

**U.S. Department of Labor**

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
4600 Silver Hill Road  
Washington, D.C. 20212-0002



Month Day, Year

Respondent Name

Respondent Address

Respondent City, State, and Zip code

Dear [Respondent Name]:

You are receiving this letter because you recently provided data to the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Housing Survey. Thank you for your recent participation in this important survey. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is committed to producing high-quality statistics that accurately reflect the economic conditions in the United States. **As part of that commitment to quality, the BLS randomly conducts follow-up contacts. This helps us verify that we correctly recorded your responses and verifies that BLS representatives were professional in their conduct.** Your participation in this verification is vital to the accuracy and integrity of the CPI.

Our records indicate that [data collector name] contacted you in [Month Year] regarding the housing unit at [unit address]. **We ask that you take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the prepaid envelope included with this mailing.**

If you have questions about the CPI, the Housing Survey, or this data quality follow-up, please call Steven Joering, Branch Chief of Data Quality, at 202-691-7067 or email him at [Joering.Steven@bls.gov](mailto:Joering.Steven@bls.gov).

If you would like information about the Consumer Price Index, please see the Frequently Asked Questions on the back side of this letter or visit our website: [www.bls.gov/cpi](http://www.bls.gov/cpi).

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "U. Oliver".

Ursula Y. Oliver  
Associate Commissioner  
Office of Field Operations

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the Consumer Price Index (CPI)?**

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of change in the cost of goods and services typically purchased by urban consumers. As the only comprehensive measure of inflation at the retail level, the CPI is widely used by private industry, labor unions, and the federal government to help in making informed business and economic decisions. Below are a few examples of uses of the CPI:

- The cost-of-living adjustments for over 50 million Social Security beneficiaries.
- The cost of lunches for millions of school children.
- Federal income tax brackets, so you don't pay higher taxes because of inflation.
- Payments in collective bargaining agreements.

### **Why are you verifying my information?**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) regularly conducts verifications on the accuracy of the data collected by its staff as part of a legally mandated quality assurance process. This contact is part of that quality assurance process, and your response will help the BLS provide accurate statistics.

### **What will you do with my information / Is this confidential?**

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.

### **I did not participate previously, should I still complete this?**

Yes, even if you did not participate previously, your responses will still be helpful. Responding to this questionnaire will help the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) improve the accuracy of the Consumer Price Index. BLS has sampled the listed unit address as part of the Consumer Price Index Housing Survey, and it is important that we understand the reported information.

### **Is this authorized/approved by OMB?**

The time needed to complete this survey is estimated to be less than 4 minutes. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of this time estimate or suggestions for making the survey simpler, you can write to: Office of Prices and Living Conditions, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20212-0002. The OMB control number for this voluntary survey is 1220-0163. Without a currently valid number BLS would not be able to conduct this survey.

# Consumer Price Index: Housing Survey Verification

When completing this survey, please think only about the housing unit and time period listed below:

**[Unit Address]**

**Month Year**

## Experience with BLS representative

1. Were you contacted by a representative of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in [Month Year] regarding this unit?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No, no one was contacted  
☐ No, but you know someone else reported for this unit  
☐ Not sure

SKIP TO HOUSING UNIT INFORMATION  
(QUESTION 3)

2. Were you satisfied with your experience providing data for the CPI Housing Survey?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Please provide any additional comments about your experience:

## Housing Unit Information

Again, thinking about [unit address], complete the following questions.

3. In [Month Year] was this unit...?

- ☐ Occupied by the owner ► SEE INSTRUCTION BELOW  
☐ Occupied by the renter ► CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 4  
☐ Vacant ► SEE INSTRUCTION BELOW  
☐ Unit does not exist, or was not a housing unit ► SEE INSTRUCTION BELOW

If this unit was occupied by the renter in [Month Year], continue with question 4 below.  
Otherwise, if this unit was NOT occupied by a renter in [Month Year], skip to question 10.

4. Is the occupant of this unit a relative of the landlord?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

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5. For the month of [Month Year], please mark the rent the tenant was charged (excluding any subsidy received).

- ☐ [Dollar Amount]  
☐ [Dollar Amount]  
☐ [Dollar Amount]  
☐ Some other amount, please provide an exact dollar amount below:

\$       .

6. Did the rent you reported in question 5 include any optional extra charges?

*Examples of optional extra charges include pet fees, parking fees, washer & dryer in the unit, etc...*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No ► SKIP TO QUESTION 8



7. Please list below any optional extra charges that were included in the rent you reported in question 5.

|    | Type of extra charge <i>included</i> in the rent | Amount of this charge                                                                                                                                                        |
|----|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. |                                                  | \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> . <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> |
| 2. |                                                  | \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> . <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> |

8. Was the rent for [Month Year] reduced because the landlord received any supplemental funding or assistance from a government program such as Section 8?

- ☐ Yes ► Enter the amount the rent was reduced \$       .    
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

9. Was the rent reduced because someone did work for the landlord?

- ☐ Yes ► Enter the amount the rent was reduced \$       .    
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

10. Thank you for your time and assistance with helping us ensure the quality and integrity of the data BLS collects. In the event that a representative from BLS needs to contact you regarding the information you provided, please provide your contact information below.

*The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this survey and held confidential to the fullest extent allowed by law.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (    )    -

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this survey in the postage paid envelope provided.**