



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Bureau of the Census
Washington, DC 20233-0001

October 8, 2020

TO: Desk Officer for the U.S. Census Bureau
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)

FROM: David Waddington
Chief, Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division

SUBJECT: Request for Approval of Non-Substantive Change: Annual Social and Economic Survey

The Census Bureau is writing to request approval of a Non-Substantive Change to the questions administered on the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Survey (ASEC) questionnaire approved on December 10, 2018 (OMB No. 0607- 0354). Refer to the 60-day notice in the Federal Register, (83 FR 42252), published August 21, 2018. This request is in keeping with the Census Bureau's commitment to foster transparency in its efforts to produce new, relevant and timely data on the social and economic experiences individuals are having during this period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The requested change consists of an additional four questions to the ASEC, and are designed to collect new relevant information. These questions are based on approved questions added to the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The added questions will assist researchers to evaluate the impact of governmental assistance programs on economic well-being, particularly for the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM).

- Given widespread school closings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many school districts have shifted to alternative ways to distribute free school meals to children. However, the ability for families to take up these programs likely varies in ways that cannot be uniformly predicted, so adding a follow-up question about receipt of school meals during school closures helps to improve data quality on the market value of these benefits.

- The three stimulus questions are necessary to allow researchers to estimate the amount of stimulus payments received by households. The coronavirus stimulus payments disbursed in 2020 were based on income from CY2018 or CY2019, making it nearly impossible to model with only CY2020 income. We need to add these questions to get accurate information on stimulus payments received to properly estimate after-tax income for the SPM.

Please see Attachment NSC-1 for documentation of these proposed changes. Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns

PROPOSED (September 15, 2020)

<SCHOOL LUNCH QUESTION—ADD TO SCHOOL LUNCH BLOCK>

Question Universe: Household level question. If any child is reported as receiving free/reduced price school lunch in Q83

1. ECVDMEAL

Did your children continue receiving free/reduced price meals through your school or school district if schools were closed during the Coronavirus-COVID-19 pandemic?

- 1) Yes
- 2) No
- 3) Schools were not closed

<STIMULUS QUESTIONS—ADD TO END OF SUPPLEMENT>

Question universe: Household level question. All households.

1. ECVD_EIP

During 2020, did you or anyone in your household received any stimulus payment or payments from the Department of the Treasury due to the Coronavirus-Covid-19 pandemic?

◆ Do not include refunds on annual income taxes, unemployment compensation, or payments from an employer.

- 1) Yes → Go to ECVD_COV
- 2) No → Go to end of supplement

2. ECVD_COV

Who was the stimulus payment for?

- ◆ Enter all that apply, separate using the space bar or a comma.
- ◆ Probe: Anyone Else?

→ Go to ECVD_AMT

3. ECVD_AMT

What was the amount of the stimulus payment(s) that you received for all the covered adults and children in 2020?

◆ Enter dollar amount

→ Go to end of supplement