

**OMB Information Collection Request  
Supporting Statement B  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Current Population Survey (CPS) Basic Demographic Items  
OMB Control Number 0607-0049**

**B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

**1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

The CPS is an address-based sample derived from the Census Master Address File (MAF) covering the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The potential respondent universe for the CPS is one household respondent for each of the 128 million households. From this universe, we randomly select a sample of approximately 70,000 households each month. Of these, approximately 59,000 households will be eligible for interview, since approximately 11,000 households are found to be vacant, converted to a business, destroyed, or other reasons. The expected yield of completed interviews is 50,000 households per month.

**Table B.1: Universe, Sample Count, and Expected Response Rate**

Type of Entity	Total Universe	Sample Size	Expected Response Rate	Actual Response Rate (Annual Average)
Households	128,000,000	59,000	84.0 %	80.0 %

**2. Survey Collection Procedures**

The Census Bureau will request survey participation from approximately 59,000 households each month via one of two modes: Computer-automated personal interviewing or computer-automated telephone interviewing. The first contact for each household is attempted in person, and successive monthly contacts are allowed by telephone. Attachment A gives an overview of the CPS sample design and estimation methodology. The CPS produces demographic data, labor force data, and data from various periodic supplemental inquiries. We designed the CPS sample to produce estimates of employment and unemployment characteristics with sufficient reliability to meet the BLS' requirements for monthly data and estimates of month-to-month, quarter-to-

quarter, and year-to-year changes. The coefficient of variation on estimates of unemployment is 1.9 percent monthly at the national level. It is 8.0 percent annually at the state level. This degree of accuracy is sufficient to meet the needs mandated.

In accordance with our standard practice, the CPS sample has been redesigned based on information collected in the 2010 Decennial Census. (See Attachment A).

One of the primary goals for the CPS is to provide estimates of month-to-month change in the employment and unemployment statistics. The current rotation pattern for the CPS (4-8-4) was chosen because it provides such estimates reliably with a much smaller sample size than an annual rotation would.

**3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

Attention is placed on the following design elements to help increase cooperation by prospective respondents.

- Questions were developed with logical, clear wording and simple grammar.
- Questions were grouped according to subject areas.
- Respondent contact strategies and letters have been carefully designed to maximize respondent attention and interest.
- Monthly interviewer instruction and training on survey concepts and respondent cooperation strategies.
- Close monitoring of real-time data to react quickly to low response rates.

Refer to section 3 of Attachment A for a discussion of the CPS nonresponse.

#### **4. Procedures or Methods Testing**

An extensive program of testing was conducted on CPS methods, procedures, and content from 1978 through 1993 using the Methods Development Survey (MDS), and its predecessor, the Methods Test Panel (MTP).

The results of the testing have become the CPS Labor Force instrument, which uses an automated Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing/Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing environment. For information on the results, see the February 1994 Employment and Earnings article titled, "Revisions to the Current Population Survey Effective January 1994."

In addition, since 1994 the roster and demographic collection questions have been thoroughly vetted and reviewed on a regular basis. Any changes to the Roster Collection or Demographic Characteristic questions are reviewed at the corporate level within the U.S. Census Bureau. Following standard testing procedures, any changes are cognitively tested, then tested in the field by the survey designated to first use them, and then reviewed and incorporated in any other survey using the same mode, with a need for the same collection. The current questions covered under this clearance request were included in the most recent Decennial Census Content test, American Community Survey (ACS) content test, and ACS production.

Procedurally, each month before production each data processing system is tested for any errors. On a test platform, we mimic interviewing to collect test data. As part of the initial load of data and instruments, we test case assignments in the field as well. In the winter of 2013, as part of the sample redesign that will begin in April 2014, all systems were thoroughly tested in three rounds.

## **5. Individuals Responsible for Study Design and Performance**

The following individuals may be contacted on the statistical data collection and analysis operations:

### Statistical Design:

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### Data Collection Survey Design:

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## Attachments

- A - Overview of the CPS Sample Design and Methodology
- B-1 - CPS Front Items
- B-2 - CPS Demographic Items
- B-3 - CPS Back Items
- B-4 - CPS Weather Related Items (as needed basis)
- C - CPS Supplements for 2018 and 2019
- D-1 - CPS-263(MIS-1), CPS-263(MIS-1) - Advance Letter
- D-2 - CPS-264(MIS-5), CPS-264(MIS-5) - Advance Letter
- D-3 - CPS-266 Thank You Cards
- E-1 - BC-1433, BC-1433 - CPS Fact Sheet
- E-2 - CPS-692 CPS Monthly Flow of CPS Data
- E-3 - BC-1428, BC-1428 - Confidentiality Brochures
- F - Statutes Authorizing the Collection of Information
- G - Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request