

U.S. Department of Labor

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
2 Massachusetts Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20212



[DATE]

[RESPONDENT NAME]

[RESPONDENT ADDRESS]

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME]:

You are receiving this letter because you recently provided data to the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Housing Survey. Thank you for your recent participation in this important survey. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is committed to producing high-quality statistics that accurately reflect the economic conditions in the United States. **As part of that commitment to quality, the BLS randomly conducts follow-up contacts. This helps us verify that we correctly recorded your responses and verifies that BLS representatives were professional in their conduct.** Your participation in this verification is vital to the accuracy and integrity of the CPI.

Our records indicate that {BLS NAME} contacted you in [MONTH/YEAR] regarding the housing unit at [FULL HOUSING UNIT ADDRESS]. **We ask that you take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the prepaid envelope included with this mailing.**

If you have questions about the CPI, the Housing Survey, or this data quality follow-up, please call Steven Joering, Branch Chief of Data Quality, at 202-691-7067 or email him at Joering.Steven@bls.gov.

If you would like information about the Consumer Price Index, please see the Frequently Asked Questions on the back side of this paper or visit our website: [www.bls.gov/cpi](http://www.bls.gov/cpi).

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Uy Oliver".

Ursula Y. Oliver  
Director, Consumer Price Surveys  
Office of Field Operations

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Consumer Price Index (CPI)?**

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of change in the cost of goods and services typically purchased by urban consumers. As the only comprehensive measure of inflation at the retail level, the CPI is widely used by private industry, labor unions, and the federal government to help in making informed business and economic decisions. Below are a few examples of uses of the CPI:

- The cost-of-living adjustments for over 50 million Social Security beneficiaries.
- The cost of lunches for millions of school children.
- Federal income tax brackets, so you don't pay higher taxes because of inflation.
- Payments in collective bargaining agreements.

### **Why are you verifying my information?**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) regularly conducts verifications on the accuracy of the data collected by its staff as part of a legally mandated quality assurance process. This contact is part of that quality assurance process, and your response will help the BLS provide accurate statistics.

### **What will you do with my information / Is this confidential?**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, its employees, agents and partner statistical agencies will use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and will hold the information in confidence to the full extent permitted by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (44 U.S.C. 3572) and other applicable Federal Laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your informed consent. Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, Federal information systems are protected from malicious activities through cybersecurity screening of transmitted data.

### **I did not participate previously, should I still complete this?**

Yes, even if you did not participate previously, your responses will still be helpful. Responding to this questionnaire will help the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) improve the accuracy of the Consumer Price Index. BLS has sampled the listed unit address as part of the Consumer Price Index Housing Survey, and it is important that we understand the reported information.

### **Is this authorized/approved by OMB?**

The time needed to complete this survey is estimated to be less than 4 minutes. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of this time estimate or suggestions for making the survey simpler, you can write to: Office of Prices and Living Conditions, 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Rm. 3655, Washington, DC 20212. The OMB control number for this voluntary survey is 1220-0163. Without a currently valid number BLS would not be able to conduct this survey.

# Consumer Price Index: Housing Survey Verification

When completing this survey, please think only about the housing unit and time period listed below:

[HOUSING UNIT]

[MONTH/YEAR]

## Experience with BLS representative

1. Were you contacted by a representative of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in [INSERT MONTH/YEAR] regarding this unit?

- Yes  
 No, no one was contacted  
 No, but you know someone else reported for this unit  
 Not sure
- } SKIP TO HOUSING UNIT INFORMATION (QUESTION 3)

2. Were you satisfied with your experience providing data for the CPI Housing Survey?

- Yes  
 No  
 Please provide any additional comments about your experience:

## Housing Unit Information

Again, thinking about [HOUSING UNIT], complete the following questions.

3. In [INSERT MONTH/YEAR] was this unit...?

- Occupied by the owner ► SEE INSTRUCTION BELOW  
 Occupied by the renter ► CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 4  
 Vacant ► SEE INSTRUCTION BELOW  
 Unit does not exist, or was not a housing unit ► SEE INSTRUCTION BELOW

If this unit was occupied by the renter in [MONTH/YEAR], continue with question 4 below. Otherwise, if this unit was NOT occupied by a renter in [MONTH/YEAR], skip to question 10.

4. Is the occupant of this unit a relative of the landlord?

- Yes  
 No

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**5. For the month of [MONTH/YEAR], how much rent was the tenant charged?**

*Please provide an exact dollar amount.*

\$       .

Rent tenant was charged

**6. Did the rent you reported in question 5 include any extra charges?**

*Examples of extra charges include pet fees, one-time maintenance fees, late fees, etc...*

Yes  
 No ► **SKIPTO QUESTION 8**

**7. Provide the type and amount of any extra charges that were included in the rent you reported in question 5.**

	Type of extra charge included	Amount of this charge
1.		\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> . <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
2.		\$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> . <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

**8. Was the rent for [MONTH, YEAR] reduced because the landlord received any supplemental funding or assistance from a government program such as Section 8?**

Yes ► Enter the amount the rent was reduced \$       .    
 No  
 Not sure

**9. Was the rent reduced because someone did work for the landlord?**

Yes ► Enter the amount the rent was reduced \$       .    
 No  
 Not sure

**10. Thank you for your time and assistance with helping us ensure the quality and integrity of the data BLS collects. In the event that a representative from BLS needs to contact you regarding the information you provided, please provide your contact information below.**

*The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this survey and held confidential to the fullest extent allowed by law.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (    )    -

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this survey in the postage paid envelope provided.**