

*National Compensation Survey (NCS) – Supplemental questions related to sick leave policies during the Coronavirus pandemic*

*1220-New*

*Emergency Collection request*

*May 8, 2020*

**Supporting Statement for the Supplemental Questions to the National Compensation Survey related to sick leave policies during the Coronavirus pandemic**

**B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

**The existing NCS sample allocation, selection and estimation methods applied in OMB Clearance #1220-0164 (expiring April 2021) are modified for the NCS Emergency Collection of Supplemental Questions related to sick leave policies during the Coronavirus pandemic as noted in the following documentation.**

**1a. Universe**

There are no changes from the currently approved NCS ICR 1220-0164.

**1b. Sample**

**Supplemental Questions**

NCS Private Sector sampled establishments will be used to produce estimates for this product.

**2a. Sample Design**

**Supplemental Questions**

This is a one-time collection request, so there is no sample rotation or replenishment.

The sample for these supplemental questions is the NCS Private Sector sample groups used in estimation. State and local government sample units are excluded.

**2b. Estimation Procedure**

**Supplemental Questions**

These supplemental questions are categorical. National level estimates of the percentages of establishments that fall into a given category will be calculated at the establishment level. Other estimates, such as the percentage of establishments providing a specific change, will be computed using a base of only those establishments that made changes to their sick leave plans. Calculation of establishment weights and percentages will follow standard NCS practices.

**2c. Reliability**

**Supplemental Questions**

These units are covered by quality assurance processes under the NCS collection program. Given the limited scope of the data, and to be sensitive to the current pressures on respondents, there is no additional quality assurance contact for the emergency collection questions.

**2d. Data Collection Cycles**

*National Compensation Survey (NCS) – Supplemental questions related to sick leave policies during the Coronavirus pandemic*

*1220-New*

*Emergency Collection request*

*May 8, 2020*

NCS data are collected quarterly for all schedules.

**Supplemental Questions**

This is a one-time data request which will be collected during the regular quarterly collection timeframe of June 1, 2020 to July 31, 2020.

For further information on the sample and data collection procedures for the NCS please see currently approved ICR 1220-0164.

**3. Non-Response**

**Supplemental Questions**

Due to the Coronavirus-pandemic-related impact and closures, NCS temporary non-response for schedules in update status during the March 2020 quarter was 18%, and a non-response rate for newly initiated schedules at 25%. The non-response for this one-time request is expected to be similar, and may be higher since much of the NCS March collection occurred early in the month.

**3a. Maximize Response Rates**

**Supplemental Questions**

Email was the most effective method for collection of data under the existing NCS clearance in the March Quarter. 70 % of establishments that provided NCS data in the March quarter used email to provide at least part of their data.

The collection instrument will be sent to respondent email addresses that have been refined previously by field economists and used in the existing NCS survey. Many respondents are able to retrieve email easily when teleworking, and the questions are designed to be understood without detailed explanation. Respondents are expected to generally provide data through email. Field economists will provide an option to respond via telephone to respondents who normally provide NCS data through this method.

While no quality assurance re-contact will be made, limited non-response turnaround may be performed if necessary to meet publication criteria. This is in recognition of the additional demands on respondents at this time.

**3b. Non-Response Adjustment**

**Supplemental Questions**

Non-response will be divided into categories for the special data collection. Unit non-response will be treated using a methodology that may include a combination of NRAF and benchmark factors. No adjustment will be made to impute missing data for item non-response.

*National Compensation Survey (NCS) – Supplemental questions related to sick leave policies during the Coronavirus pandemic*

*1220-New*

*Emergency Collection request*

*May 8, 2020*

### **3c. Non-Response Bias Research**

#### **Supplemental Questions**

The data elements are closely related to data currently collected, and non-response is expected to follow known patterns.

For additional information on NCS nonresponse procedures please see currently approved ICR collection for 1220-0164.

### **4. Testing Procedures**

#### **4a. Tests of Collection Procedures**

#### **Supplemental Questions**

Expert review of the questionnaire was completed by the BLS Office of Survey Methods and Research (OSMR).

The questions fielded are closely related to sick leave data currently collected in the NCS under ICR #1220-0164. The distinction is these questions focus on changes specifically made in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, and ask about sick leave usage within a specific window instead of an annual average. They are also collected via a standardized questionnaire instead of by a field economist.

The respondents for this survey are existing NCS respondents who provide benefits data each quarter. Standard collection methodology includes asking if there are changes to sick leave plans, and details about the provisions and any resulting changes in how many days are used. During the December 2019 and March 2020 collection cycles, NCS focused on validating existing sick leave plans and improving item non-response. As a result, the concepts of paid/unpaid sick leave plans and employee usage have been recently reviewed with respondents. Office of Field Operations staff have current knowledge about collecting sick leave data that was used to develop these questions and create response categories that minimize burden and maximize response.

#### **4b. Tests of Survey Design Procedures**

For further information on testing procedures for the NCS, please see currently approved collection for ICR 1220-0164.

### **5. Statistical and Analytical Responsibility**

Hilery Simpson, Associate Commissioner, Compensation Levels and Trends of the Office of Compensation and Working Conditions, is responsible for the statistical aspects of the NCS

*National Compensation Survey (NCS) – Supplemental questions related to sick leave policies during the Coronavirus pandemic*

*1220-New*

*Emergency Collection request*

*May 8, 2020*

program. Hilery Simpson can be reached on 202-691-5184. BLS seeks consultation with other outside experts on an as needed basis.