Generic Information Collection Request: Cognitive testing of the 2026 Census Test emails with Group Quarters Administrators

Request: The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the pretesting clearance (OMB number 0607-0725). We plan to conduct up to 12 cognitive testing sessions with administrators of group quarters, focusing on the emails a college and university administrator can receive. These emails inform the administrator of the tasks required to enumerate their group quarters. Group quarters (GQs) are places where people live or stay in a group living arrangement and which are owned or managed by an entity or organization that provides housing and may also provide services to its residents or clients, such as university housing.

Purpose: The purpose of the cognitive testing sessions is to gather feedback from GQ administrators on the content and quantity of email notification planned for the GQ enumeration in the 2026 Census Test. The findings from this study will be used to improve the clarity of the information presented in the emails and inform the number and timing of emails sent to administrators.

Population of Interest: The population of interest is GQ administrators of colleges and universities. This group is the largest GQ type to receive the emails and we have pre-existing relationships with these administrators, which should make recruiting easier.

Timeline: We plan to recruit in November and conduct the cognitive testing sessions in December 2024, in time to make any changes to the quantity of emails used in the 2026 Census Test.

Language: The sessions will be in English only.

Cognitive testing administration: Sessions will be between 60 and 90 minutes and conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams. Participants will be emailed the consent form (Enclosure 1) prior to the session. In the email is also a description of what they should expect. The scheduling and pre-session emails are in Enclosure 2. We will then send 11 emails (Enclosure 3) to each participant prior to the session. The emails will be staggered so not to arrive all on the same date. These are the draft emails an administrator in the 2026 Census Test could receive. Participants should read through the emails ahead of the session. During the session, a Census Bureau researcher will use the protocol found in Enclosure 4 to gather feedback on the emails. The session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams and the researcher will share each of the emails the participant received. The session will be audio and video recorded via Snagit 2024. Besides the researcher and participant, a note taker and other Census Bureau staff working on the GQ program might observe the session.

Sample: We will conduct no more than 12 cognitive testing sessions with college and university GQ administrators who agree to participate.

Recruitment: Census Bureau Group Quarters staff will recruit participants for this study from respondents to a previous feedback survey who answered yes to a question asking if they would be willing to participate in future research (approved by OMB 7/2/2023). They may also contact

participants of focus groups conducted last year (approved by OMB 6/16/2023). Participants will be contacted by telephone initially, with email follow up for scheduling. The text of the scheduling emails is included in Enclosure 2.

Informed Consent: Prospective participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that any information they provide during the interview will be confidential and will only be accessible to the researchers conducting the study. Participants will be emailed the consent form (Enclosure 1) prior to the session. They will provide oral consent at the start of the session.
Incentive: Participants will not be provided an incentive for their participation.

Burden hours: We estimate that recruiting telephone calls will take 10 minutes, the recruiting and scheduling emails with instructions will take 10 minutes to read, and then each of the 11 individual emails to review will take 10 minutes. The session itself will take between 60 and 90 minutes depending on whether the participant read the emails earlier.

The burden associated with specific tasks is summarized in Table 1. We estimate the total burden for this study to be 48.7 hours.

Table 1: Description of burden hours by task

	Number of participants	Participation time (minutes)	Total burden hours
Recruiting calls	40	10	400 minutes
Email with consent form and instructions about what to expect	12	10	120 minutes
Emails 1 to 11	12	10	1,320 minutes
Session	12	90 (max)	1,080 minutes
Total burden			2,920 minutes or **48.7 hours**

The materials to be used in the current study are listed below:

> Enclosure 1: Consent form
> Enclosure 2: Email with instructions for session and eleven emails
> Enclosure 3: GQ administrator emails
> Enclosure 4: Protocol

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

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