

The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education

**OMB Information Collection Request
0970 - 0391**

Supporting Statement Part A

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Type of Request: Revision

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**Alternative Supporting Statement for Information Collections Designed for
Research, Public Health Surveillance, and Program Evaluation Purposes**

Part A

Executive Summary

- **Type of Request:** This request is a revision to a currently approved information collection (OMB #0970-0391, titled “The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education”). This request is to add a longitudinal follow-up information collection (i.e., 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups) for select samples of the main 2024 NSECE information collection.
- **Progress to Date:** Data collection for the 2024 NSECE began in November 2023 and baseline data collection is scheduled to run through November 2024. All planned activities are being implemented; data collection is ongoing, with no revisions to the currently approved plans at this time.
- **Timeline:** This revision request does not alter the timeline currently described under OMB #0970-0391 for the 2024 NSECE information collection.
- **Summary of changes requested:** The addition of two follow-up data collections with respondents who complete interviews in the 2024 NSECE: one with households and one with individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs in 2024. Using characteristics of sample members from the 2024 NSECE, the collected household follow-up data will allow nationally-representative descriptions of 1) households under 300% FPL, and 2) households with at least one resident child under age 13 and using paid individual care in 2024, and will provide new information on household search and selection of ECE, with a focus on financial assistance and paid individual care. Data collected in the workforce follow-up will allow nationally-representative descriptions of classroom based early care and education (ECE) workers in 2024 and will provide new information on retention and attrition patterns among classroom-based ECE workers.

We do not intend for this information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.

- **Time Sensitivity:** Data collection approval is requested by December 2024, so that timely data collection can occur with households during the first five months of 2025, and to allow for successful recontacting of individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs in fall 2025, approximately fifteen months after their 2024 NSECE interview. The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups must begin outreach, screening, and recruitment of households and individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs as early as possible in January 2025 in order to ensure sufficient time to complete survey data collection throughout all 50 states and D.C. before the end of the calendar year.

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A1. Necessity for Collection

The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) and 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups are funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children & Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). These information collection activities are part of ACF's ongoing effort to better understand the availability and use of ECE across the nation. Data collection for the 2024 NSECE began in November 2023 and baseline data collection is scheduled to run through November 2024. All planned and approved activities are being implemented and are ongoing, with no revisions to the currently approved plan at this time. This request is specific to the addition of two follow-up data collections: one with households and one with workforce respondents who complete interviews in the 2024 NSECE.

Note for review of this request: Supporting Statements A and B are written to break out information about the currently approved 2024 NSECE information collection (no revisions), and the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups, which are new to this effort, and we are currently submitting for review and approval (current request).

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions):

The 2024 NSECE is preceded by three prior NSECE data collections¹: the 2012 NSECE, which created the first national profile of ECE since the early 1990s; the 2019 NSECE, which captured information to help assess how multiple programmatic and policy changes introduced since 2012 had changed the ECE landscape; and the NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up, which re-interviewed provider and workforce (classroom staff) survey respondents in the 2019 NSECE between late 2020 and early 2022 to show how the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted the supply of care available to families. Before the start of the pandemic, there were multiple indications of significant challenges in the ECE system resulting in it being labeled with such terms as “fragile” and “fragmented,” and the COVID-19 pandemic only further exposed and exacerbated these weaknesses. Since the 2019 NSECE, there have been three major legislative responses to the COVID-19 pandemic involving substantial additional funding for child care subsidies (i.e., Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplementary Appropriations Act, and American Rescue Plan Act) and at the same time substantial new flexibility to Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies for implementation of these funds. Also, since 2019, the U.S. economy has undergone significant shifts including a pandemic-related downturn followed by inflation rates not seen in three decades, as well as the persistence of work from home and remote work. These major economic shifts may alter parents' use of ECE as well as the labor market and economic forces in which ECE providers operate.

The 2024 NSECE is well-positioned to identify patterns of ECE recovery and children's participation in ECE during the years following the COVID-19 pandemic, and to capture the effects of major public investments and regulatory efforts aimed at sustaining and strengthening ECE and the ECE workforce. The 2024 NSECE and 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups will collect information in a manner that

¹ All previous NSECE data collections were approved under this OMB number (OMB #0970-0391).

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facilitates comparisons with data collected for the 2012 NSECE, the 2019 NSECE, and (where appropriate) the NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up Survey and the 2024 NSECE. The timing of these collections offers the unique opportunity to capture changes in ECE supply and use from immediately before and during the COVID-19 pandemic through the recovery period and also to examine longer-term patterns and trends dating back to 2012.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Longitudinal follow-ups of the 2024 NSECE offer a unique opportunity to expand the goals of the 2024 NSECE by asking additional in-depth and longitudinal questions of households and individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs in 2024. Both follow-up surveys are designed to collect in-depth information that was not feasible to collect in the 2024 NSECE and which can be uniquely collected through re-interviews of selected 2024 NSECE participants.

The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups will consist of two nationally-representative surveys:

1. a survey of households (1) with incomes under 300% of the federal poverty (FPL) and/or (2) who had used paid care by an individual in the spring of 2024 (2024 NSECE Household Follow-up)
2. a survey of individuals who were employed in 2024 in center-based ECE programs working directly with children in classrooms serving children age 5 years and under, not yet in kindergarten (2024 NSECE Workforce Follow-up).

Participants for the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups will be drawn from respondents to the 2024 NSECE Household and Workforce surveys. The household follow-up will include information about households' awareness of and experience with publicly-funded ECE programs, how households selected ECE arrangements for fall 2024, and who provided paid individual care to the households' children in 2024. The workforce follow-up will include information about the experiences of ECE instructional staff over time, where workers who leave ECE employers or the ECE sector go and why they leave, and workers' experiences in various ECE settings throughout their ECE careers.

Both follow-ups will enhance the value of the 2024 NSECE by expanding the potential utility of those data to describe household and worker experiences over time and to address additional information needs. Accurate data on families with young children and the experiences of ECE workers are essential to assess the current landscape of ECE, and to provide insights to advance ECE policy and initiatives.

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate this collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency. ACF has contracted with NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) to complete this work.

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A2. Purpose

Purpose and Use

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

The 2024 NSECE data will provide consistent and representative data to ACF for better understanding how the ECE landscape has changed since 2012 and the extent to which funding that resulted from legislative responses is associated with changes in the ECE system. The 2024 NSECE will capture information on center-based providers, home-based providers, and center-based classroom assigned instructional staff (workforce) that will allow the study team to document the characteristics of the supply of ECE across the U.S. in 2024. At the same time, the 2024 NSECE will collect information of households with children under age 13 in order to describe their characteristics and their use of child care and early education services in 2024. Accurate data from households, ECE providers, and staff across all types of ECE will make it possible to provide multiple perspectives on the recovery. The methodological innovations built into the NSECE data collection also make it possible to consider a range of critical issues in ECE over longer periods of time, building on the availability of data on both supply and demand from the same geographical areas, detailed data on family employment patterns and ECE search, data on all types of home-based ECE, and capacity to look at access to ECE in a multifaceted way by utilizing multiple sources of data in the NSECE. The 2024 NSECE data will be used to develop analytic products that describe key findings. NORC will also develop public-use and restricted-use data files with supporting documentation and technical assistance materials that will be made available to the research community for further analysis.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Data from the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups will provide consistent and representative data to ACF for more in-depth understanding households' search and selection of ECE, and for workforce participation in the ECE field over time. The objectives of the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups are to build on the design and implementation of the 2024 NSECE to collect urgently needed information on two topics relevant to ECE policy: 1) how households learn about and make use of financial assistance in seeking and selecting ECE, with additional focus on paid individual care arrangements; and 2) patterns of retention and attrition among individuals in the center-based ECE workforce.

The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups expand upon the goals and questions of the 2024 NSECE through new constructs as well as providing longitudinal information to answer questions about changes over time. There is some overlap of themes across the 2024 NSECE and the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups. Where there is overlap in constructs, the follow-up data are intended to answer new research questions about changes over time. The ability to observe changes over time answers new questions about the stability of care arrangements or ECE employment. For the household follow-up, there are questions covering changes in the characteristics of individual care arrangements over time, experiences of low-income families with the subsidy system/subsidized ECE, and factors impacting parents' search and selection of care. For the workforce follow-up there are questions on what motivates educators to stay in ECE and their current centers, characteristics of staff that are more likely

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to stay in ECE, stability of workforce conditions experienced by staff, and the impact of staff shortages on ECE staff.

The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups data will be combined with the 2024 NSECE to provide in-depth perspectives on these key issues and new topic areas including searching for and selecting non-parental care, seeking financial assistance for ECE, and origin and current status of individual paid care arrangements (household) and career trajectories, job satisfaction, and non-ECE job experiences (workforce). The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups data will be used to develop analytic products that describe key findings. NORC will also develop public-use and restricted-use data files with supporting documentation and technical assistance materials that will be made available to the research community for further analysis.

The information collected is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision-maker, and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

Research Questions or Tests

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

The 2024 NSECE is designed to address the research questions included in Appendix L.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups are designed to address the research questions included in Appendix S.

Study Design

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

The 2024 NSECE includes four interrelated surveys comprised of three screeners and four questionnaires. The questionnaires include the Household Questionnaire, Home-based Provider Questionnaire, Center-based Provider Questionnaire, and Workforce (Classroom Staff) Questionnaire. These are described in the table below. There were two primary sample sources for the 2024 NSECE's four component surveys. The sample for the household survey and unlisted home-based provider survey was an address-based sample of housing units drawn from the Delivery Sequence File kept by the U.S. Postal Service. The center-based providers and listed home-based providers were sampled from a comprehensive list of addresses of ECE programs in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, which the NSECE team developed. The workforce (classroom staff) survey sample is generated from completed center-based provider surveys. Collectively, these surveys paint a comprehensive picture of the supply of and demand for ECE in the U.S. and offer a clearer understanding of how well families' needs and preferences match providers' offerings and constraints. To facilitate over-time comparisons, the 2024 NSECE largely replicates the design of the 2019 and 2012 NSECE, although all three are cross-sectional surveys with no intentional overlap in sampled households, providers, or workforce members. Longitudinal data are not available for households, providers, or workforce members. Despite the

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relatively large scope of the NSECE and a design that is nationally representative, the data may not be able to describe the experiences of some populations due to imprecise estimates or small sample sizes. Limitations will be noted in NSECE analytic products, data trainings, and materials created to support the use of the data.

2024 NSECE Instruments (no revisions)

Data Collection Activity	Instruments	Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection	Mode and Duration
Household Survey	2024 NSECE Household Screener and Questionnaire (Instruments 1 and 1S)	<p>Respondents: parent or guardian of a child or children under age 13 in households with at least one member child under age 13</p> <p>Content: household characteristics (such as household composition and income), parents' employment (employment schedule, employment history, etc.), the use of ECE services (care schedules, care payments and subsidies, attitudes towards various types of care and caregiver, etc.), and search for non-parental care</p> <p>Purpose: to describe the nation's demand for and use of ECE services</p>	<p>Screening Modes: web, paper-and-pencil self-administered questionnaire, text message survey, with phone and in-person as needed</p> <p>Questionnaire Modes: web, with phone and in-person interviewing as needed</p> <p>Duration: 60 Minutes</p>
Home-based Provider Survey	2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire (Instruments 2 and 2S)	<p>Respondents: home-based providers identified through household screening (unlisted home-based providers) or sampled from the provider sampling frame (listed home-based providers)</p> <p>Content: covers many of the same topics as the center-based provider and workforce (classroom staff) questionnaires described below; additional topics include the household composition of the provider, and questions trying to understand the proportion of household income coming from home-based care. Relative to unlisted providers, listed home-based providers are eligible for a number of additional items regarding the type of care provided, which are asked to more formal or market-based providers, including use of curriculum, membership in professional organizations, specific professional development questions, background checks, and inspections</p> <p>Purpose: to describe the full spectrum of individuals who provide care in a home-based setting</p>	<p>Mode: web, with phone and in-person interviewing as needed</p> <p>Duration: 20 Minutes (unlisted providers); 40 Minutes (listed providers)</p>

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Center-based Provider Survey	2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire (Instruments 3 and 3S)	<p>Respondents: center directors and other instructional leaders</p> <p>Content: structural characteristics of care, revenue sources, enrollment, admissions and marketing, enumeration of staff (instructional/non-instructional), and respondent demographics</p> <p>Purpose: to describe the population of centers serving children 5 years and under, not yet in kindergarten</p>	<p>Mode: web, with phone and in-person interviewing as needed</p> <p>Duration: 45 Minutes</p>
Workforce (Classroom Staff) Survey	2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) Questionnaire (Instruments 4 and 4S)	<p>Respondents: center-based classroom-assigned instructional staff</p> <p>Content: personal characteristics (demographic, employment-related, education/training); classroom activities; classroom characteristics; attitudes and orientation toward caregiving; and work climate and benefits</p> <p>Purpose: to describe classroom-assigned teachers, assistants, and aides working in a center with at least one child age 5 and under, not yet in kindergarten</p>	<p>Mode: web, with phone and in-person interviewing as needed</p> <p>Duration: 20 Minutes</p>

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

We propose two longitudinal follow-up data collections to the nationally representative samples achieved in the 2024 NSECE: one of households and one of classroom-assigned center-based ECE workers. The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups include one questionnaire for each follow-up data collection: a Household Questionnaire and a Workforce Questionnaire. The resulting household data will provide new, in-depth information about household experiences with search and selection of ECE, their awareness and use of financial assistance for ECE, and use of paid individual care. The workforce data will provide information on classroom-assigned center-based workers' over-time ECE employment experiences. The two surveys are described in the table below.

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Proposed 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

<i>Data Collection Activity</i>	<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection</i>	<i>Mode and Duration</i>
Household Survey	2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up Questionnaire	<p>Respondents: parent or guardian in a household that responded to the 2024 NSECE survey and in a household (1) with incomes under 300% of the federal poverty line (FPL), and/or (2) who had used paid care by an individual in 2024.</p> <p>Content: household composition, status of regular ECE arrangements, searching for and selecting non-parental care, seeking financial assistance for ECE, origin and status of individual care arrangements, household characteristics</p> <p>Purpose: To describe how households learn about and make use of financial assistance in seeking and selecting child care.</p>	<p>Mode: web and phone, with in-person follow-up as needed</p> <p>Duration: 20 minutes</p>
Workforce Survey	2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Questionnaire	<p>Respondents: individuals who responded to the 2024 NSECE survey and were employed in 2024 in a center-based ECE program working directly with children in classrooms serving children age 5 years and under, not yet in kindergarten.</p> <p>Content: identification of job transitions, current role characteristics, career trajectories, demographic and personal circumstances</p> <p>Purpose: To understand patterns of retention and attrition among individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs in 2024.</p>	<p>Mode: web and phone, with in-person follow-up as needed</p> <p>Duration: 20 minutes</p>

Other Data Sources and Uses of Information

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

A provider sampling frame was built from multiple state and national-level lists of ECE providers, including lists of licensed and license-exempt providers maintained by state licensing agencies, the federal Office of Head Start’s list of centers offering Head Start services, additional federal lists of ECE providers, the lists of accredited providers maintained by non-profit agencies such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and a commercially available list of public or private schools offering any grade kindergarten through eighth. Because these are lists for use in program

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operation or for commercial purposes, they are not the result of data collections subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The provider sampling frame was used for sampling center-based and listed home-based providers.

The 2024 data will be linked at the tract level to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (OMB # 0607-0810) for community-level contextual information, for example, on community poverty density and urban/rural. We have made use of school districts' administrative data to identify district-sponsored ECE centers, and plan to reduce burden on respondents when data requested in the center-based provider questionnaire are available publicly.

The 2024 NSECE questionnaires also seek permission from respondents to link to external data sources. Additional linkages to publicly available data may be undertaken by analysts to understand a variety of issues, such as, for example, which families receive child care and financial assistance for their children and how does this impact their ECE choices, what kinds of jobs ECE workers move to after they leave ECE, professional development activities undertaken and degrees earned by individuals working with children, and how licensing requirements and child care subsidies are associated with the types of care offered and used by families in certain areas.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up will be linked to the 2024 NSECE Household data file, including other data files such as the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (OMB # 0607-0810). The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up will include identifiers that would allow the data file to be linked to the 2024 NSECE Workforce survey data, including all publicly available extant data that exists for that file.

A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

The 2024 NSECE employs a multi-mode data collection approach that achieves significant cost efficiencies for the government while giving respondents flexibility to select the most convenient mode to complete their questionnaires as the data collection period progresses. The project emphasizes the convenience of web survey completion for all provider and workforce (classroom staff) surveys, as well as the household screener, and subsequently offers telephone and in-person questionnaire administration options. The project has an option for households to complete the household screener by text message after texting a short code to request the questions. A paper self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) option is available for the household screener for respondents to use as needed. Telephone, in-person, and web surveys all reduce respondent burden and produce data that can be prepared for release and analysis faster and more accurately than is the case with pencil-and-paper surveys.

The project also employs tablet technology to support field interviewer screening, prompting, and interviewing for the 2024 NSECE, which will further reduce respondent burden. Particularly, using tablets allows interviewers to quickly text and email provider questionnaire URLs while talking with

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respondents, and allows interviewers to deliver technical support instantly to respondents on completing the web questionnaire.

Additionally, contact materials include unique QR codes whereby scanning the code with a smartphone camera, respondents are able to click a link that will take them directly to their respective web screener or web questionnaire. Respondents enter a unique PIN to access their web screener or web questionnaire.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

For the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups, data collection is proposed using web-based interviewing, which allows respondents to complete the interview at their own convenience and with minimum contact with contractor data collection staff. Self-administration times are generally shorter than interviewer-administered administration times due to faster silent reading ability of most adults, so web-based interviews are expected to reduce burden relative to interviewer administration. We also propose to use responses from prior interviews, administrative data sources, and programming within the instrument to minimize burden. The proposed approach minimizes cost to the government, maximizes respondent flexibility and convenience, and reduces processing time to provide data to the agency and research community. Non-response follow-up will again use tablet technology to support phone or in-person outreach. Contact materials will also include unique QR codes as for the 2024 NSECE.

A4. Use of Existing Data: Efforts to reduce duplication, minimize burden, and increase utility and government efficiency

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

Three extant national surveys collect data on ECE characteristics and utilization patterns. These surveys are the National Household Education Survey, Early Childhood Program Participation (NHES: ECPP), last conducted in 2019 (OMB# 1850-0768), the Survey of Income Program Participation (SIPP), last conducted in 2014 (OMB# 0607-0977), and the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, last initiated in 2010-2011 (OMB# 1850-0750), with plans for a new cohort to be initiated in 2023-2024.

While these three national surveys may address some of the data needs relative to households with children, there are no data collection efforts aimed at understanding the institutions, professionals, and individuals working directly with children across all spectra of ECE, nor the relationship between the changing needs of families and these ECE resources.

The NSECE differs from these studies in several important ways:

- 1. Measures both ECE supply and demand.** The 2024 NSECE allows for a comparison of data collected from both households and ECE providers in the same geographic areas. Analyses of parents' ECE choices as well as their decision-making process can be contextualized with detailed information about a sample of available providers in their area.

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- 2. Oversamples households expected to have low-income or who reside in areas with high proportions of households with low incomes.** The design of the 2024 NSECE implements oversamples that are expected to result in interviews with disproportionately many households with low-income to allow for important subgroup analyses, including examining patterns among subgroups that consider combinations of characteristics, such as employment *and* income or race/ethnicity *and* income.
- 3. Includes unlisted home-based providers.** This study allows for a more thorough understanding of the role of unlisted home-based providers in ECE. The 2024 NSECE will provide data to describe and analyze which American families use unlisted home-based providers, and how their availability varies by community, socioeconomic status of families, and formal child care market characteristics. We will also be able to understand the demographic characteristics of these providers and how they see their role in caring for children and helping the parents of these children. Research on these topics is important for policy makers as they may inform decisions regarding subsidies paid and professional development available to unlisted home-based providers.
- 4. Includes multiple children in household.** The 2024 NSECE provides detailed information about the ECE arrangements of all children in a household age 12 or younger. This data will include the type (or combinations) of arrangements, descriptions of providers, number of hours of care in ECE arrangements, where ECE services are provided, and the cost of the ECE.
- 5. Includes detailed non-parental care and parental work schedules.** One key feature of the 2024 NSECE household questionnaire administered in the winter and spring of 2024 is a full week's schedule of all non-parental ECE (including elementary school attendance) for all age-eligible children in the household, in addition to all employment, schooling, and training activities of each parent or regular caregiver within the household. The comprehensive schedules, along with other rich data from the household and provider surveys, will provide a highly specific aggregate description of the match between parental search requirements for ECE and the actual utilization of ECE.
- 6. Allows for 51-state sample.** The 2024 NSECE employs a 51-“state” design (50 states and the District of Columbia), which permits analysis of policy variation across states. Many of the specific decisions states face depend on market dynamics — how to strengthen regulatory and quality rating standards, what reimbursement rates and co-pay schedules to set, and what supports to providers and individual staff can improve quality in a cost-effective manner. The answers depend on the interaction of supply and demand within a local market, and thus, market data must be gathered at the state and local, not just the national level.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

For the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups, every effort has been made to determine whether similar research and information exists by searching existing data and reports, and in consultation with federal staff. As part of these efforts, the study team reviewed reports and other published resources that

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specifically focus on household engagement with financial assistance for child care, household search and selection for childcare, and ECE workforce experiences.

For the household longitudinal follow-up, the study team identified three state surveys, two national surveys (one in Canada, one in the United States), and several child care questionnaires with possibly relevant information. These include both household and child care provider surveys, intended to learn more about families' engagement with child care, their child care needs, and characteristics of provider programs. For the workforce longitudinal follow-up, the study team identified one questionnaire and three city and state-level survey-based studies on ECE teacher workforce experiences and turnover.

Though extant data sets provide useful information, they also leave multiple gaps in our knowledge base on household search and selection for care and workforce experiences. First, none of the identified studies had both a similar target population and content area focus to the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups. Most studies used a convenience sample in a specific state. Second, in our search we did not find longitudinal surveys of the ECE workforce. Documenting longitudinal patterns of ECE workforce is critical to understanding predictors of retention and attrition that are of high importance to ACF.

In addition to the important contributions of the 2024 NSECE, the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups differ from existing studies in several important ways:

- 1. Nationally representative follow-up of household and workforce populations.** The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups provide a nationally representative, in-depth look at both households and workforce. While the NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up provided a longitudinal study of the ECE workforce, that study was conducted at a specific time period that is not likely generalizable to a "typical" policy environment. Other longitudinal, nationally representative studies of the ECE workforce rely on administrative data with job categories that may not align or provide sufficient nuance for our understanding of the ECE workforce.
- 2. Leverages information from the 2024 NSECE.** The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-up builds on the rich information collected in the 2024 NSECE. Using the 2024 NSECE we are able to identify households that may be eligible for or use specific ECE resources and services, and ask targeted questions in the longitudinal follow-up to learn more in-depth about their experiences with ECE. Combining the 2024 NSECE and the 2024 NSECE Workforce Follow-up, we are able to explore changes over time in workforce experiences.
- 3. Fills gaps in knowledge.** The 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups fill several main gaps in our current knowledge of the ECE sector – household search and selection of care, particularly engagement with financial assistance, information about the use of paid individual care, and questions about ECE workforce retention and attrition, including direct reports from ECE classroom workers about their current experiences.

We therefore conclude that additional information beyond existing research and data is needed to better understand household search and selection of ECE, including use of financial assistance, and ECE workforce patterns of retention and attrition. The study team concluded that no existing data source can provide all data needed to fully address the study's objectives.

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A5. Impact on Small Businesses

Some ECE providers in the selected sample are small businesses. The proposed data collection approach provides flexibility in timing and mode of interview participation to minimize burden on these businesses and other respondents.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Given the need for longitudinal information about the ECE workforce and household ECE decision-making, a single wave of data would not be able to capture these over-time experiences. Information from two waves (the 2024 NSECE and the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups) is critical to the agency's information needs to support the availability of high-quality ECE to families for their participation in the economy and their child's development and to support the ECE workforce. For example, the Follow-ups will allow for deeper exploration in questions related to changes over time, including stopping or starting the use of financial assistance or paid individual care and the reasons for these changes, and factors associated with retention of or exit from the ECE workforce.

A7. Now subsumed under 2(b) above and 10 (below)

A8. Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

In accordance with the PRA of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published notices in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of these information collection activities. Notices requesting comments on the NSECE 2024 data collection were published to solicit comments during a 60-day comment period (88 FR 2626) and a 30-day comment period (88 FR 28556). During the notice and comment periods, one comment was received. We reviewed the comment, which was from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), in the context of the NSECE research objectives and study design and made the following changes: 1) We added respondent gender identity items to the center-based and home-based provider questionnaires; we found that the items related to respondent gender identity proposed for inclusion in the workforce (classroom staff) and household questionnaires were consistent with their recommendations, but we updated the wording of the question to be consistent with the most recent OMB guidance. 2) We added questions about the respondent's sexual orientation in the workforce (classroom staff) and household questionnaires. The NSECE questionnaires collect more extensive demographic information from household and workforce respondents than from center- and home-based provider respondents to support policy-relevant analyses related to household and worker characteristics. The center-based and home-based provider questionnaires prioritize collecting information about enrollment, program attributes, and services.

On April 3, 2024 ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of the NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-ups (89 FR 23019). This notice provided

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a sixty-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment period we did not receive comments.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

The 2024 NSECE has held multiple meetings of its Technical Expert Panel (TEP). The TEP provides insight and content and technical expertise on various project activities, including informing decisions about the content areas for ECE research, technical elements of survey design, and administration and analysis. The TEP also shares with OPRE and the project team research-related issues from the ECE field. In individual and group consultations, the team described relevant aspects of the NSECE and listened to feedback from these experts. Expert panel members come from research organizations and universities and include the following individuals:

Technical Expert Panel on Sampling Approach	
Lynne Stokes Southern Methodist University	Jae-Kwang Kim Iowa State University
Patrick Cantwell U.S. Census Bureau	
Technical Expert Panel on Content Areas and Analytic Priorities	
Colleen Vesely George Mason University	Alejandra Ros Pilarz University of Wisconsin, Madison
Elizabeth Davis University of Minnesota	Jason Hustedt University of Delaware
Holli Tonyan California State University at Northridge	Marci Ybarra University of Chicago
Gina Adams Urban Institute	Peg Burchinal University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Arya Ansari Ohio State University	Iheoma Iruka University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Herman Knopf University of Florida	
Technical Expert Panel on Content Design	
Susan Lambert University of Chicago	Marcy Whitebook University of California, Berkeley
Rene Bautista NORC at the University of Chicago	Stephanie Curenton-Jolly Boston University

A second expert panel, the 2024 NSECE Content Advisory Team (CAT), contributed to the development of the 2024 NSECE questionnaire design and analysis and reporting strategy that builds on the 2019 NSECE instrumentation and analytic products. The CAT members have the highest order expertise in each ECE topical area and include the following individuals:

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Taryn W. Morrissey American University	Roberta Weber Independent consultant
Kathleen Gallagher University of Nebraska, Kearney	Stephanie Curenton-Jolly Boston University
Julia R. Henly University of Chicago	Marcy Whitebook University of California, Berkeley
Deborah Phillips Georgetown University	Bob Goerge Chapin Hall
Martha Zaslow Child Trends	

Through these consultation efforts, the study team did not request the same information from more than 9 individuals and therefore the PRA was not implicated by these activities.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Expert consultations have taken place regarding how best to design an information collection to support the agency’s information needs, as well as on data availability, data collection, and dissemination strategies. We have consulted several individuals outside of ACF, through group discussions, materials review, and one-on-one correspondence.

Julia R. Henly University of Chicago	Bob Goerge* Chapin Hall
Kathleen Gallagher* University of Nebraska, Kearney	Marcy Whitebook University of California, Berkeley
Martha Zaslow Child Trends	Stephanie Curenton-Jolly Boston University
Taryn W. Morrissey American University	Roberta Weber Independent consultant
Anna Johnson Georgetown University	

* Note: At the time of consultation, Bob Goerge was affiliated with Chapin Hall and Kathleen Gallagher was affiliated with University of Nebraska, Kearney. At the time of this OMB submission, Goerge is affiliated with NORC at the University of Chicago, and Gallagher is affiliated with the University of Oklahoma Early Childhood Education Institute (ECEI).

Through these consultation efforts, the study team did not request the same information from more than 9 individuals and therefore the PRA was not implicated by these activities.

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A9. Tokens of Appreciation

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

As previously approved, we are currently using tokens of appreciation as part of the overall data collection strategy for the 2024 NSECE study. More information on both the currently approved tokens of appreciation is provided in Exhibit 1 and the following text, along with the justification for proposed tokens of appreciation for the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current)

We propose to include tokens of appreciation for the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups, as described in this section. Our plan has been informed by previous NSECE data collections. We list the primary motivations for our approach below:

1. To increase the likelihood that data collection can be completed within the data collection window (i.e., for households before the start of summer 2025, and for workforce within the 2025 calendar year). Known differences in patterns in ECE usage and supply among households and providers during the summer months versus the typical program year would compromise data quality and comparability of data across cases if the required timeframe was not met. Workforce compensation information will be most helpful if collected within a single calendar year for comparability with other annually produced financial data. In the 2012 NSECE we were able to complete data collection before the end of the school year, but in the 2019 NSECE, we had to extend data collection into July, resulting in some compromises in data comprehensiveness.
2. To minimize bias in estimates, ensuring that the final data sets are representative of the target population, including hard to reach sub-populations such as individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs in 2024 who have lower levels of education and training in ECE. Both in the 2019 NSECE and the NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up, we found that members of the ECE workforce were a particularly challenging population to collect data from, and found some evidence that less-educated workers were especially less likely to participate in the interview.
3. To ensure that target sample sizes are achieved. Target sample sizes are required to support high priority subgroup analyses that have low prevalence in the population, especially ECE providers and workers in rural areas, paid home-based ECE providers not known to state and national agencies (i.e., unlisted paid home-based providers) and households using child care subsidies. These subgroups, all high priority for analysis, are relatively rare in the population, making it very difficult to interview them in adequate numbers for analyses without achieving high response rates. Analyses of the 2012 and 2019 NSECE most frequently encounter sample size constraints for these subgroups. To increase the numbers of sampled individuals in these groups we would need to expand the geographic areas in which providers are sampled, double the numbers of households screened, or supplement the address-based household sample with

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households identified from administrative data. These options are not feasible for the 2024 NSECE due to analytic constraints, budget constraints, and lack of national administrative data.

Exhibit 1. Tokens of Appreciation: Approved Amounts for the 2024 NSECE (no revisions) and Proposed Amounts for the NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-Ups (current request)

Status	Token type	Survey	Amount	Token administration
Approved for NSECE 2024	Screeners pre-paid token	Household	\$2	All households invited to complete screener – unconditional
Approved for NSECE 2024	Screeners pre-paid token	Listed Home-based	\$2	All listed home-based providers receiving postal mail invitation – unconditional
Approved for NSECE 2024	Interview pre-paid token	Unlisted Home-based	\$5	All unlisted home-based providers receiving postal mail invitation - unconditional
Approved for NSECE 2024	Interview pre-paid token (experiment)	Workforce (Classroom-Staff)	\$5 or \$0	Randomized experimental design to center-based ECE workers – unconditional
Proposed for NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)	Interview pre-paid token	Workforce or Household Follow-up	\$10, \$5 or \$0	Randomized experimental design to households or workforce members- unconditional
Approved for NSECE 2024	Screeners completion token (experiment)	Household	\$5 or \$0	Randomized experimental design to households determined to have barriers preventing access for screener outreach – conditional upon screener completion
Approved for NSECE 2024	Interview completion token	Household	\$25	All households eligible for household interview - conditional upon interview completion
Proposed for NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)	Interview completion token	Household Follow-up	\$20	All households sampled for household follow-up interview - conditional upon interview completion

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Status	Token type	Survey	Amount	Token administration
Approved for NSECE 2024	Sample representativeness token (design allows for quasi-experimental evaluation)	Household	\$15	Households in selected subgroups with lagging overall response rates (screener return rates multiplied by household response rates) late in field period to improve sample balance and representativeness – conditional upon interview completion
Proposed for NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-Ups (current request)	Sample representativeness token (design allows for quasi-experimental evaluation)	Household Follow-up	\$20	Households in selected subgroups with lagging overall response rates late in field period to improve sample balance and representativeness – conditional upon interview completion
Proposed for NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)	Sample representativeness (experimental)	Workforce Follow-up	\$10 or \$0	Randomized experimental design to individuals in selected subgroups with lagging overall response rates late in field period to improve sample balance and representativeness – conditional upon interview completion.
Approved for NSECE 2024 and Proposed for NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)	Non-monetary	All samples	Not applicable	Token gifts of value less than \$2 for rapport building, for example, magnets, pens, plants, to small subgroups of sample as part of specific outreach efforts

Pre-paid tokens to encourage self-administration

The household survey, unlisted home-based provider survey, and listed home-based provider survey all require a screener completion to determine eligibility for the main interviews. These surveys use a mixed-mode strategy that sends mail invitations to self-administer the screener before following-up with other modes of outreach. Difficulties conducting field outreach to screen sampled units could result in lower screening rates and thus underrepresentation of selected subgroups in the final NSECE interview data. Prepaid tokens of appreciation have been found to be more effective in increasing response rates than promised tokens in mailed invitations to a mail or web survey (Singer and Ye 2013). Pre-paid mail tokens have been shown to produce a larger impact per dollar than pre-paid tokens by other modes or post-paid tokens. For example, based on experimentation in the 2017 National Household Education Survey (NHES), the U.S. Department of Education found that \$5 cash tokens of appreciation produced higher screener response rates than \$2 tokens and, as a result, implemented a \$5 pre-paid token in the 2019 NHES (OMB # 1850-0768). Also, the 2020 National Survey of Children’s

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Health (NSCH), conducted by the Census Bureau for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (OMB # 0607-0990) used a \$2 pre-paid token and found it performed similarly to a \$5 pre-paid token in asking households to complete a screener to determine eligibility for a household survey about children. A distinctive feature of pre-paid tokens is that sampled individuals receive the token whether or not they participate in the survey – these tokens are unconditionally given. In addition, providing tokens could potentially affect the sample composition by improving cooperation for sample units who would otherwise be more likely to refuse (e.g., Oscarsson and Arkhede 2020, Singer and Ye 2013). Previous studies have found positive effects of tokens to draw in more respondents from underrepresented groups such as low educated (e.g., Wagner et al. 2022, McGonagle and Freedman 2017, Petrolia and Bhattacharjee 2009, Ryu, Couper, and Marans 2006) and lower income groups (e.g., Ryu, Couper, and Marans 2006, Martin, Abreu, and Winters 2001).

We provide the following approved pre-paid tokens to encourage self-administration in the 2024 NSECE:

- \$2 in the initial advance letters for the households and for listed home-based providers to encourage self-administration of their screeners. These pre-paid tokens were previously incorporated in the 2012 and 2019 NSECE designs. Without these tokens, screening rates are likely to fall, jeopardizing the project's ability to identify and interview eligible individuals within the available time frame and to the desired number of completed interviews.
- \$5 in the initial advance letters for unlisted home-based providers. This token is to encourage interview completion rather than screener completion, however eligibility of unlisted home-based providers can change quickly as care providing arrangements change, so even a small increase in completion rates is valuable for sample sizes and representativeness of data. This pre-paid token is new to the 2024 NSECE. No experiment is proposed due to lack of power for this relatively small sample. Maximizing the number of interviews completed with unlisted home-based providers is critical to supporting the analytic goals of the 2024 NSECE. Our 2019 NSECE experience indicates that this sample type would benefit from efforts to improve interview completion rates.
- A randomized experiment for center-based workforce (classroom staff) members in which workers in a randomly-selected 30% of centers will receive a \$5 pre-paid token in their initial advance letter inviting completion of the workforce interview. Workers at the remaining 70% of centers will not receive any pre-paid token in their advance letters. We will evaluate the effectiveness of this pre-paid token using such data collection outcomes as: 1) self-completion of the interview within 4 weeks of the initial mailing, 2) interview completion by the end of the field period, and 3) the number of outreach attempts required for completed interviews. Understanding the experiences of ECE workers is a primary purpose of the 2024 NSECE, we wish to test whether positive impacts of pre-paid tokens in household surveys can carry over to the ECE workforce context. The experimental design could benefit other research efforts anticipated with ECE workers and other low-wage occupational groups of high policy interest.

Consistent with this approach, we propose experiments with pre-paid tokens to encourage self-administration in the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups:

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- \$10, \$5 or \$0 pre-paid-token for both household respondents and individuals who were employed in center-based ECE programs in 2024. The final design of the experiment for the follow-up will be informed based on what we learn about the use of pre-paid experiments in the 2024 NSECE at the end of the data collection period.

Tokens provided on condition of cooperation with household survey requests

In addition to the initial pre-paid token to encourage participation in the household screener, we provide additional conditionally-paid tokens at different stages and for different subsets of households sampled for the household survey for the 2024 NSECE:

- We estimate approximately 20 percent of sampled households will be identified as having a barrier to contact, such as gated communities, locked buildings, drop-point addresses not physically connected to a dwelling, or other barriers. These households may differ systematically in their financial circumstances, household composition, or access to or use of ECE, thus it is important that the NSECE reflect these households appropriately in the final data. We will send a postal mailing to these households once they have been identified, encouraging screener completion. A randomly-selected 50% of these households will receive a letter offering a \$5 token upon screener completion; the remaining 50% of these household will receive a very similar letter but with no mention of token of appreciation. We will evaluate the effectiveness of this conditional screener completion token using such data collection outcomes as: 1) self-completion of screeners within 4 weeks of mailing, 2) screener completion by the end of the field period, and 3) completion of the household survey among eligible households, and the number of outreach attempts required for each of these three outcomes. (The unlisted home-based provider sample identified from households in this experiment is not expected to have adequate power for testing effects on completion of the unlisted home-based provider interview.) The household screening rate in the 2019 NSECE was lower than in the 2012 NSECE, in large part due to larger numbers of households with barriers to contact in 2019. We are anticipating at least as many households with similar barriers in 2024, and propose this token as a possible way to mitigate these barriers.
- Similar to the \$20 post-paid token received by households completing the 2012 and 2019 NSECE household surveys, households completing the 2024 NSECE will receive a \$25 post-paid token upon completion of an eligible household questionnaire. We included a modest increase from \$20 to \$25 recognizing decreased purchasing power of a dollar from 2012 to 2024. An additional \$15 post-paid token is used to achieve sample balance and improve the representativeness of the interviewed sample. We will offer an additional \$15 token upon interview completion to any households belonging to sub-groups that have an overall completion rate (screener return rates multiplied by household response rates) that is 10 percent or more below the overall completion rate for the full sample. We will examine the interview completion rates by the following characteristics at the census tract level: urban/rural (RUCA, metropolitan, micropolitan, and rural), racial/ethnic composition of census tract (3-levels), mode of screener completion (self vs interviewer-administered), Census Bureau tract level Low Response Score from the most current Planning Database available at the time of data collection launch (3-levels), percentage of households in tract speaking a language other than English at home, and presence in special

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geographic locations such as tribal area/military location/non-standard postal routes. Failing to have enough number of completes from hard-to-survey subpopulations defined by these characteristics could lead to nonresponse bias in the NSECE survey estimates, such as, for racial minority and low-income subpopulations. Although we are not using a randomized assignment, we will assess the effectiveness of this sample representativeness token through quasi-experimental difference-in-difference methods, exploiting overlapping membership of households in different subgroups. We will evaluate the sample representativeness token in terms of final interview completion rates, total token cost per completed interview, and number of outreach attempts required per completed interview. This token will help the project address subgroups with weaker overall completion rates, so that the final household data set can be as representative as possible of the target population.

Consistent with this approach, we propose provide additional conditionally-paid tokens in the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups:

For the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up, an additional \$20 post-paid token is proposed for some households to achieve sample balance and improve representativeness of the interviewed sample, for the reasons described in the bullet above.

- For the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up, a \$20 post-paid token is proposed for all households completing the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-up questionnaire.
- For the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up, an additional \$10 post-paid token to achieve sample balance and improve representativeness of the interviewed sample.
- For sample balance and representativeness in both longitudinal follow-ups, we will identify individuals belonging to sub-groups that have an overall completion rate that is 10 percent or more below the overall completion rate for the full sample. We will then randomly select among these individuals to receive an additional \$10 post-paid token upon completion, while those not selected will not receive the additional amount. We will evaluate the effectiveness of this conditional token by analyzing questionnaire completion rates between those individuals who were selected for the additional amount and those who were not selected.

Non-monetary Tokens of Appreciation for All Samples

We propose using small in-kind gifts in the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups similar to those approved in the 2024 NSECE. In prior NSECE data collections 2012, 2019, and for the NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up, NSECE field interviewers found that the use of in-kind gifts of appreciation (e.g., magnets, pens, small plants, etc.) were helpful tools to successfully gain cooperation among sampled individuals, in addition to the honoraria offered for their time to complete the survey. The diverse make-up of the NSECE sampled populations meant that sample members had unique concerns about participating in the survey, including questions about privacy and future use of data. As this approach was used more extensively as data collection progressed, interviewers found that in-kind gifts were a successful tool to building rapport and gaining trust, which laid the groundwork for motivating these respondents to participate.

Small in-kind gifts can also provide field interviewers with another reason to approach sampled individuals whom they have already attempted to contact in the past without success, thereby retaining

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this tool for cases that require more effort to gain cooperation. Field interviewers will be trained on the types of cases for which in-kind gifts will be most useful, but a degree of flexibility will be allowed in order to respond most appropriately to the specific needs of each individual case. Where in-person outreach is not feasible, in-kind gifts may be sent to respondents.

A10. Privacy: Procedures to protect privacy of information, while maximizing data sharing

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

Note: There are no changes from the 2024 NSECE privacy procedures for the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups. The following approved plan is applicable to all data collection efforts, approved and proposed.

Personally Identifiable Information

The project captures personally identifying information (PII) throughout the data collection process and in the questionnaires to recruit and contact sampled households, providers and classroom staff to participate in the survey.

PII collected in the household screener and questionnaire includes the following: 1) names and contact information of individuals looking after children who are not their own (collected in the screener) to select an unlisted home-based provider, 2) child care provider names to capture the types of care used by the household, and 3) names of household members to determine who lives in the household. The project also requests permission to search state or local government records for child-care subsidy, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (Food Stamps), TANF, WIC, Medicaid, or other programs that provide assistance to families. In order to do this, the questionnaire collects the full name and date of birth for each child. At the end of the questionnaire, the project also captures the respondent's email address, mailing address, and phone number in order to provide a token of appreciation and for future contact if needed.

In the home-based provider survey, the project collects contact information needed for recruitment, including provider's email address, phone number, and mailing address. The questionnaire also requests permission to search state or national employment records, college attendance or professional development records, or state data on licensing and/or subsidies. In order to conduct the search, the project collects the respondent's full name, phone number, business name, business address, and date of birth.

For the center-based provider survey, the project collects contact information needed for recruitment, including center email address, phone number, and mailing address as well as contact information for the individual identified as the questionnaire respondent (name, phone number, and email), if different from the center's contact information. In addition, the questionnaire collects classroom staff names and contact information such as phone and email for the individuals selected for the workforce (classroom staff) survey if this information is different from the center's. This is necessary in order to choose and contact the respondent(s) for the workforce (classroom staff) survey.

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For the workforce (classroom staff) survey, the project may collect additional contact information from the individuals selected for the survey as part of the recruitment process (such as personal mailing address). The project also requests permission to search state or national employment records, college attendance or professional development records, or state data on licensing and/or subsidies. In order to conduct the search, the questionnaire collects the respondent's name, phone number, business name, business address, and date of birth.

Respondent contact information (name, phone, email, address) is also requested at the end of each survey should we need to re-contact the respondent for any reason.

Assurances of Privacy

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. As specified in the contract, the Contractor will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information.

At least some of the information collected through these data collections will likely be retrieved by an individual's personal identifier in a way that triggers the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a). The system of records notice (SORN) for this collection is OPRE Research and Evaluation Project Records, 09-80-0361. Each individual will be provided with information that complies with 552a(e)(3) prior to being asked for information that will be placed into that system of records. This means respondents will receive information about the authority, the purposes for use, the routine uses, that the request is voluntary, and any effects of not providing the requested information.

Due to the sensitive nature of this research (see A.11 for more information), the study will obtain a Certificate of Confidentiality. The study team has applied for this Certificate. The Certificate of Confidentiality helps to assure participants that their information will be kept private to the fullest extent permitted by law and will be included in the informed consent statements.

Data Security and Monitoring

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall protect respondent privacy to the extent permitted by law and will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information. The Contractor has developed a Data Safety and Monitoring Plan that assesses all protections of respondents' PII. The Contractor shall ensure that all of its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor, who perform work under this contract/subcontract, are trained on data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements.

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall use Federal Information Processing Standard compliant encryption (Security Requirements for Cryptographic Module, as amended) to protect all instances of sensitive information during storage and transmission. The Contractor shall securely generate and manage encryption keys to prevent unauthorized decryption of information, in accordance with the Federal Processing Standard. The Contractor shall: ensure that this standard is incorporated into the Contractor's property management/control system; establish a procedure to account for all laptop

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computers, desktop computers, and other mobile devices and portable media that store or process sensitive information. Any data stored electronically will be secured in accordance with the most current National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements and other applicable Federal and Departmental regulations. In addition, the Contractor must submit a plan for minimizing to the extent possible the inclusion of sensitive information on paper records and for the protection of any paper records, field notes, or other documents that contain sensitive or PII that ensures secure storage and limits on access.

The Contractor will disseminate data files for each of the 2024 NSECE surveys with varying levels of restriction. The Contractor will create public-use data files and two levels of restricted-use files. The public use files and the first level of restricted use files will be available through the Child and Family Data Archive (CFData). The public-use files will be available for download; researchers seeking to use the level-1 restricted-use data will need to get approval from CFData before access to the data is granted. To provide data to the research community as soon as possible, the Contractor may also make the public-use and level-1 restricted-use data available while CFData processes the files. The Contractor will provide access to second-level restricted-use data which may include state and county identifiers as well as linking variables for cluster-level analyses and county- and cluster-level sampling.

A11. Sensitive Information²

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

At the close of the household questionnaire, respondents are asked to provide consent for the project to access administrative records from government subsidy programs. Respondents (parents or guardians) who grant such consent are then asked to provide the full names, dates of birth, and the street address of their children under age 13. Such sensitive information is required in order to match administrative records to survey data. The availability and use of child care subsidies is a key research topic of this study. These data require extensive questionnaire batteries for collection and are even then very difficult for parents to report accurately. Collection of administrative records would improve the quality of subsidy-related analyses that could be completed using the NSECE data. Respondents are free to refuse consent for records access, and in this case will not be asked for personal identifying information.

The home-based provider and workforce (classroom staff) questionnaires include similar requests, seeking permission to search state or national employment records and other data sources that contain information about college attendance or professional development. Respondents who consent will be asked to provide their full names, addresses, phone numbers, and dates of birth. Such sensitive

² Examples of sensitive topics include (but not limited to): social security number; sex behavior and attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close relationships, e.g., family, pupil-teacher, employee-supervisor; mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to respondents; religion and indicators of religion; community activities which indicate political affiliation and attitudes; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers; records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment; receipt of economic assistance from the government (e.g., unemployment or WIC or SNAP); immigration/citizenship status.

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information is needed to match administrative records to survey data. Collection of administrative records would help improve our understanding of why some people leave the ECE field, where they go, and how much education and training helps them succeed in the field or elsewhere in the job market.

The household, home-based provider, and workforce (classroom staff) questionnaires ask respondents to report their total household income the year preceding questionnaire completion (calendar year 2023). Questionnaires ask respondents to report income as an exact dollar amount. Since income may be difficult to remember or report, if respondents do not know or refuse to provide this information, the questionnaires then ask them to describe income by pre-defined approximate ranges, such as less than \$15,000, \$15,001 to \$22,500, and so on.

These same questionnaires have additional questions about respondents' current financial situation, such as recent food insecurity, and receipt of government assistance for individuals with low incomes. Questions assessing the languages spoken, sex or gender identity, and the race/ethnicity of children in care or other workers in the classroom may also prove challenging for respondents of the household, home-based provider, and workforce (classroom staff) surveys to answer. The respondent may not know or may not feel comfortable making that assessment for other people. Although these questions are sensitive in nature, these are vital to examining differences in the experiences of potentially vulnerable groups. Further, parents, workers and home-based providers are asked about experiences with discrimination or refusal of care, which may also be difficult for some respondents to answer, but these items have been prioritized by ACF and experts in the field.

Last, the home-based provider questionnaire may raise additional concerns about disclosure, such as individuals without full work permission in the U.S., or providing ECE services without full compliance with licensing, health and safety violations, subsidy participation, or other requirements. The questionnaire, therefore, very intentionally avoids any reference to such issues as visa status or licensing status. We view it as essential in gaining cooperation and respondents' trust to be able to assure them that no questions will be asked on these potentially sensitive topics. Visa status and licensing status are not critical to the research questions for the study.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

For the household follow-up, we ask detailed questions about applications to and usage of public programs regarding financial or other assistance. This type of information is essential to helping programs improve their ability to support families. In addition, we are asking more detailed items about conditions related to a child's disability status, which many parents may feel have been unfairly ascribed to their children or the parents may be reluctant to report. The questions about children's conditions are generally taken from other federal surveys and will help the NSECE to be more accurate and detailed in describing the experiences of families of children with disabilities.

For the workforce follow-up, individuals may be reluctant to report their lifetime experiences with employment if some jobs or employment experiences such as work where wages were paid in cash or reasons for leaving a job if the reason was in dispute (such as a resignation versus a termination for

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cause). The questionnaire does not ask details about payment type or eligibility for unemployment insurance, but can help inform the critical issue of turnover and exit among ECE workers.

As with all the data collected on this study, individual responses will never be shared outside of the project team. Responses to sensitive questions will be combined across respondents of the survey.

A12. Burden

The request is specific to the 2024 NSECE, including ongoing approved data collection efforts and proposed follow up data collection.

Explanation of Burden Estimates

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

Each of the 2024 NSECE instruments has different administration times: 60 minutes for the household instrument, 20 minutes for unlisted home-based providers and 40 for listed home-based providers completing the home-based provider instrument, 45 minutes for the center-based provider instrument, and 20 minutes for the workforce (classroom staff) instrument. Because there is a high ineligibility rate across three of the NSECE samples, the project employs a screener to determine eligibility for three of the four instruments. The burden estimates below were developed using 2019 NSECE screener, eligibility, and interview completion rates to estimate numbers of screener and interview completes for the household survey, home-based provider survey for listed providers, and the center-based provider survey. The burden estimates have been updated to reflect current data collection efforts.

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Each of the two longitudinal follow-ups instruments is expected to average 20 minutes administration time. The administration time may be quite less for some respondents, including those who do not use individual paid care or those no longer in the ECE workforce. A subset of respondents may receive additional outreach as part of our quality assurance activities. If a field-administered administration is identified as having potential data quality concerns, respondent outreach may occur to confirm initial administration. The burden estimates below use 2019 NSECE and NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up screener, eligibility, and interview completion rates to estimate numbers of screener and interview completes for the household survey, home-based provider survey for listed providers, and the center-based provider survey. We use 2019 NSECE and NSECE COVID-19 quality assurance activity reports to estimate the potential number of quality assurance activities and the time needed to complete. We expect the household follow-up data collection to run for four months from January 2025 through May 2025 and the workforce follow-up to also run for months from September 2025 through December 2025.

Estimated Annualized Cost to Respondents

The average hourly wage information includes estimates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Exhibit 2 shows the estimated annualized burden and cost to respondents for the 2024 NSECE and the 2024 NSECE Follow-ups. Estimated annual wage rates vary across years, as reflected in Exhibit 2. The wage

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rate for the 2024 NSECE Follow-up household survey is the average hourly wage for all occupations (\$22.00)³. The wage rate for the 2024 NSECE Follow-up center-based provider and listed home-based provider survey is the average hourly wage for 11-9031 Education Administrators, Preschool and Child Care Center/Program (\$22.75)⁴. The wage rate for 2024 NSECE Follow-up unlisted home-based providers and center-based workforce (classroom staff) members is the average hourly wage for 39-9011 Childcare Workers (\$13.22)⁵. All 2024 NSECE Follow-up average wage data used are current as of July 19, 2024, as provided by the above websites.

Exhibit 2. Estimated Annualized Burden and Cost to Respondents

Instrument	No. of Respondents (total over request period)	No. of Responses per Respondent (total over request period)	Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	Total/ Annual Burden (in hours)	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
2024 NSECE Household Screener	17,187	1	.1	1,719	\$22.00	\$37,818
2024 NSECE Household Questionnaire	4,231	1	1	4,231	\$22.00	\$93,082
2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Screener (listed home-based providers)	264	1	.03	8	\$22.75	\$182
2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire (listed home-based providers)	946	1	.67	634	\$22.75	\$14,424
2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire (unlisted home-based providers)	175	1	.33	58	\$13.22	\$767
2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Screener	4,401	1	.1	440	\$22.75	\$10,010
2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire	3,602	1	.75	2,702	\$22.75	\$61,471
2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom	3,794	1	.33	1,252	\$13.22	\$16,551

³ https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm#00-0000

⁴ <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes119031.htm>

⁵ <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399011.htm>

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Instrument	No. of Respondents (total over request period)	No. of Responses per Respondent (total over request period)	Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	Total/ Annual Burden (in hours)	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
Staff) Questionnaire						
2024 NSECE Household Longitudinal Follow-up Questionnaire	3,750	1	.36	1,350	\$31.48	\$42,498
2024 NSECE Household Longitudinal Follow-up Quality Assurance Questionnaire	38	1	.05	1.9	\$31.48	\$59.81
2024 NSECE Workforce Longitudinal Follow-up Questionnaire	5,550	1	.33	1,832	\$15.42	\$28,249
2024 NSECE Workforce Longitudinal Follow-up Quality Assurance Questionnaire	56	1	.05	2.8	\$15.42	\$43.18
Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours				14,231		\$305,155

A13. Costs

Consistent with 2019 NSECE and as currently approved for the 2024 NSECE, honoraria are being provided directly to participants as compensation for their time participating in their professional capacity in the center- and home-based provider and workforce (classroom staff) surveys. Honoraria are “payments given to professional individuals or institutions for services for which fees are not legally or traditionally required in order to secure their participation,” (Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Office of Management and Budget, 2016). Based on OMB guidance, honoraria is the term most appropriate for payments to schools, teachers, and administrators, and is usually paid after participation (Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Office of Management and Budget, 2016). Honoraria values vary for each sample group based on the relative burden placed on each sample for completing each questionnaire. Exhibit 3 provides an overview of the currently approved honoraria and the proposed honoraria for follow-up data collection.

Exhibit 3. Proposed and Approved Honoraria Models for 2024 NSECE and 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups

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Status	Sample	Survey	Post-paid Honorarium Value	Estimated Questionnaire Completion Time (hours)	Average hourly wage rate
Approved for NSECE 2024	Center-based provider	Center-based Provider Survey	\$25 (prior to July 2024) \$50 (beginning July 2024)	0.75	\$22.75/hour
Approved for NSECE 2024	Listed home-based provider	Home-based Provider Survey	\$20	0.67	\$22.75/hour
Approved for NSECE 2024	Unlisted home-based provider		\$15	0.33	\$13.22/hour
Approved for NSECE 2024	Workforce (classroom staff)	Workforce (Classroom Staff) Survey	\$10 (prior to July 2024) \$20 (beginning July 2024)	0.33	\$13.22/hour
Proposed for NSECE 2024 Longitudinal Follow-up	Workforce (classroom staff)	Workforce Follow-up	\$20	0.33	\$15.42/hour

Note: Estimated hourly wage rate from BLS as indicated for Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 4. Comparison between 2019 NSECE and 2024 NSECE Honoraria Models

Sample	Survey	2019 Post-paid Honorarium Value	2024 Post-paid Honorarium Value
Center-based provider	Center-based Provider Survey	\$20	\$50 (beginning July 2024)
Listed home-based provider	Home-based Provider Survey	\$15	\$20
Unlisted home-based provider		\$10	\$15
Workforce (classroom staff)	Workforce (Classroom Staff) Survey	\$10	\$20 (beginning July 2024)

Exhibit 4 compares the 2019 (actual) and 2024 (approved) NSECE post-paid honoraria. The center-based provider honorarium value is based on the average hourly rate for ECE administrators and is set at \$50 factoring the expected increase in hourly wage rate in 2024. This respondent is often a center director or other administrator. In 2012, respondents received \$35 for web completion of the center-based provider interview (\$20 for interview-administered completion). The reduced payment is likely one factor in the lower overall completion rates for the center-based provider survey in 2019 compared with 2012.

Although there is some diversity among listed home-based providers, the majority own and operate childcare programs and face similar challenges to the center-based providers in reporting administrative

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data. As a result, the value of the honorarium for this sample is set at \$20 for completion of a slightly shorter questionnaire, also anticipating some increase in wages from 2019 to 2024.

In contrast, the honorarium value for unlisted home-based providers, is set to \$15 for a questionnaire that is on average shorter than the one administered to listed home-based providers. A contribution of the 2012 and 2019 NSECE has been to reveal that a large fraction of the nation’s paid family child care providers are unlisted home-based providers; these individuals are asked to complete reporting tasks of similar complexity to the listed home-based providers and center directors.

The overall workforce (classroom staff) sample honorarium is less than the amount offered for the two provider surveys, but the classroom staff questionnaire is less complex and is based on the lower wages of classroom workers relative to classroom directors. A \$10 honorarium was used in the 2019 NSECE and the NSECE COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up. Furthermore, the \$10 honorarium aligns with the other studies of similar populations that have found a similar honorarium to be beneficial for recruitment in terms of burden. This includes the Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education Project (ECE-ICHQ) (0970-0499), which offered \$10 for center-based provider staff who completed a web questionnaire of about ten minutes in length.

A14. Estimated Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

Cost estimates include labor and other direct costs associated with each cost category.

Cost Category	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total Estimated Costs
Sampling and Screening	170,098	1,002,356	916,940			2,089,394
Field Work and IT programming	79,743	2,781,020	25,697,556	370,878	12,823	28,942,020
Analysis	132,327	30,965	340,605	1,215,829	1,048,409	2,768,135
Publications/Dissemination	160,255	24,382	42,359	485,760	1,338,315	2,051,071
Annual Costs	542,423	3,838,723	26,997,460	2,072,467	2,399,547	35,850,620

2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Cost Category	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total Estimated Costs
Sampling and Screening			24,652	24,652		49,304
Field Work and IT programming			507,256	4,565,302		5,072,558

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Cost Category	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total Estimated Costs
Analysis				96,712	507,736	604,448
Publications/Dissemination					184,962	184,962
Annual Costs			531,908	4,686,666	692,698	5,911,272

Total Annual Costs

The total average estimated annual costs for all data collection under this OMB number is \$8,352,378

	Total Estimated Costs	Average Annual Estimated Costs
2024 NSECE (approved: 5 years)	35,850,620	1,970,424
2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (proposed:3 years)	5,911,272	7,170,124
Totals (5 years):	41,761,892	8,352,378

A15. Reasons for changes in burden

This request is to add two follow-up data collections under this OMB number. There are no changes to previously approved instruments, but burden estimates have been updated to reflect the current status of data collection.

A16. Timeline

2024 NSECE (currently approved information collection, no revisions)

Data collection for the 2024 NSECE began in October 2023. The time schedule for data collection is listed in Exhibit 5 below:

Exhibit 5. Data Collection Time Schedule

Activity	Date
Pre-field Data Collection	Late October 2023 - December 2023
Field Data Collection	December 2023 - November 2024
Data Processing and Analysis	November 2023 - December 2025
Data files available for public use	July 2025 - December 2025

In addition, the 2024 NSECE team will prepare comprehensive reports on the utilization and supply of ECE, specifically seven research briefs, four methodological briefs, and seven fact sheets that address the research questions mentioned above. The project team will also produce public- and restricted-use data files, with relevant documentation, which will be made available to other researchers to fully explore the range of issues of policy and programmatic importance. These data will have geographic and other identifiers to allow for linkage to other information (e.g., Census Bureau data, policy variables).

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2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups (current request)

Data collection for the 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups is proposed to take place between October 2024 and May 2025. The proposed time schedule for data collection is listed in Exhibit 6 below:

Exhibit 6. Proposed Data Collection Time Schedule for 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups

Activity	Date
Household Follow-up Data Collection	January 2025 – May 2025
Workforce Follow-up Data Collection	September 2025 – December 2025
Data Processing and Analysis	July 2025 – August 2026
Data files available for public use	December 2026 – May 2027

A17. Exceptions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

- Instrument 1 2024 NSECE Household Screener and Questionnaire
- Instrument 1S 2024 NSECE Household Screener and Questionnaire (Spanish)
- Instrument 2 2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire
- Instrument 2S 2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire (Spanish)
- Instrument 3 2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire
- Instrument 3S 2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Screener and Questionnaire (Spanish)
- Instrument 4 2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) Questionnaire
- Instrument 4S 2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) Questionnaire (Spanish)
- Instrument 5 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up Questionnaire
- Instrument 5S 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up Questionnaire (Spanish)
- Instrument 6 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up Questionnaire
- Instrument 6S 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up Questionnaire (Spanish)
- Appendix A 2024 NSECE Household Survey Contact Materials
- Appendix A-S 2024 NSECE Household Survey Contact Materials (Spanish)
- Appendix B 2024 NSECE Household Questionnaire Items - Overview and Comparison

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Appendix C 2024 NSECE Unlisted Home-based Provider Survey Contact Materials

Appendix C-S 2024 NSECE Unlisted Home-based Provider Survey Contact Materials (Spanish)

Appendix D 2024 NSECE Listed Home-based Provider Survey Contact Materials

Appendix D-S 2024 NSECE Listed Home-based Provider Survey Contact Materials (Spanish)

Appendix E 2024 NSECE Home-based Provider Questionnaire Items - Overview and Comparison

Appendix F 2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Survey Contact Materials

Appendix F-S 2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Survey Contact Materials (Spanish)

Appendix G 2024 NSECE Center-based Provider Questionnaire Items - Overview and Comparison

Appendix H 2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) Survey Respondent Contact Materials

Appendix H-S 2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) Survey Respondent Contact Materials (Spanish)

Appendix I 2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) Questionnaire Items - Overview and Comparison

Appendix J 2024 NSECE Field Materials for Contacting Respondents

Appendix J-S 2024 NSECE Field Materials for Contacting Respondents (Spanish)

Appendix K 2024 NSECE General Research Review Board Materials

Appendix L 2024 NSECE Research Questions

Appendix M 2024 NSECE Public Comment

Appendix N 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up Respondent Contact Materials

Appendix N-S 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up Respondent Contact Materials (Spanish)

Appendix O 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Household Follow-up Questionnaire Items – Overview and Comparison

Appendix P 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up Respondent Contact Materials

Appendix P-S 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up Respondent Contact Materials (Spanish)

Appendix Q 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Workforce Follow-up Questionnaire Items – Overview and Comparison

Appendix R 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups Field Contact Materials

Appendix R-S 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups Field Contact Materials (Spanish)

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Appendix S 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups Research Questions

Appendix T – 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups Quality Assurance Questionnaire

Appendix T S- 2024 NSECE Longitudinal Follow-ups Quality Assurance Questionnaire (Spanish)

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