

**Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**  
**Rental Housing Finance Survey (RHFS)**  
**OMB Number: 2528-0276**

**B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

The agency should be prepared to justify its decision not to use statistical methods in any case where such methods might reduce burden or improve accuracy of results. When statistical methods are involved, the following documentation should be included with the Supporting Statement -A to the extent that it applies to the methods proposed:

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has requested that the Census Bureau produce estimates of selected characteristics of existing rental housing properties in the United States.

These estimates will be based on data collected from a representative sample of rental housing units in the United States in 2024. These rental units will be used to identify rental housing properties. The owners and/or property managers of the structure containing the sampled units will be contacted and asked about specific financing and property-related characteristics.

The sample universe consists of rental units from the 2021 American Housing Survey (AHS) Sample. The AHS provides a single frame covering both the single units and units in buildings with 2 or more units. With the exception of public housing units and group quarters (military, etc.), all rental units (vacant for rent and rented units) are eligible for the sample. Public housing units are removed using screening variables from AHS. Units that are part of the same building/rental property are identified and removed from the frame before sampling.

A sample of these units was selected in several steps. First, the eligible rental units were assigned to one of five strata based on the number of units in the structure as reported by AHS respondents. These strata are: 1 unit, 2-4 units, 5-24 units, 25-49 units, and 50 or more units. The units within each stratum were sorted by geographic variables, including state, urban/rural status, and county. A representative sample of these ordered units was then selected within each stratum. The minimum sample size allocation of properties per stratum was set so that the expected coefficient of variation at the national level by strata would be 6%. Then the required number of units for each strata that will yield the desired property sample size for each strata was determined. An oversample rate was then applied to each

stratum based on the percentage of non-respondents and ineligible structures from the 2021 iteration of this survey. This oversample was needed for two reasons: a high non-response rate and a large number of ineligible properties. Sample sizes by strata for the RHFS 2024 sample are shown below.

<b>Sample Part Description</b>	<b>Sample Size Including Oversample</b>
1 unit	900
2-4 units	1,750
5-24 units	6,500
25-49 units	1,425
50 or more units	925
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,500</b>

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
- Estimation procedure,
- Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
- Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
- Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Prior to RHFS data collection, the Census Bureau will collect the contact information for the rental property owner by conducting Internet research and address matching to administrative records when possible.

The RHFS data collection will begin with an advance letter to the rental property owner which invites their participation in the survey using a web-based instrument.

Respondents that do not complete their survey after approximately three weeks will continue into the field follow-up operation. Field representatives (FRs) will either call or visit the respondents in an attempt to conduct the interview.

Based on the available contact information, the FRs may be contacting either property owners or managers. In some instances, the owner will refer staff to the manager (or the manager will refer the staff to the owner) due to one party not having sufficient knowledge to answer certain questions.

During the interview, respondents may provide contact information for an additional respondent (i.e., property manager, owner, or accountant). This person will be contacted if the data already provided do not qualify as a sufficient partial interview. In addition, an effort will be to determine if different questionnaires are being referred to the same owner (which can occur if one individual owns multiple properties). In these situations, questionnaires will be consolidated and administered during a single follow-up attempt.

The survey estimates will be based on weighted data. The weights for producing these estimates will be calculated using a three-step procedure. First, the base weight (BW), which is the product of the AHS sample weight and the inverse of the probability of selecting a unit, will be calculated, and assigned to each sample unit in the stratum.

Next, a property adjustment factor (PAF), which adjusts the base sample weight so that it represents properties and not sample units.

Next, a nonresponse adjustment factor (NRF), which is the ratio of the sample properties divided by the interviewed sample properties, will be calculated and assigned to the interviewed sample properties. Separate NRFs will be computed for each stratum.

Finally, a population adjustment factor (POP) is applied to align the total units with rental unit estimates from the American Housing Survey (AHS).

The weight for each interviewed structure will be the product of these factors as expressed by the following formula:

$$\text{Weight} = \text{BW} * \text{PAF} * \text{NRF} * \text{POP}$$

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

We will maintain high levels of data accuracy and response rates through FR instruction, professional training, and close monitoring of the data. FRs will be educated on proper interviewing techniques as well as methods for dealing with reluctant respondents.

In addition, respondents who still refuse to participate during the field follow-up operation may receive a Refusal Letter. These letters will be generated at the Regional Office level and sent in order to educate individuals about the importance of our survey and the Census Bureau's commitment to confidentiality.

In addition, Unable to Contact Letters will be sent to respondents whom the FRs are having trouble reaching. This letter will inform respondents that a Census Bureau representative has been attempting to locate them and will ask them to call a Census Regional Office for further instruction.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of test may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

The survey content and the electronic data collection instrument are not expected to significantly change so no cognitive testing is planned.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

The Census Bureau will collect and process these data. Within the Census Bureau, the following individuals should be consulted for further information on their area of expertise.

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Attachments