be collected in the same manner as the CPS. See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information about the use of improved information technology.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

BLS staff in the CPS program have discussed the addition of these questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the CPS with staff from the Census Bureau and National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which can leverage the detailed demographic and labor force data already obtained through the CPS, will not be available with the same degree of quality from any other source. While other surveys are also adding questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, none provide the same degree of timeliness, comprehensiveness, versatility (through supplements), and data reliability. There is, therefore, no significant duplication of effort between the CPS and other surveys.

See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information about efforts to identify duplication of data that are provided through the CPS.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

The data are collected from households; their collection does not involve any small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

The BLS intends to add the supplemental questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic to the regular monthly collections of the CPS for the upcoming 180 days. The data will supplement the labor market information already collected in the CPS and will shed light on how the job market is evolving each month in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information on the consequences of collecting the CPS less frequently.

7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5

Collection of the CPS questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting data is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

A. Because this is a request for an emergency clearance, BLS asks that the 60-day comment period be waived at this time. However, BLS commits to publishing a 60-day Federal Register Notice (FRN) within 30 days of approval of this package announcing the emergency request and seeking comments on the additional questions. That 60-day FRN would also announce a potential revision to the CPS Basic Labor Force clearance if a period of collection beyond 180 days is deemed necessary.

The BLS has communicated with the Census Bureau and the NCHS in the development of the five questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. There are no known similar questions on a nationally representative monthly sample survey at this time.

B. During the development of the CPS questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, BLS has been in continuous consultation with two outside agencies:

Bureau of the Census

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Department of Commerce
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(301) 763-5482

National Center for Health Statistics

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Director, Division of Health Interview Statistics
 CDC/National Center for Health Statistics
 3311 Toledo Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782
 (301) 458-4107

C. See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information about agencies that were consulted about the CPS.

9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

There are no payments or gifts provided to respondents.

10. Protection of the Privacy and Confidentiality of Information Provided by Respondents

Data collected through the questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic will be protected in the same manner as other data collected in the CPS. See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information on how CPS data are protected.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The five questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic proposed for inclusion in the CPS are not of a sensitive nature and do not concern matters that are commonly considered private. See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information on how CPS data are protected.

12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

Estimates of Burden Hours for 180 Days:

Survey	Type of Respondent	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden Per Response (in hours)	Total Burden (in hours)
Current Population Survey	Household	49,500	6 (monthly)	2 min per household	9,900

Estimates of Cost Burden for 180 Days:

Survey	Total Burden Hours	Hourly Wage Rate	Respondent Cost
Current Population Survey	9,900	\$19.14	\$189,486

See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information on burden hours for the CPS.

13. Estimate of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no other annual costs to respondents other than their time to respond. See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information on the cost burden of the CPS.

14. Cost to the Federal Government for 180 Days

The cost to the federal government for the new COVID-19 questions is approximately \$180,000 for 180 days (6 monthly collections). Funding for these questions will be part of the annual agreement through which the BLS contracts with the Census Bureau to conduct the CPS. See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002 for information on the cost of the CPS to the federal government.

15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments

This collection is submitted as a new collection.

16. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

Following the BLS model with previous special data collections, such as the addition to the CPS of several questions after Hurricane Katrina, BLS plans to summarize the findings from the questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and make them available to the public as soon as is practicable. The raw data will also be released as public-use microdata files.

See OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No.201706-1220-002 for information on CPS publications.

17. Reason(s) Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

As with the CPS, the Census Bureau does not wish to display the assigned expiration date of the collection of the COVID-19 questions because the instrument is automated and the respondent, therefore, would never see the date. The advance letter sent to households by the Census Bureau contains Census's OMB clearance number for the CPS and Census's version of the failure to

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comply notice (Attachment E under OMB Control No. 1220-0100/ICR Reference No. 201706-1220-002). Copies of this advance letter are stockpiled by the Census Bureau for use as needed; changes to the letter would make the current inventory of letters unusable.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

There are no exceptions to the certification.