

Ask U.S. Panel Pilot FAQs

What is the Ask U.S. Panel pilot?

The Ask U.S. Panel pilot is a large nationally representative survey panel by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Defense. The purpose of the panel is to collect the opinions of individuals living across the United States (U.S.), including service members and their spouses, on a variety of topics and gather information that can be used to improve future government surveys. The pilot tests the feasibility and procedures that maybe used to develop and implement a long-term panel. Data collected from service members and their spouses through the panel will be used to improve military life and policies affecting active-service members and their families. The pilot panel will consist of individuals and households living across the U.S, including active-duty service members and spouses of active-duty service members, that have agreed to be contacted and invited to participate in surveys led by the U.S. Census Bureau and other federal agencies, including the Department of Defense.

How was I selected for the Ask U.S. Pilot Panel?

You are one of more than 2,500 active-duty service members and spouses of active-duty service members that were randomly selected to participate. In order for the Ask U.S. Panel to be successful, it is important to have participants that represent the military.

Why should I participate?

Participation in the Ask U.S. Panel pilot is voluntary. There are no penalties for refusing to answer any questions. The data collected by the panel will be used to improve military life by informing policies affecting active-service members and their families. The information you provide also will help the U.S. Census Bureau and DoD better understand public opinion on a variety of different topics and will be used to inform how data may be collected in the future. Your cooperation is important because it will ensure our survey results represent an accurate picture of active-duty service members and spouses of active-duty service members. Your answers not only represent you, but also hundreds of other active-duty service members and spouses of active-duty service members. You may choose not to take part in the Ask U.S. Panel pilot, but because our sample is randomly selected, no other active-duty service member or spouse of an -duty service member can take your place. By taking part in the Ask U.S. Panel, you will represent the views and opinions of many other individuals like yourself.

Do I receive anything for participating?

Yes. As a token of appreciation, panel members received \$5 in their survey invitation and will receive \$20 for completing their initial enrollment survey, and an additional \$10 for completing a 15-minute survey later in 2022.

What does participation involve?

You will first complete a 20-minute enrollment survey to confirm your eligibility and enroll in the panel. Panelists will be asked to be a part of the pilot panel for up to one year, during which time they will be invited to complete one additional 15-minute survey later in 2022. Surveys will be about a variety of topics, such as food and nutrition, housing, employment, and education. Participation in individual surveys is voluntary and you may skip surveys that you do not wish to complete.

How will you protect my privacy?

The U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Defense, other federal agencies, and RTI, a non-for-profit research organization, are committed to assuring the confidentiality of the information that you provide as part of this collection. All survey responses will be combined with the answers of many others and reported in a summary form. Our interest is only in the combination of all responses and not anyone's individual answers. Your name and any other identifying information will never be associated with the answers you provide on surveys – this information is only collected for contact purposes so that we may send you invitations to future surveys. Your privacy and confidentiality are protected to the full extent required by law.

Who is sponsoring the Ask U.S. Panel pilot?

The U.S. Census Bureau is the primary sponsor of the Ask U.S. Panel. Other federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, will also contribute funding and sponsor surveys for the Ask U.S. Panel pilot.

Who is RTI International?

The U.S. Census Bureau has partnered with RTI International (RTI), a not-for-profit research organization, to establish and manage the Ask U.S. Panel. RTI conducts research both in the United States and abroad under agreements with federal, state, and local governments; public service agencies; universities and foundations; and commercial clients. You can learn more about RTI by visiting www.rti.org.

How do I know if the Ask U.S. Panel is legitimate?

You may find out more information regarding Census Bureau survey programs at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/surveyhelp/faqs.html>.

You may also contact the U.S. Census Bureau at ADRM.pra@census.gov or the RTI International Ask U.S. Panel pilot Data Collection Task Leader, Dustin Williams, at askuspanel@rti.org to confirm the legitimacy of the Ask U.S. Panel pilot.

The study has also been approved by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The valid OMB control number for this information collection is #####-#####. The expiration date is ##/##/####.