

SUPPORTING STATEMENT A
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
The American Community Survey and the
Puerto Rico Community Survey
OMB Control No. 0607-0810

Abstract

The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing monthly survey that collects detailed housing and socioeconomic data from a sample of about 3.5 million addresses in the United States and about 36,000 addresses in Puerto Rico each year. The ACS also collects detailed socioeconomic data from a sample of about 170,000 residents living in group quarters (GQ) facilities in the United States and Puerto Rico where it is known as the Puerto Rico Community Survey (PRCS). Resulting tabulations from this data collection are provided on a yearly basis. The ACS allows the U.S. Census Bureau to provide timely and relevant housing and socioeconomic statistics, even for low levels of geography. The Census Bureau requests authorization from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to extend the expiration date in order to continue producing an accurate demographic snapshot of the nation and its people.

Justification

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

The U.S. Census Bureau requests authorization from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to extend the American Community Survey (ACS) and Puerto Rico Community Survey (PRCS) data collection. The Census Bureau has developed a methodology to collect and update demographic, social, economic, and housing data every year that are essentially the same as the "long-form" data that the Census Bureau formerly collected once a decade as part of the decennial census. The ACS blends the strength of small area estimation with the high quality of current surveys. There is an increasing need for current data describing lower geographic areas and subpopulations, such as groups within the Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian populations, the elderly, and children. Federal and state government agencies use such data to evaluate and manage federal programs and to distribute funding for various programs that include food stamp benefits, transportation dollars, and housing grants. State, county, tribal, and community governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and the general public use information like housing quality, income distribution, journey-to-work patterns, immigration data, and regional age distributions for decision-making and program evaluation. The ACS is now the only source of comparable data about social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics for small-areas and small subpopulations across the Nation and in Puerto Rico.

The ACS program provides estimates annually for all states and for all medium and large cities,

counties, and metropolitan areas. For smaller areas and population groups, it takes five years to accumulate enough data to provide reliable estimates. Every community in the nation continues to receive a detailed, statistical portrait of its social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics each year through one-year and five-year ACS products.

The Census Bureau is collecting these data under authority of Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141, 193, and 221. Please see the Title 13 U.S.C. section 141, 193, and 221 excerpt in Attachment T for more information about this legal authority.

The goals of the ACS and PRCS are to:

- Provide federal, state, tribal, and local governments an information base for the administration and evaluation of government programs; and
- Provide data users with timely demographic, housing, social, and economic data updated every year that can be compared across states, communities, and population groups.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The ACS collects detailed socioeconomic data which are documented here:

<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2018/dec/planned-questions-2020-acs.html>

Information is requested from residents of sampled households. For in-person interviews, respondents must be at least 15 years old. Respondents are invited to complete the survey online, by paper questionnaire, telephone, or in person. The Census Bureau selects a random sample of addresses to be included in the ACS. Each address has about a 1-in-480 chance of being selected in a month, and no address should be selected more than once every 5 years.

Using the Census Bureau's Master Address File (MAF), which is continually updated, a sample of addresses are selected, and survey materials are mailed each month to a new group of potential households. Most households are asked first to complete the survey through the internet, with a paper questionnaire provided to those households that do not respond by internet. Of the remaining households that have not responded either by mail or internet, a sub-sample of remaining households are selected for a personal interview, generally at a rate of one in three. Addresses for which the ACS did not mail survey materials to because the address was unmailable are sub-sampled for Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) at a rate of two in three. The ACS also conducts interviews with a sample of residents at selected group quarters (GQ) facilities. Collecting these data from a new sample of housing units (HUs) and GQ facilities every month provides more timely data and lessens respondent burden in the decennial census. The following section details the ACS data collection practices.

ACS Household Data Collection

The Census Bureau uses a multiple mode contact strategy to collect ACS data. These modes include mail, internet, telephone, and personal visit. For households eligible to receive survey materials by mail, the first contact (Attachment A) is a letter that provides instructions on how to complete the survey online, prominently displays the user identification number, and explains that a paper questionnaire will be sent later if the respondent is unable to complete the survey online.

The internet version of the questionnaire is available in English and Spanish and includes questions about the HU and the people living in the HU. The internet questionnaire (Attachment B) has space to collect detailed information for 20 people in the household.

The second mailing is a letter (Attachment C) that reminds respondents to complete the survey online, thanks them if they have already done so, and informs them that a paper form will be sent at a later date if the Census Bureau does not receive their response. This letter includes clear instructions to log in, including an explicit reference to the user identification number.

The third mailing is a Paper Questionnaire Package (Attachment D) that is sent only to those sample addresses that have not completed the online questionnaire and asks them to respond soon either by completing the survey online or by returning a completed paper questionnaire. The paper questionnaire has room to collect data on all questions for five people and for a few questions for seven more.

The fourth mailing (Attachment E) is a postcard that reminds respondents to mail back the questionnaire or respond on the internet. It also informs them that an interviewer may contact them if they do not complete the survey and reminds them of the importance of the ACS.

The fifth mailing (Attachment F) is sent to respondents who have not completed the survey within five weeks. This mailing includes a due date reminding these respondents to return their questionnaires by a specified deadline to be removed from the list of HUs that will be visited by Census Bureau interviewers and thanks them if they have already done so. This letter includes clear instructions to log in, including an explicit reference to the user identification number.

If a respondent starts to answer the survey online and provides an e-mail address but does not complete the survey, an email (Attachment G) will be sent to the respondent to remind them to return to the survey to complete their online questionnaire. This email includes a link to the online survey, clear instructions to log in, including an explicit reference to the user identification number. This email is sent only once to a respondent, either prior to the third mailing or prior to the fifth mailing depending on when they started filling out the online survey.

Respondents can call the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) line and ask for materials in Spanish. An address can receive up to two Spanish Paper Questionnaire packages, which contain

the same materials as the English package, depending on when the respondent submitted their request. The address will also receive a reminder postcard in Spanish if the Census Bureau does not receive the completed questionnaire by a cut-off date. All the materials that are sent to respondents who request a replacement package in Spanish are included in Attachment H.

For sample housing units in Puerto Rico, a different mail strategy is employed. Based on the results of testing in 2011 and concerns with the resulting internet response rates from that testing, the ACS deferred the introduction of an internet response option in order to further assess the best implementation approach. Therefore, the Census Bureau continues to use the previously used mail strategy with no references to an internet response option. The first mailing of the PRCS includes a pre-notice letter in Spanish and English.

The second Puerto Rico mailing includes an introductory letter, an FAQ brochure, a paper questionnaire, and a return envelope.

The third Puerto Rico mailing is a reminder postcard.

The fourth Puerto Rico mailing is a replacement package similar to the second mailing and is mailed only to non-respondents.

The fifth Puerto Rico mailing is a reminder postcard that is mailed only to non-respondents.

All of the materials that are sent to respondents in Puerto Rico, including related reminder postcards, are included in Attachment I.

The ACS provides TQA for respondents who need assistance with completing the paper or internet questionnaires, who have questions about the survey, or who would like to complete the ACS interview over the telephone instead of by other modes. Respondents may call the ACS toll-free TQA numbers listed on the various ACS mail materials. The TQA staff answers respondent questions and/or completes the entire ACS interview using a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) instrument. The questions in the TQA instrument are very similar to those on the internet questionnaire and mail questionnaires with small changes for adaption for a telephone interview. Interested households may request a survey form in Spanish (Attachment H) by calling our TQA telephone number. For Puerto Rico households, the Census Bureau mails a Spanish version of the questionnaire. Upon request through TQA, respondents are mailed an English version of the PRCS questionnaire and appropriate informational materials (Attachment I).

The Failed Edit Follow Up (FEFU) operation is used to follow up with households with coverage problems (such as mail respondents with more than five people, mail respondents with more people listed on the cover than in the basic demographic section, or questionnaires returned for vacant units). The Census Bureau also uses the FEFU operation to confirm the status of internet responses classified as businesses or vacant units and to collect the minimum amount of information needed to further process the questionnaire. FEFU is available to interviewers in both English and Spanish. The FEFU questions can be found in Attachment J.

The ACS also collects information from HUs identified as vacant. The Census Bureau asks a knowledgeable contact to answer the housing questions on the ACS questionnaire along with some additional questions for these units. Questions asked on the ACS household CAPI instrument that are worded differently and those asked in addition to the questions on the household ACS questionnaire for vacant units are included in Attachment K.

The final mode of data collection is Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), the nonresponse followup data collection mode, and is used to conduct personal interviews for a sample of addresses for which the Census Bureau has not obtained a self-response (paper or internet). The questions in the CAPI instrument are very similar to those on the internet and mail questionnaires with small changes for adaptation for a telephone or personal visit interview. The CAPI questionnaire is available in English and Spanish and includes questions about the HU and the people living in the HU. The questionnaire has space to collect detailed information for 20 people in the household.

For Stateside households eligible to receive survey materials by mail, a letter is mailed that encourages respondents to complete the survey online to avoid an in-person interview. It prominently displays the user identification number to access the internet version of the questionnaire and describes how to respond to the survey online. Another internet letter is given to respondents with unmailable addresses during the personal interview. The two versions of the letters are included in Attachment L.

The CAPI interviewers have several materials available to explain the ACS to households. Interviewers may provide an introductory letter and the HU informational brochure to respondents during the initial contact. The introductory letter provides respondents with a better understanding of the ACS, and how their information is kept confidential. The HU Informational brochure helps respondents understand the value of the ACS, how the data are used to support them and their communities, and where they can go to obtain survey results and how to contact a Regional Office by telephone for additional questions. The letter and brochure are included in Attachment L.

The ACS provides several materials to respondents to explain the purpose of the survey, emphasize the confidentiality and describe the uniqueness of the survey. The Better Understanding letter emphasizes the confidentiality of the survey data and the benefits of the survey to motivate response. The respondent is told to call the field representative or go online to respond. The ACS uses the Confidentiality letter when a respondent indicates they have specific concerns about their response being kept confidential or their data being secure. The ACS sends the Refusal letter when a respondent explicitly refuses to participate in the survey. The letter is short and to the point regarding confidentiality and the legal requirements to participate. It provides response options and emphasizes that the respondent will be contacted again soon to complete the interview. A Questions and Answers (Q&A) brochure is given to reluctant respondents to provide answers to frequently asked questions regarding the ACS including information about the ACS, how the data

are used, and protections for participant information. The letters and brochure are included in Attachment L.

The ACS sends three types of letters to addresses interviewers are unable to contact. The ACS sends a No One Home letter to an address when the interviewer is unable to make contact with anyone at the sample address but thinks someone lives there. It emphasizes the confidentiality of the survey data and the benefits of the survey to motivate response. The respondent is told to call the interviewer or go online to respond. The ACS sends the Please Call Me letter to help interviewers who can only reach respondents by phone. The ACS uses the Final Attempt letter at the end of the data collection period. The letter is short; it expresses the uniqueness of being selected for the survey, the legal requirement for participation, and the different ways to respond. The letters are included in Attachment L.

The ACS sends three types of letters when they have access issues. The Management letter for multi-unit buildings help interviewers gain access to multi-unit buildings when they cannot directly access the sampled address. The Management letter for Gated Communities help interviewers gain access to addresses located in gated communities. A Seasonal Unit letter is sent when the field representative suspects that the sampled address is only used seasonally and cannot make contact with anyone at the sample address. Field representatives may send this letter to someone who may be able to verify that the unit is seasonal. The letters are included in Attachment L.

Finally, the interviewer sends a Thank You letter to respondents who completed the CAPI interview and lets them know they may be contacted for quality assurance purposes. This letter is included in Attachment L

The introductory letter, HU informational brochure, Q&A brochure, and the thank you letter are available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, French, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Vietnamese. They are included in Attachment L.

Later this year, the ACS plans to introduce newly revised letters and brochures designed to increase the number of returns on internet, improve data quality, and reduce ACS spending. The ACS will begin using the following materials with a new look and feel later in 2022: Introductory letter, ACS Informational Brochure, Better Understanding letter, Confidentiality Letter, Refusal letter, Q&A Brochure, No One Home letter, Please Call Me Letter, Final Attempt letter, Management letters, Seasonal Unit letter, and the Thank You bookmark. The enhanced letters, brochures, and bookmark are included in Attachment L.

The ACS conducts a reinterview operation to monitor field representative performance. Only respondents that provide an interview through CAPI are eligible for this reinterview. For the housing unit reinterview operation, the Census Bureau uses a separate set of questions for units that were identified as occupied, vacant, or noninterview at the time of the original CAPI interview. Reinterviews are initially conducted through a centralized CATI operation. Reinterview cases are transferred to the regional offices for personal visit interviewing if they cannot be resolved through

the telephone attempts. The housing unit ACS Reinterview questions are included in Attachment M.

ACS Group Quarters (GQ) Collection

In addition to selecting a sample of residential addresses, the ACS selects a sample of GQs. An introductory letter and FAQ brochure for the facility administrator are mailed to the sample GQ approximately two weeks prior to the period when a field representative may begin making contact with the GQ. The field representative gives the facility contact person a thank you letter when they arrive for the interview. The introductory letters, FAQ brochures, and thank you letters can be found in Attachment N. The field representatives use the CAPI Group Quarters Facility Questionnaire (GQFQ) in English or Spanish when making initial telephone contact to schedule an appointment and to conduct a telephone or personal visit with the sample GQ. The GQ has the option to provide the field representative with a hard copy of the listing information or upload an electronic listing of the residents in the online eListing application to generate the sub-sample of persons for ACS interviews. The GQFQ questions, eListing screens, and listing sheets can be found in Attachment O.

The ACS uses a subset of the ACS HU questions to conduct interviews with sample residents in GQs. Resident-level personal interviews with sampled GQ residents are conducted using CAPI, but bilingual paper questionnaires can also be used for self-response. The GQ CAPI and paper questionnaires contain questions for one person. The GQ CAPI also excludes certain questions for residents of institutional group quarters that are out of scope to reduce burden. The GQ resident data collection packages (Attachment P) include a thank you letter, and a copy of the ACS GQ brochure. The Census Bureau conducts a separate operation to collect ACS GQ data from sampled GQs in federal prisons and in remote Alaska.

For Puerto Rico sample GQ residents, the Census Bureau uses PRCS data collection packages (Attachment Q) to collect the GQ data.

The ACS conducts a GQ reinterview (RI) operation to monitor the performance of field representatives conducting the GQFQ interviews. For the GQ RI operation, the Census Bureau uses a separate set of questions to verify and monitor the field representative interviews at the GQ level (Attachment R). Similar to the housing unit RI operation, GQ RIs are initially conducted through a centralized telephone operation. Reinterview cases are transferred to the regional offices for personal visit interviewing if they cannot be resolved by the telephone attempts.

See <https://www.census.gov/about/policies/quality/guidelines.html> for more information about the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of the information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to the information collections conducted by the

Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

- 3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

The ACS uses web-based technology to collect data for stateside housing unit interviews. Paper questionnaires are still available to respondents who need or prefer to use paper. If a respondent starts to complete the survey online and provides an e-mail address, but does not complete the survey, they will be sent an email reminding them to return to the survey to complete their online questionnaire. This email includes a link to the online survey, clear instructions to log in, including an explicit reference to the user identification number. This email is sent only once to a respondent.

The ACS uses web-based technology to obtain group quarters residency lists directly from facilities. The Census Bureau is also pursuing the use of an internet response option for certain types of group quarters, such as college dorms.

Computer-assisted interviewing is used for personal visit and telephone interviews, for both housing unit and group quarters interviews. Computer-assisted instruments allow for the automation of skip patterns and conduct error checks on-the-spot to minimize costly follow-up interviews or editing.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2.**

The ACS is the instrument used to collect detailed population and housing data that had traditionally been collected only during the decennial census. The content of the ACS reflects topics that are required directly or indirectly by Congress and that the Census Bureau determines are not duplicative of another agency's data collection. Several questions in the ACS appear in other demographic surveys but these results are typically not released as frequently as ACS results or at the same level of geography. The comprehensive set of ACS questions, coupled with the tabulation and dissemination of data for small geographic areas, does not duplicate any other single information collection. Moreover, many smaller Federal and non-Federal studies use a small subset of the same measures to benchmark those results to the ACS, which is often the most authoritative source for local area demographic data.

The OMB Interagency Committee for the ACS, co-chaired by OMB and the Census Bureau, includes more than 30 participating federal agencies and meets periodically to examine and review ACS content. This committee ensures that other agencies are aware of the ACS content and provides an extra safeguard that ACS does not duplicate its collection and content with other surveys.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The collection of ACS data for housing units does not involve small businesses or other small entities.

The collection of ACS data for group quarters could include small entities (such as small group homes). Small group quarters facilities (defined as having fewer than 15 people) are eligible to be in sample only once every five years. The focus of the interview is on a sample of residents, not the business, though a facility administrator is involved in the data collection.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Collecting the data less frequently, on fewer sampled cases, would increase the margin of error on the estimates produced from the ACS especially affecting small geographic areas. The ACS is conducted monthly because collecting data every month provides the most accurate annual average of many survey items that can vary by month or season. A monthly survey also helps the Census Bureau stabilize workloads across the year for CAPI operations and account for seasonal changes that occur. If the collection is not conducted, many federal agencies would not be able to implement programs as intended or meet requirements defined by policy and regulations. Examples of federal uses for the ACS data and associated laws (when applicable), are described in the ACS Handbook of Questions and Current Federal Uses.

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/operations-and-administration/2014-content-review/federal-uses.html>

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;
- requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;
- requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;
- requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;
- in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable

- **results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

The ACS data collection does not require any of the special circumstances mentioned above.

- The ACS samples housing units in such a way that no address can be in sample more than once every five years. Data for a sampled address are collected once. If a person moves or has more than one location where they live, they can be in sample more than once.
- Respondents are instructed to respond to the survey as soon as possible, which avoids costly follow-up activities such as in-person interviewing. However, once in sample a respondent has three months to respond to the survey.
- Other than the survey itself, respondents are not required to submit any documents.
- Respondents are not required to produce or retain records for the survey.
- The data collected from the ACS and associated research studies result in statistics that are released or in reports documenting findings. The sample is designed to ensure sufficient geographic coverage so that the ACS can produce an accurate demographic snapshot by surveying a representative sample of the population.
- ACS survey results, including statistical estimates categories, are established and recognized as an official survey time series that has been used as survey benchmarks for other data collection programs for well over a decade.
- ACS survey materials include information related to Title 13 protections of the data collection and other associated federal regulations. The Census Bureau implements disclosure avoidance procedures on all of its products and complies with federal regulations related to data security policies.
- Respondents are not required to submit proprietary information. All information collected are protected by law.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in

response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

The ACS frequently consults with persons outside of the Census Bureau to obtain views on a variety of topics. The ACS consults with data users, other federal agencies, and experts in the fields of survey methodology and statistics for feedback on the data produced from the survey as well as data collection activities, statistical techniques, and disclosure protection. For example, the Population Reference Bureau, in partnership with the Census Bureau, maintains an online community, organizes webinars and special sessions at professional meetings, and holds ACS Data Users Conferences.

The Census Bureau published a notice of our intent to extend the ACS data collection on September 14, 2021 edition (Vol. 86, No. 175, pages 51112-51113) of the Federal Register. The Census Bureau received four public comments in response to that notice from the following:

- The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)
- The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund
- The University Professional and Continuing Education Association (UPCEA)
- Jean Public

The comments from the BEA strongly supports the continued collection of data by the ACS.

The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund made several recommendations to the Census Bureau. First, NALEO encouraged the Census Bureau to evaluate the implications of a potential 2020 Census undercount for the quality of ACS data, and to examine options to ameliorate the detrimental consequences of such an undercount.

The Population Estimates Program typically relies on the decennial census counts to serve as its base from which to build the decade's estimates.

NALEO also encouraged the Census Bureau to continue to assess the impact of the release of 2020 ACS 1-year experimental estimates and the delay in releasing the 2016-2020 ACS 5-year estimates on the full range of activities for which such data are used.

The Census Bureau created and publicly promoted an ACS Experimental Data webpage (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/experimental-data.html>) to provide stakeholders with information about the 2020 ACS 1-year experimental data in a centralized

location. Ahead of the November 30, 2021 release, the Census Bureau announced a webinar to explain and answer questions about the release of the 2020 ACS 1-year data using experimental weights, including the number and format of the tables, the geographic areas available, and guidance regarding the use of the experimental estimates. The public webinar on the (<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/acs-webinar-experimental-data.html>) the afternoon of the data release, November 30th, included a discussion of the data available, how to access the data, guidance for data users, and the methodology used to produce the experimental estimates. The webinar included a Q&A session for media and data users. Due to the Census Bureau's commitment to producing high-quality data, on November 10, 2021, the Census Bureau publicly announced the delay of the 2016-2020 ACS 5-year estimates. (<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/acs-5-year-2016-2020.html>).

The Census Bureau recognizes the critical importance of the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year data, in particular, on government and business decision-making and the need for quality ACS data for that purpose, and used the time to refine the methodology to reduce the impact of the nonresponse bias. The Census Bureau hosted a prerelease webinar on March 10, 2022, to who participants how to access the data and how to compare geographies and statistics over time.. The 2016-2020 ACS 5-year estimates were released on March 17, 2020 and are available on data.census.gov.

Finally, NALEO recommended ACS increase their sample size and the Census Bureau encourage the OMB to revive efforts to modernize the Hispanic origin and race questions, and conduct additional research to understand the implications from the Census Bureau's new approach to coding question responses in 2020 Census and the wording changes in the race and Hispanic origin questions.

The process for reviewing the standards on race and ethnicity is determined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Census Bureau experts will evaluate the results of the 2020 Census ethnicity and race data and consult with advisors, stakeholders, and our colleagues at OMB and other Federal statistical agencies on potential new areas for future research, including using a combined race and ethnicity question in the decennial census and the American Community Survey.

The UPCEA commented on changes to the educational attainment question. They suggested adding an option for a non-degree credential offered by a postsecondary institution.

The Census Bureau remains committed to providing high quality data to ensure efficient and effective management of federal programs and services. The Census Bureau, working with OMB and Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, has established criteria for determining content on the ACS. These criteria ensure that the ACS asks only what is necessary, constraining the length and burden of the ACS on the American public. It is incumbent upon federal agencies to identify their need for data and communicate this information to the Census Bureau. Requests for new or revised content for the ACS must demonstrate a statutory or regulatory need for data at small geographies or for small populations to be considered for the ACS.

One comment was critical of the American Community Survey data collection because the 2020 Census was recently completed.

The ACS is different from the 2020 Census. The ACS shows how we live—our education, housing, jobs, and more. It provides information about the social and economic needs of the community every year. The census is conducted every ten years to provide an official count of the entire U.S. population to Congress. Responses to both the ACS and 2020 Census also help provide local and national leaders with the information they need for planning and programs.

More information about the importance of the ACS and Decennial Census is online:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about/acs-and-census.html>

The public has an additional opportunity to review and submit comments on the American Community Survey and Puerto Rico Community Survey during the 30-day Notice of Proposed Information Collection. The notice for public comment, titled “The American Community Survey and The Puerto Rico Community Survey”, appeared in the Federal Register April 15, 2022 (Vol. 87 No. 73, pages 22501-22503).

The Census Bureau received one comment from the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy. The Williams Institute recommended that the Census Bureau include additional sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) measures in both surveys, “as data from each are needed to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are included in local, state, and federal government efforts to address socioeconomic, health, and other disparities across the U.S. population.”

The Census Bureau remains committed to providing high quality data to ensure efficient and effective management of federal programs and services. The Census Bureau, working with OMB and Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, has established criteria for determining content on the ACS. These criteria ensure that the ACS asks only what is necessary, constraining the length and burden of the ACS on the American public. It is incumbent upon federal agencies to identify their need for data and communicate this information to the Census Bureau. Requests for new or revised content for the ACS must demonstrate a statutory or regulatory need for data at small geographies or for small populations to be considered for the ACS.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

The Census Bureau does not pay ACS respondents or provide respondents with gifts.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

The Census Bureau collects data for this survey under Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141, 193, and 221. All data are confidential under Section 9 of that Title. In accordance with Title 13, each household, GQ administrator, and each person within a GQ participating in the ACS is assured of the confidentiality of their answers. Confidentiality information is sent to sampled housing units with the initial mail package. Housing units responding using the internet questionnaire are presented with additional assurances of the confidentiality and security of their online responses.

At the beginning of follow-up interviews, the interviewer explains the confidentiality of data collected and that participation is required by law. The interviewer may also give the household respondent a copy of a letter from the Census Bureau Director explaining the confidentiality of all information provided and a Q&A brochure, as appropriate.

The brochure mailed to sample GQs with the GQ introductory letter contains assurances of confidentiality. It is also provided to sampled GQ residents at the time of interview. The interviewer also explains the confidentiality of data collected and that participation is required by law. GQ administrators and GQ residents may ask for additional information. The interviewer may provide a Questions and Answers Guide and a Confidentiality Notice, as appropriate to explain confidentiality regulations and standards.

ACS data collection is covered under the COMMERCE/CENSUS-5 American Community Survey system of records notice (SORN). Records are maintained to perform methodological evaluations and enhancements for data collection and quality control studies, and to undertake linkages with survey and administrative data for statistical projects as authorized by law and the Census Bureau. Additional information can be found here:

<https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/PrivacyAct/SORNs/census-5.html>

The CEN30 IT system maintains the ACS data stored and processed on Census Bureau servers. This system interacts with other Census Bureau IT systems to collect, process, and store data. The Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) for the American Community Survey can be found here:

https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/privacy/Census%20PIAs/CEN30_FY20_PIA_SAOP_Approved.pdf

Related PIAs referenced in that document are located here:

<https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/privacy/Census-pias.html>

- 11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

Some of the data the Census Bureau collects on the ACS, such as race, ethnicity, disability, and sources of income and assets, may be considered to be of a sensitive nature. The Census Bureau takes the position that the collection of these types of data are necessary for the analysis of important policy and program issues and has structured the questions to lessen their perceived sensitivity. The Census Bureau has provided guidance to the CAPI field representatives on how to ask these types of questions during the interview. The Census Bureau has materials that demonstrate how the data from these questions are used and how those data are kept confidential. Respondents who use the internet to complete the survey have access to links on the survey screens that provide information to help address their questions or concerns with topics they may consider sensitive.

Race and Ethnicity data are collected and classified in accordance with the OMB *Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity* (1995).

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The sample size is 298,000 households per month, and the Census Bureau plans to mail survey materials to approximately 293,500 households each month that have mailable addresses. The Census Bureau estimates that, for the average household, the paper questionnaire or the internet questionnaire will take approximately 40 minutes to complete, including the time for reviewing the instructions and answers. The Census Bureau plans to conduct reinterviews for approximately 1,906 households each month. The Census Bureau estimates the average time for a reinterview will be 10 minutes.

The Census Bureau plans to conduct personal interviews at 1,675 GQs each month. At each facility, one GQ contact is interviewed to collect data about the GQ and to provide a list of residents in the GQ. This list is used to randomly select the sample of individuals to complete the ACS. The estimated time for each facility interview is 15 minutes. The Census Bureau samples approximately 14,241 people in GQs each month. The estimated response time for each person to complete the ACS-1(GQ) is 25 minutes. The Census Bureau also conducts GQ reinterviews for approximately 118 GQs each month. The Census Bureau estimates the average time for a GQ reinterview will be 10 minutes.

Please note the number of respondents is 3,767,000 but because of recontacting respondents during our reinterview operation, the number of responses is 3,791,297. The Census Bureau has based these estimates of the average length of time on our previous ACS tests and on experiences with forms of comparable lengths used in previous censuses and tests. The total number of respondent burden hours for a full year is 2,464,283 hours. See Table 1 for the detailed respondent and burden hour estimates.

Estimated Annualized Respondent Burden Hours

Table 1. Annual ACS and PRCS Respondent and Burden Hour Estimates

Data Collection Operation	Forms or Instrument Used in Data Collection	Annual Estimated Number of Respondents	Estimated Minutes Per Respondent by Data Collection Activity	Annual Estimated Burden Hours
I. ACS Household	ACS-1, ACS	3,576,000	40	2,384,000

Questionnaire, Online Survey, Telephone and Personal Visit	1(SP), ACS-1PR, ACS-1PR(SP), Online Survey, Telephone, CAPI				
II. ACS GQ Facility Questionnaire CAPI - Telephone and Personal Visit	CAPI GQFQ	20,100	15		5,025
III. ACS GQ CAPI Personal Interview or Telephone, and Paper Self-response	CAPI, ACS-1(GQ), ACS-1(GQ)(PR)	170,900	25		71,208
IV. ACS Household Reinterview - CATI/CAPI	ACS HU-RI	22,875	10		3,813
V. ACS GQ-level Reinterview - CATI/CAPI	ACS GQ-RI	1,422	10		237
TOTALS		3,791,297	N/A		2,464,283

Estimated Annualized Respondent Costs

Type of Respondent	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response	Hourly Wage Rate*	Total Burden Costs
Household Respondent	3,576,000	1	40	\$27.07	\$64,534,880
Facility Administrator	20,100	1	15	\$41.04	\$206,226

Facility Resident	170,900	1	25	\$7.25	\$516,260
Total	--	--	--	--	\$65,257,366

*The wage rate for household respondents is estimated based on average hourly rate among all occupations as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as of May 2020. BLS's *Occupational Outlook Handbook* <https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm> The wage rate for Facility Administrators is estimated based on an average among the various types of facility administrators (such as medical and health service managers and lodging managers at educational institutions) as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as of May 2020. The wage rate for Facility Residents (such as college students, group home residents, and nursing home residents) is estimated to be minimum wage.

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

There are no capital or ongoing maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

As requested in the FY2022 President's Budget, the estimated annual cost of the ACS is approximately \$233.5 million. The Census Bureau will pay the total cost of the ACS.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

There were changes due to previous miscalculations in the burden estimate. This burden estimate accurately accounts for Puerto Rico sample sizes and responses. The full implementation of the ACS and PRCS GQ data collection began in 2006. Sample sizes approximated 200,000 persons through 2016 and around 170,000 persons starting in 2017. Refinements were made to the methodology for computing initial sample beginning with the 2017 sample. One of these refinements was to omit people in out-of-scope GQs from the initial sample size. The effect of these refinements is a smaller sample size.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

The 2022 data collection activities will begin in late December 2021.

Approximately two months after the initial mailing for a sample month, ACS will begin the CAPI operation for a sample of households which have not responded by mail or internet.

Each month, the ACS conducts interviews with sample GQ administrators and a sample of residents. The data collection for each GQ sample month is six weeks. The GQ reinterview takes place approximately one month after the beginning of the survey year and continues until the end

of December each year. The ACS GQ does not include a formal Nonresponse Followup operation, but field representatives contact a respondent or GQ administrator for missing responses on the questionnaire at any point during the six week data collection period.

The Census Bureau publishes approximately 2,500 tables each year using data collected over a 1-year and 5-year period. For the 1-year publication, tables are produced for areas of 65,000 or greater beginning September 2023. For the 5-year publication, tables are published down to the Census tract and block group levels. The Census Bureau also provides custom tabulations of the ACS data on a cost-reimbursable basis. In addition, the ACS releases yearly Public Use Microdata (PUMS) microdata files consisting of a subsample of responses received in that year.

This information is available through the Census Bureau's main data dissemination site, data.census.gov and is generally published each fall for the previous 1-year and 5-year periods, using data collected over that previous year and five-year period.

The Census Bureau protects the confidentiality of the data by using approved data protection techniques. The data tables and microdata are reviewed and approved by the Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board to ensure they meet the Census Bureau's confidentiality standards.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be appropriate.

The Census Bureau is seeking approval to not display the OMB expiration date on the questionnaires associated with this information collection. The ACS is an ongoing and continuous survey that is mandatory. If there is an expiration date on the questionnaire, respondents may infer that the survey is over as of the expiration date, which is not the case.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

The Census Bureau certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).

Appendix A

2022 Data Collection Materials

A American Community Survey Household (HU) First Mailing:

- ACS-13PS(2022)(02-18-2022) ACS Introductory Letter

B American Community Survey Internet Screen Capture Guide

- ACS-400C (January 2022), ACS Internet Data Collection Instrument Screen Capture Guide

C American Community Survey Household (HU) Second Mailing:

- ACS-20L(2022) (10-15-2021) ACS Reminder Letter

D American Community Survey HU Third Mailing:

- ACS-1(2021)(05-18-20), ACS Stateside Questionnaire
- ACS-14(L)(2022) (10-29-2021), ACS Follow-up Letter
- ACS-46(2022) (05-26-2021), ACS Stateside Outgoing Envelope
- BRE 6385-47(2022)(06-02-2021), ACS Business Reply Envelope

E American Community Survey HU Fourth Mailing:

- ACS-29(2020)(05-21-2019), Postcard for Second Reminder

F American Community Survey HU Fifth Mailing:

- ACS-23PS(A)(2021) (01-29-2021), Additional Mailing Postcard

G American Community Survey Email Reminder:

- ACS Email Reminder

H American Community Survey HU Spanish Mailing Package:

- ACS-1(SP)(2021)(05-29-20), ACS Stateside Questionnaire in Spanish
- ACS-10SM(SP)(2020) (02-19-2019), ACS FAQ Brochure Stateside Spanish

- ACS-13(L)(SP)(2021) (02-17-2021), ACS Spanish Introductory Letter
- ACS-14(L)(SP)(2021) (02-17-2021), ACS Follow-up Letter in Spanish
- ACS-23PS(A)(SP)(2021) (02-16-2021), Additional Mailing Postcard (English/Spanish)
- ACS-29(SP)(2021) (03-15-2021), Postcard for Second Reminder, Stateside Spanish
- ACS-46(SP)(2020) (12-17-2018), ACS Stateside Spanish Outgoing Envelope
- 6385-47(2022)(06-02-2021), ACS Business Reply Envelope

I Puerto Rico Community Survey HU Mailing Forms:

- ACS-12(L)PR(2021) (03-04-2021), PRCS Pre-notice Letter
- ACS-40PR(2020) (08-02-2019), PRCS Pre-notice Envelope
- ACS-13(L)PR(2021) (02-17-2021), PRCS Introductory Letter in English/Spanish
- ACS-10SMPR(2021) (01-04-2021), PRCS FAQ Brochure in English/Spanish
- ACS-1PR(SP)(2021)(05-19-20), PRCS Spanish Questionnaire in Spanish
- ACS-20PR(2021) (02-16-2021), PRCS Reminder/Thank You Postcard in English/Spanish
- ACS-14(L)PR(2021) (03-16-2021), PRCS Follow up Letter in English/Spanish
- ACS-23PR(2021) (02-16-2021), PRCS Reminder Postcard in English/Spanish
- ACS-46PR(2022)(05-27-2021), PRCS Outgoing Envelope
- ACS-1PR(2021)(05-18-20), PRCS Questionnaire in English VA
- BRE 6385-47(2020)(12-12-2018), ACS Business Reply Envelope

J American Community Survey Failed Edit Follow up Questions

K American Community Survey Vacant Unit Questions

L American Community Survey CAPI Materials

- ACS-16(L)(05-01-21) Introductory Letter in Multiple Languages
- ACS-16(L)(9-14-2021) Introductory Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-26(L)(05-01-21) ACS Thank You Letter in Multiple Languages
- ACS-26(B) (3-2-2022) ACS Thank You Bookmark in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-50(HU)(1-2021) ACS HU Informational Brochure in Multiple Languages
- ACS-50(HU) (1-2021) ACS HU Brochure in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-50(HU) (1-2021) ACS HU Brochure for Remote Alaska (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-50(HU) (1-2021) PRCS Bilingual HU Brochure (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-51(HU)(1-2020) Q&A Brochure in English and Spanish
- ACS-51 (HU) (5-2020) Q&A Brochure in Multiple Languages
- ACS-613B(L) PR ENG Better Understanding Letter in Puerto Rico English
- ACS-613B(L) PR ENG Better Understanding Letter in Puerto Rico English (New Look and Feel)

- ACS-613B(L) SS ENG Better Understanding Letter in English
- ACS-613B(L) SS ENG Better Understanding Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-613N(L) PR ENG No One Home Letter in Puerto Rico English
- ACS-613N(L) PR ENG No One Home Letter in Puerto Rico English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-613N(L) SS ENG No One Home Letter in English
- ACS-613N(L) SS ENG No One Home Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-613R(L) PR ENG Refusal Letter in Puerto Rico English
- ACS-613R(L) PR ENG Refusal Letter in Puerto Rico English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-613R(L) SS ENG Refusal Letter in English
- ACS-613R(L) SS ENG Refusal Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-CON SS ENG Confidentiality Letter in English
- ACS-CON SS ENG Confidentiality Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-FA SS ENG Final Attempt Letter in English Jan-June 2022 Version
- ACS-FA SS ENG Final Attempt Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-FA SS ENG Final Attempt Letter in English July 2022-Forward Version
- ACS-INET RO SS ENG Internet Letter for Regional Offices in English
- ACS-INET ROXX (2021) (12-14-2020) CAPI Internet Letter for All ROs
- ACS-MU-1(L) SS ENG Management Building Access Letter in English
- ACS-MU-2(L) SS ENG Management Gated Community Letter in English
- ACS-PCM PR ENG Please Call Me Letter in Puerto Rico English
- ACS-PCM PR ENG Please Call Me Letter in Puerto Rico English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-PCM SS ENG Please Call Me Letter in English
- ACS-PCM SS ENG Please Call Me Letter in English (New Look and Feel)
- ACS-SEA SS ENG Seasonal Unit Letter in English
- ACS-SEA SS ENG Seasonal Unit Letter in English (New Look and Feel)

M American Community Survey Housing Unit Content Reinterview (CRI) Questions

N American Community Survey Group Quarters Facilities Data Collection Package

- ACS-18(L)(C)(GQ)(RO name)(2022) ACS GQ Student Housing Introductory Letter
- ACS-18(L)(H)(RO name)(2022) ACS GQ Health Care Introductory Letter
- ACS-18(L)(GQ)(RO name)(2022) ACS GQ Facility Manager Introductory Letter
- ACS-18(L)(GQ)(PR)(2022) PRCS GQ Introductory Letter (English)
- ACS-18(L)(GQ)(PR)(S)(2022) PRCS GQ Introductory Letter (Spanish)
- ACS-51(GQ)(F) ACS GQ Facility FAQ
- ACS-26(L)(GQ)(F)(2022), ACS Facility Thank You Letter (English/Spanish)
- ACS-26(L)(GQ)(PR)(F)(2022), PRCS Facility Thank You Letter (English/Spanish)

O American Community Survey Group Quarters Facility Questionnaire and Listing Sheets

- GQFQ Facilities Questionnaire
- ACS-290(GQ)ACS GQ Listing Sheet
- ACS-290(GQ)(PR)(SP)(7-16-2 PRCS GQ Listing Sheet
- ACS-290B(GQ)(8-1-2011) ACS GQ Control List
- ACS-290B(GQ)(PR)(SP)(7-14-2011) PRCS GQ Control List (Spanish)

P American Community Survey Group Quarters Resident Data Collection Package

- ACS-1(GQ)(2016) (1-27-2015), ACS GQ Questionnaire (English/Spanish)
- ACS-17(L)(GQ)(2015)(6-2014), ACS Resident Introductory Letter (English)
- ACS-17(L)(GQ)(S)(2015)(6-2014), ACS Resident Introductory Letter (Spanish)
- ACS-21(GQ) (7-2011), ACS GQ Confidentiality Notice (English/Spanish)
- ACS-26(L)(GQ)(R)(2015)(6-2014), ACS GQ Resident Thank You Letter (English/Spanish)
- ACS-50(GQ) (June 2014) ACS Brochure (English/Spanish)
- ACS-51(GQ)RA (August 2012) ACS GQ Remote Alaska FAQ
- 5385-46(GQ) (7-2012) ACS Business Reply Mail Envelope

Q Puerto Rico Community Survey – Group Quarters Resident Questionnaire Package:

- ACS-1(GQ)(PR)(2016) (1-27-2015), PRCS GQ Questionnaire (English/Spanish)
- ACS-17(L)(GQ)(PR)(2015)(6-2014), PRCS Resident Introductory Letter (English/Spanish)
- ACS-21(GQ)(PR)(7-2011), PRCS GQ Confidentiality Notice (English/Spanish)
- ACS-26(L)(GQ)(PR)(R)(2015)(6-2014), PRCS Resident Thank You Letter (English/Spanish)
- ACS-51(GQ)PR (June 2014) PRCS GQ Puerto Rico FAQ
- 5385-46(GQ)(PR) (8-2011) PRCS GQ Business Reply Mail Envelope

R American Community Survey Group Quarters Reinterview Questions

S 60d FRN Comments Received

- Combined Files of 60d FRN Comments Received
- Comments from BEA
- Comments from NALEAO
- Comments from UPCEA
- Comments from Jean Public

T [USCODE-2007-Title13](#)