

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR JOB OPENINGS AND LABOR TURNOVER SURVEY

OMB CONTROL NO. 1220-0170

This ICR seeks to extend the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS).

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

The Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) collects data on job vacancies, labor hires, and labor separations. The data can be used as demand-side indicators of labor shortages. These indicators of labor shortages at the national level will greatly enhance policy makers' understanding of imbalances between the demand for and supply of labor. Presently there is no other economic indicator of the demand for labor with which to assess the presence of labor shortages in the U.S. labor market. The availability of unfilled jobs - the number of job vacancies or the vacancy rate - is an important measure of tightness of job markets, parallel to existing measures of unemployment.

JOLTS statistics reveal structural labor market conditions, such as the effectiveness of job matching and training processes, the implications of unemployment insurance and welfare, and deficient demand for labor.

JOLTS statistics can be used as a potential indicator of business cycles. In addition, JOLTS statistics allow businesses to compare their turnover rates to national rates.

Title 29, chapter 1, part 2 of United States Code authorizes JOLTS data collection.

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

The information is collected once a month at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Atlanta Data Collection Center (DCC), Atlanta, Georgia. Data is collected from the private sector, State and local governments, and the Federal Government. It is collected using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI), web reporting, email, and fax. For the next survey round, an establishment will be in the sample for 36 months.

Upon receiving the selected sample, the sample units are distributed among the Atlanta DCC interviewers. The interviewer then conducts address refinement. Address refinement requires interviewers to confirm correct contact information for an establishment. Once this has been done, the enrollment package is printed and mailed to the respondent. During the first six months of collection, the interviewer calls the respondent and conducts the interview over the phone using CATI. The first month includes clarification on the reporting unit. During the sixth month interview, the interviewer prepares the respondent for rollover to web, email, or fax. Each respondent is encouraged to report all remaining months of data using web reporting.

There are 6 data elements collected by the form. Those elements are Total Employment, Total Number of Job Openings, Total Hires, Quits, Layoffs and Discharges, and Other Separations. Quits, Layoffs and Discharges, and Other Separations comprise Total Separations.

The reference period for Total Employment is the pay period including the 12th of the month. The reference period for Job Openings is the last business day of the month. Hires and Separations are requested for the entire month.

The information is published monthly at the NAICS Supersector level for the U.S. and at the total non-agriculture level for the major Census regions. The data are made public via press releases and the BLS website. The data are used by BLS economists in their efforts to interpret and report labor market developments. Businesses use the data to compare their own turnover rates to a national figure. JOLTS data are useful to academics studying labor economics. Policy analysts can use the data to track the business cycle.

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

JOLTS collects data using CATI for the first six months a unit is in the sample. JOLTS then encourages use of web technology in collecting data after a sample unit's sixth month in the sample. Email and fax reporting are other alternatives for collection. These options allow the respondent to save time since they do not have to process and return the form by mail. The initial six months reporting via CATI is necessary to help the respondent understand the form and data requested.

Although every attempt is made to schedule CATI interviews at the most convenient time for respondents, email, fax, or web reporting allow respondents an even greater flexibility in responding at their most convenient time.

Respondents who are not able to break out Separations into Quits, Layoffs and Discharges, and Other Separations, are routed through web collection in such a way as to only report Total Separations. This use of web collection reduces their response time and their overall burden.

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

Extensive research using libraries, other statistical agencies, and the Internet has not identified similar information. Some academics have made use of proxies, such as the “Help Wanted Online” from the Conference Board (<http://www.con.helpwantedonline.cfm>), but this measure falls short of an accurate measurement of true job openings since it creates the index based solely on help-wanted advertising in newspapers.

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

The information requested is readily available in both small and large firms. Special attention was paid to selecting reference periods for data elements that were easily understandable to all respondents.

The JOLTS sampling frame is stratified by geographic Region, Industry Supersector, and Employment Size Class. A stratified sample is allocated using the Neyman allocation (Cochran, 1977, pp. 259-261) methodology. This stratification and allocation methodology ensures that small businesses are sampled at a lower rate (i.e., lower probability of selection) than large businesses; this reduces the respondent burden on small establishments relative to large establishments.

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

As an indicator of the demand for labor that would be parallel to existing measures of unemployment, less frequent conduct of study would diminish the ability of BLS to produce meaningful statistical estimates. In addition, it would prevent the estimates from being used as a leading indicator of business cycles and current economic trends.

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

- **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

- **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **requiring the use of statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

JOLTS releases data rates and levels on a monthly basis, therefore requiring collection of information on a monthly basis to support the monthly estimate.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the *Federal Register* of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

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

No comments were received as a result of the Federal Register notice published in 87 FR 39565 on July 1, 2022.

During the original development of the JOLTS concepts and forms, the JOLTS form was sent to seven experts for their comments regarding the data elements to be collected. The comments

were solicited to ensure that the form collected only essential data elements and/or appropriate breakouts. The result is a form that imposes the least respondent burden while capturing data essential to produce a quality economic indicator.

Reviewers of Form:

Katharine Abraham	Past Commissioner, BLS
Carolyn Bagin	Center for Clear Communications, Inc.
Dan Hamermesh	University of Texas
Harry Holzer	Chief Economist, DOL/Michigan State University
Larry Katz	Harvard University
Bruce Meyers	Northwestern University
Dan Sullivan	Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
William Wascher	National Bureau of Economic Research/ Bank for International Settlements
Joyce Zickler	Federal Reserve - DC

Also, during 2008 an OMB approved response analysis survey was conducted to determine the cause for employment divergence within the temporary help industry. Discussions were held with the owner of a Manpower Inc. franchise to identify possible areas of improvement in our survey questions.

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

There will be no gifts or payments to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

The Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA) safeguards the confidentiality of individually identifiable information acquired under a pledge of confidentiality by controlling access to, and uses made of, such information. CIPSEA includes fines and penalties for any knowing and willful disclosure of individually identifiable information by an officer, employee, or agent of the BLS.

Based on this law, the BLS provides respondents with the following confidentiality pledge/informed consent statement:

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

BLS policy on the confidential nature of respondent identifiable information (RII) states that “RII acquired or maintained by the BLS for exclusively statistical purposes and under a pledge of confidentiality shall be treated in a manner that ensures the information will be used only for statistical purposes and will be accessible only to authorized individuals with a need-to-know.”

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

No sensitive questions will be asked.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. General, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form**
- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14.**

Explanation of how the total burden hours were derived for fiscal years 2023-2025 is illustrated below.

Estimated Total Annualized Respondent Cost and Hour Burden

Form	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
Private	7,154	12	85,848	10/60	14,308	\$29.94	\$428,381.52
State, Local, and Tribal Government	1,123	12	13,476	10/60	2,246	\$29.94	\$67,245.24
Federal Government	386	12	4,632	10/60	772	\$29.94	\$23,113.68
Total	8,663		103,956		17,326		\$518,740.44

Burden cost was calculated by obtaining the hourly employment cost for office and administrative support occupations as determined by the National Compensation Survey (NCS) Employment Cost for Employee Compensation. The employment cost for the fourth quarter of 2021 was \$29.94¹.

Respondents to each survey round remain in a panel for 36 months. Below is a more detailed breakdown of responses by sector.

Breakdown of responses by Activity

Activity: Private

Form	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
CATI	2,612	12	31,344	10/60	5,224	\$29.94	156,406.56
Other	346	12	4,152	10/60	692	\$29.94	\$20,718.48
Web	4,196	12	50,352	10/60	8,392	\$29.94	\$251,256.48
Total	7,154		85,848		14,308		\$428,381.52

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/eccec.pdf>

Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey

OMB Control Number: 1220-0170

OMB Expiration Date: 12/31/2022

Activity: State, Local, and Tribal Government

Form	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
CATI	410	12	4,920	10/60	820	\$29.94	\$24,550.80
Other	54	12	648	10/60	108	\$29.94	\$3,233.52
Web	659	12	7,908	10/60	1,318	\$29.94	\$39,460.92
Total	1,123		13,476		2,246		\$67,245.24

Activity: Federal Government

Form	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
CATI	114	12	1,368	10/60	228	\$29.94	\$6,826.32
Other	15	12	180	10/60	30	\$29.94	\$898.20
Web	257	12	3,084	10/60	514	\$29.94	\$15,389.16
Total	386		4,632		772		\$23,113.68

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

- The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of service component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.
- If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult

with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.

- **Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

a. Capital start-up costs: \$0

b. Total operation and maintenance and purchase of services: \$0

14. Provide estimates of the annualized cost to the Federal Government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 into a single table.

The annual JOLTS budget is approximately \$6 million, which includes roughly \$2.5 million annually for data collection labor hours.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

This request shows a 26% decrease in respondents, annual responses, and burden hours of 8,663; 103,956; and 17,326, respectively. The JOLTS program plans to perform response analysis sometime before this approval expires and will seek an appropriate increase in respondents and burden hours at that time.

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

The JOLTS program releases data on a monthly basis available at www.bls.gov/jlt/. The release is available within 30 - 60 working days of the survey reference month. Regular monthly releases began April 15, 2004.

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

BLS is requesting OMB approval for permission to suppress the expiration date on the JOLTS forms. An expiration date would restrict JOLTS' ability to use these same forms in subsequent years.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification.