

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR AMERICAN TIME USE SURVEY

OMB CONTROL NO. 1220-0175

This ICR seeks OMB clearance for an extension without change of the BLS American Time Use Survey.

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 purpose of this request is for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to extend clearance for the collection of time-use data by the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) for three years. There are no changes to the ATUS interview.

The ATUS, which began full production in January 2003, is the Nation's first federally-administered, continuous survey on time use in the United States. A nationally representative sample of persons from households completing their final month of interviews for the Current Population Survey (CPS) is drawn for ATUS. BLS contracts with the Census Bureau to conduct one interview with one person age 15 or over from each selected household. The primary focus of the interview is on activities done "yesterday" (from 4 a.m. on the day before the interview to 4 a.m. on the day of the interview), though additional questions are asked about work during the prior week.

Collection of time-use data helps fulfill the BLS statutory mission, as outlined in Title 29, United States Code, Section 1:

“The general design and duties of the Bureau of Labor Statistics shall be to acquire and diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with labor, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word, and especially upon its relation to capital, the hours of labor, the earnings of laboring men and women, and the means of promoting their material, social, intellectual, and moral prosperity.”

Prior to the collection of the ATUS, “inadequate data on time use [was] the single most important gap in Federal statistics,” according to economist William Nordhaus.¹ At least 32 other countries collect time-use data.² Such data are considered important indicators

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics and MacArthur Network on the Family and the Economy. “Time Use, Non-Market Work, and Family Well-Being.” Summaries of the Time Use Conference. November 20-21, 1997. Washington, DC: Bureau of Labor Statistics and MacArthur Foundation, 1997.

² OECD (2024), "Time Use", OECD Social and Welfare Statistics (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/675ecc4a-en> (accessed on 05 March 2025).

of both quality of life and the contribution of non-market work to national economies. They measure, for example, time spent providing childcare and eldercare, working, doing household chores, and spent in leisure activities. Using time-use data in conjunction with wage data allows analysts to better compare production between nations that have different mixes of market and non-market activities. In the United States, several existing Federal surveys collect income and wage data for individuals and families, and analysts often use such measures of material prosperity as proxies for quality of life. Time-use data substantially augment these quality-of-life measures.

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 major purpose of the ATUS is to develop nationally representative estimates of how people spend their time. Many ATUS users are interested in the amount of time Americans spend doing non-market work activities. These include unpaid childcare and eldercare, housework, and volunteering. The survey also provides information on the amount of time people spend in many other activities, such as educational activities, traveling, religious activities, socializing, and exercising. To produce these estimates, data are collected not only about what people did, but also about where and with whom each activity occurred, and whether the activities were paid work or work-related. This additional contextual information enables coders to assign codes that describe each activity with consistency.

Because the ATUS sample is drawn from a subset of households that completed interviews for the CPS, the same demographic information collected from that survey is available for the ATUS respondents. Comparisons of activity patterns across characteristics such as sex, race, age, and educational attainment of the respondent, as well as the presence of children and the number of adults living in the respondent's household, are possible. The data have been collected on an ongoing basis since 2003, enabling analysts to identify changes in how people spend their time. Also, the ATUS activity coding lexicon was designed to ensure that time-use information in the United States can be compared, at broad levels, with information from other countries.

To ensure the widest distribution of information, BLS releases annual and quarterly data to the public once a year in the form of published tables. Public use data sets are also available, along with thousands of time-use data series. Special analyses by BLS and outside analyses appear in the *Monthly Labor Review* (published by BLS) and in other publications. As of March 2025, 21 years of ATUS data have been published (2003-2023). ATUS data have received wide interest from a variety of users, including economists, sociologists, health researchers, journalists, and businesses. ATUS information has also been of interest to government, educators, lawyers, and others, as the survey information has numerous applications. In addition to appearing in many national newspapers, magazines, and television programs, ATUS data have been used in articles appearing in many academic journals. Lists of publications, both BLS and non-

BLS, using ATUS data are available on the ATUS Web site (<https://www.bls.gov/tus/research.htm>).

The survey captures not only hours worked on a typical weekday or weekend day, but also shows the distribution of where work is being done—at home, at a workplace, or somewhere else³—and whether, over time, these distributions are changing. In addition to providing information about time spent in work activities, ATUS data have been analyzed to gain insight into commuting patterns and other behaviors associated with work.

Unpaid productive activities, such as providing childcare or informal eldercare, volunteering, and doing housework, are critical to society and to national well-being. ATUS data provide comprehensive information about these activities on a continuous basis. Analysts have used ATUS measures of time spent doing such activities to estimate the contribution these unpaid productive activities make to overall economic activity.

For decades, economists have acknowledged that changes in GDP may reflect changes in institutional arrangements rather than actual changes in economic activity.⁴ For example, under traditional methods used to value the Nation's output, the worker who decides he or she will wash and iron his or her own dress shirts rather than send them to the cleaners as he or she has previously done contributes to a decline in GDP, because the washing and ironing activity is no longer captured as a market transaction. However, ATUS respondents report on the ways they use their own time. The availability of this detailed information allows economists to more accurately value household production by estimating the value of the time (labor services) used to produce goods and services. Childcare and eldercare, meal preparation, and home repair projects are just a few of the non-market activities that ATUS data can be used to evaluate. The Bureau of Economic Analysis has used these data as a critical input to update estimates of satellite accounts that measure the value of unpaid work, including childcare and household activities.⁵

International organizations and researchers have used the ATUS data to compare the United States to other countries. Both the UN and the OECD have published ATUS estimates in order to compare time use of Americans to those living in other countries. For example, the UN used ATUS data to produce Social Development Goal (SDG) indicator 5.4.1, the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location.

Sociologists have used the data to examine social contact, such as how much time people spend with their children, colleagues, or family members. Many are interested in the time mothers and fathers spend doing household work and childcare, how this work is

³ Interviewers for the ATUS assign one of 24 location codes to each activity reported by respondents.

⁴ Landefeld, J. Steven and Stephanie H. McCulla. "Accounting for Nonmarket Household Production Within a National Accounts Framework." Review of Income and Wealth, Series 46, Number 3 (September 2000): 289-307.

⁵ For more information about the Bureau of Economic Analysis's Household Production Satellite Account, see the following webpage: <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/household-production>.

divided by sex, and how it has changed over time. They also have examined the degree to which people are trading off time spent with family or in leisure activities to do market or non-market work.

The ATUS data have helped Federal, State, and local government officials more fully understand noneconomic, as well as economic, effects of policy decisions, and to better determine when to develop new or change existing policies to address the needs of our society. For example, GAO used ATUS eldercare data in a 2019 analysis on caregiving and retirement security.⁶ ATUS data were also utilized in a USDA-authored Congressional report on access to healthy food.

Health researchers have used ATUS data to explore the amount of time spent in activities that impact Americans' health, such as sleeping, eating, preparing meals, and doing physical exercises. The data have also been used to analyze Americans' exposure to traffic accident risk.

The questions on eldercare align closely with the ATUS goal of collecting information about time spent in unpaid, productive activities. Eldercare is a topic of interest to many researchers, particularly because the U.S. population is aging, and it has drawn a number of new users to the ATUS data.

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.

The Census Bureau, which collects and processes the data for BLS, uses computer-assisted methods to conduct interviews and record respondent information. Census Bureau interviewers conduct all interviews over the telephone, completing the respondent's time-use diary using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Using an automated call scheduler and hourly reports from the system, cases are presented to interviewers in order depending on respondents' designated interview days, pre-set appointment times, and other information.

The ATUS questionnaire is built in Blaise, a Windows-based software package developed by Statistics Netherlands and adopted as the Census Bureau standard. The software's graphical user interface (GUI) enables the usage of data entry grids that accept many entries on one screen. ATUS respondents verbally report to the interviewer about the activities of the previous day—what they did, who was with them, where they were, and how long the activity lasted. The instrument enables interviewers to enter the

⁶ "Retirement Security: Some Parental and Spousal Caregivers Face Financial Risks," U.S. Government Accountability Office. Report to Congressional Committees. May 2019, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-19-382.pdf> (accessed on 05 March 2025).

information for each activity into the diary grid in any order, and it automatically computes the duration of an activity after each entry. This feature enables the interview to be flexible, making reporting easier for respondents. (See Attachment A for the main ATUS instrument.)

The ATUS activity coding application is programmed using Microsoft Visual Basic.NET 2010 for Client User interface and Microsoft SQL Server 2008R2 for Database. Diary entries captured during CATI data collection are imported into the coding application. Coders view the diary in a table format with open fields for the assignment of the 6-digit numeric code matching the activity. The application displays the lexicon of activity descriptions as well as dependent information such as the household roster and the respondent's employment information. The coder uses the lexicon to choose and assign a numeric code at each of the three tiers of detail for each activity requiring a code. The application includes a search feature that enables coders to automatically search the lexicon for a match on the chosen activity rather than manually reviewing the lexicon display to determine the appropriate 6-digit code.

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.

No private or public institutions conduct time-use surveys at regular intervals. Two academic institutions, the Universities of Maryland and Michigan, collected time-use data periodically from 1965 until 2001, but their data collection methodologies changed over time, and no continuous survey was ever conducted in the United States prior to the ATUS. As a result, analysts must infer (or ignore) patterns that occurred between survey periods, making reliable trend analyses difficult. Continuous data collection through the ATUS allows analysts to determine if, and by how much, time-use patterns are changing over time.

Additionally, the ATUS sample size is large enough to enable demographic comparisons of time use not possible in earlier studies. Demographic analyses of pre-ATUS time-use surveys were limited because sample sizes were only large enough to yield valid statistical results at aggregate levels. The 1985 time-use survey conducted by the University of Maryland was the largest of the pre-ATUS U.S. time-use surveys completed, yet it only had 5,300 respondents—less than the annual number of ATUS respondents.⁷ The ATUS sample is also more demographically controlled than those in previous surveys. Because the sample is drawn from the CPS, households are stratified by demographic characteristics. Households are sampled to ensure the ATUS data is representative of the population. (See Part B, section 1.)

⁷ Robinson, John P. and Geoffrey Godbey. Time for Life: The Surprising Ways Americans Use Their Time. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

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

The data are collected from individuals in households; their collection does not involve any small businesses or other small entities.

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.

The 8,520 ATUS interviews are spread across 12 months so that a large annual sample size can be achieved and the ability to examine seasonal patterns across years can be maintained. Less frequent collection would reduce the analytical value of trend analyses and would eliminate analyses of seasonal patterns in time use.

In addition, continuous data collection operations are more efficient to manage than larger-scale, less frequent operations. A stable, well-trained staff has been developed and cases are spread evenly across the weeks and months. Each month's ATUS sample is introduced over 4 weeks (1/4 sample each week). Each case has up to an 8-week field period. Interviewing respondents about their time use for a 24-hour period in such a way that reports can be consistently and accurately coded requires significant training and practice. Likewise, experience and familiarity with the coding rules and coding lexicon are extremely important to coders for producing accurate results. Less frequent data collection could dramatically increase training costs and impede performance.

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.**

ATUS does not collect information about race and ethnicity; however, this information is available from data collected in the CPS, which allows ATUS to publish estimates by race and ethnicity. ATUS will continue to use the information collected in the CPS after collection transitions to the SPD 15 standards. ATUS expects to publish results using the new standard approximately 2 years after CPS begins publishing estimates and data using SPD 15 standards. All estimates will be subject to ATUS publication standards.

The ATUS requires the use of an activity coding classification system not in use in any other Federal survey. A coding lexicon was developed to classify reported activities into 17 major categories, with two additional levels of detail. (ATUS coding lexicons can be found on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/tus/lexicons.htm>). BLS designed the ATUS lexicon by studying classification systems used for time-use surveys in other countries, drawing most heavily on the Australian time-use survey lexicon, and then determining the best way to produce analytically relevant data for the United States. The coding lexicon developed for the ATUS was extensively tested by Census Bureau coders and by coders at Westat prior to the start of full production in 2003.⁸ Development of the ATUS lexicon is described in Shelley.⁹

No other special circumstances apply.

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.

⁸ Westat. "Research Services for Usability Testing and Lexicon Evaluation: The American Time Use Survey." October, 2001.

⁹ Shelley, Kristina (2005). "Developing the American Time Use Survey activity classification system," Monthly Labor Review, June 2005, pp. 3-15.

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.

- a. One comment was received as a result of the Federal Register notice published in 90 FR 14168 on March 28, 2025.

The comment was emailed to BLS on May 27, 2025 and expressed support for the collection of ATUS data and the value of the information it collects. The comment encouraged continuous collection of these data, stating “collection of [the] ATUS is absolutely essential for the proper performance of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Department of Labor more generally, because it provides the sole source of prospective, nationally representative information on time use. This information allows researchers, policymakers, and the public to understand how Americans spend their time and the trade-offs in time use between home activities and employment. As illustrated by the examples above, ATUS data also provide unique insights into caregiving by youth and adults and into care receipt among children and adults of all ages. There are, of course, numerous other topics that are illuminated by the information collected by ATUS that are important to population scientists and to government.”

The comment also encouraged BLS to continue working with external partners to disseminate user-friendly ATUS data to the research community. BLS recognizes the value of the ATUS data to the research community and will continue to make ATUS data available for public use.

Lastly the comment encouraged methodological developments such as web data collection to reduce respondent burden and maintain response rates. BLS has been exploring a mixed mode design to include web collection for the ATUS. BLS recognizes a move to a mixed-mode design could potentially help ATUS improve response and be prepared for the survey climate of the future. More details about this web collection development work appear in Statement B, Section 4.

Three additional comments were received as a result of the Federal Register notice published in 90 FR 27343 on June 26, 2025. All three comments expressed strong support for the continued collection of the ATUS. BLS appreciates the thoroughness of the comments provided and the support for the collection of these data and the value of the information in the ATUS.

The first comment, which was emailed on July 23, 2025, expressed support for the collection of ATUS data. The comment noted “ATUS is the only comprehensive source of data on how people in the U.S. spend their time. These data provide valuable insight into activities that are central to people’s daily lives such as work, sleep, eating, and time with others. They also offer a flexible mechanism for studying crucial topics that are

difficult to examine using other data sources, such as time spent in caregiving (for children and adults) and how people balance work schedules with other activities.”

The second comment, which was emailed on July 24, 2025, stated “ATUS equips policymakers, researchers, journalists, community and business leaders, and the public with a critical and irreplaceable resource to understand and support uses of time that promote social and economic well-being for communities and individuals across the United States.”

The third comment, which was emailed on July 25 noted that “ATUS provides uniquely granular 24-hour time diaries, permitting researchers to study how people spend their time across a wide array of activities” and that “there is no other alternative” to the Current Population Survey, and its measure of weekly hours worked. The comment expressed how valuable the ATUS survey is to researchers, allowing “analysts to track changes over time and across demographic cohorts” and “provides input into remote-work policies, labor market flexibility, and human capital interventions.”

The third comment also had several recommendations for improvement in the ATUS survey: to maintain robust sampling, to continue developing remote-work indicators, to retain and expand (where feasible) well-being and subjective experience questions, and consider periodic supplementation or linkage to firm-level or industry data with respect to remote-work.

BLS recognizes the value of robust sampling as well as interest in special topics that enhance time-use research. BLS will consider these recommendations for improvements in the future as resources allow.

b. Consultations outside the Agency:

Survey Methods Research Community

ATUS sponsored a brainstorming session with survey methodologists in June 2001. ATUS research was presented for comment at the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) conferences in 2000, 2001, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2022 and 2023 and at the International Field Directors conference in 2001. Research was also presented at the 2005 and 2008 FedCASIC; the 2005 International Field Directors conference; the 2005 American Statistical Association meetings; the 2005 ATUS Early Results Conference; the 2006 Panel of Income Dynamics Conference; the International Association for Time Use Research Conferences in 2006, 2010, 2015, 2016, and 2019; the 2009 American Time Use Research Conference; the 2011 International Perspectives on Time Use Conference; the 2013 World Statistics Congress of the International Statistical Institute; the 2013 and 2022 conferences of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology; and the 2019 CE Survey Methods Symposium. Additionally, 2003-23 ATUS survey methodology data files are publicly available and many survey methodologists—both affiliated and not affiliated with BLS—have analyzed and presented these data.

Federal Economic Statistical Advisory Council (FESAC)

Plans for ATUS were discussed at the June 2001, December 2001, and June 2006 FESAC meetings. As needed, ATUS staff members solicit feedback and consultation from members of this group.

National Academy of Sciences (NAS)

Plans for ATUS were presented and reviewed at a NAS-sponsored conference on time use held in 1999.

MacArthur Foundation

BLS and the MacArthur foundation jointly sponsored a conference in 1997 to discuss research applications of time-use data.

Westat

BLS consulted with Westat on methods for programming the time-use data collection instrument, the usability of the coding lexicon, and possible ways to augment the survey design to boost response. Westat reviewed the literature, analyzed time-use data, and designed an experiment to test the feasibility and impact of substituting diary days and extending the diary recall period.

BLS also consulted with Westat to explore the feasibility of using a mixed-mode design that includes the collection of ATUS data via a Web instrument, developed an initial online tool in which to collect time-diary information, and tested it for usability.

NORC

BLS consulted with NORC to further develop an online Web diary tool and test a modified activity lexicon for online self-reported time-use collection, modify and test eldercare questions for online time-use collection, and conduct a small pilot study to test the web diary functionality and analysis of any mode effects.

IPSOS

BLS consulted with IPSOS to conduct a literature review to understand the current landscape of web diary surveys and best practices. BLS also consulted with IPSOS to provide alternative ideas for online diary designs based on their review.

BLS advisory committees

BLS has consulted periodically with its advisory committees on the ATUS.

Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS)

BLS consulted with COPAFS on the ATUS at the June 2004 quarterly meeting.

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

A 2001 ATUS field test evaluated, among other operational design strategies, the effect of monetary incentives (debit cards) on response rates. Results of the evaluation showed that incentive payments significantly increased response, as well as encouraged faster response. For households for which the Census Bureau had a telephone number, a \$20 incentive payment increased response rates significantly, from 69 percent to 77 percent, and a \$40 incentive payment further increased response rates to 83 percent. However, BLS determined that providing incentives to all respondents or only to refusals and noncontacts (after 4 weeks) would be cost prohibitive. Therefore, payments are not currently used as incentives for respondents in households for which the Census Bureau has a recent telephone number.

BLS offers incentives to respondents from “no-telephone-number” households. Persons in these households do not own a phone, have not provided a phone number to the Census Bureau as of CPS month-in-sample 8, or are among a small number of households that provided Census with nonworking phone numbers. These cases are referred to as “regular incentive cases.” Starting in 2013, incentives were also sent to individuals for whom the Census Bureau assigned call outcome codes of: *108 Number not in service*; *109 Number changed, no new number given*; *124 Number could not be completed as dialed*; and *127 Temporarily not in service* after the first week of collection. These cases are referred to as “expanded incentive cases.” Until 2020, sampled persons from incentive households were sent a brochure about the ATUS, a \$40 debit card incentive, and a letter containing an appeal to call an ATUS interviewer and complete the survey. After participating in the survey, these respondents were provided with the PIN (Personal Identification Number) they needed to cash their debit cards. In 2023, about 3.7 percent of the ATUS sample were regular and expanded incentive cases.

Beginning in 2020, BLS conducted a study to explore the feasibility of sending cash incentives in order to reduce the overhead costs associated with debit cards as well as increase response rates for hard-to-reach populations. Based on the results of the ATUS Cash Incentive study and with OMB approval, beginning in April 2023, BLS sends a \$10 cash incentive for regular and expanded incentive cases and the hard-to-reach group of those ages 15- to 24-years-old. Unweighted response rates for all incentive cases averaged about 24.1 percent from April to December 2023.¹⁰

Because these hard-to-reach cases and individuals living in no-telephone-number households may differ from phone households on unobservable characteristics, including their time-use patterns, and because providing incentives to this small group is not cost prohibitive, BLS believes it is beneficial to expend additional effort and expense to secure their responses.

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

¹⁰ All response rates given are calculated using the American Association for Public Opinion Research’s (AAPOR’s) response rate 2 formula. For more information, see AAPOR’s *Standard Definitions—Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*, 2008.

The Census Bureau employees hold all information that respondents provide in strict confidence in accordance with Title 13, United States Code, Section 9. Each interviewer has taken an oath to this effect, and if convicted of disclosing any information given by the respondent may be fined up to \$250,000 and/or imprisoned up to 5 years. In addition, Title 13 prohibits Census Bureau employees from disclosing information identifying any individual(s) in the ATUS to anyone other than sworn Census employees.

ATUS data are collected by the Census Bureau for BLS under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Section 8. Section 9 of the law requires that all information about respondents be kept strictly confidential, and that the information be used only for statistical purposes. Respondents are informed of their right to confidentiality under Title 13 in the ATUS advance letter and brochure, mailed approximately 10 days before the interview date. (See Attachments C and D.) The ATUS advance letter also advises respondents that this is a voluntary survey.

All Census Bureau security safeguards regarding the protection of data files containing confidential information against unauthorized use, including data collected through CATI, apply to ATUS data collection.

The BLS Processing System design requires that ATUS data be securely transferred from the Census Bureau to the BLS via a shared server. This process mirrors the process used to transfer Current Population Survey data.

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.

During the course of a 24-hour day, many people engage in activities—such as alcohol or drug use or sexual activities—that they may consider too personal or sensitive to report. To examine respondent concerns about the sensitivity of the diary and other survey questions, respondents were asked in the field test if they thought any of the questions were too sensitive. Ninety-two percent of respondents did not think that questions about their time use were too personal or sensitive. During full production, Census Bureau ATUS interviewers advise respondents before beginning the interview that they need not report anything they think is too personal. This instruction does not appear to lead to nonresponse. In 2023, less than one percent of respondents reported that an activity was “none of your business.” A potentially sensitive question is included before the diary, as part of the household roster update, about whether the respondent has any children who do not live with him or her (so that analysts may examine noncustodial parents’ time with their children.)

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.**

ATUS interviewers attempt to contact one designated person in each of approximately 2,050 sample households per month. Of those, about 1,990 will actually be eligible for the ATUS at the time of contact. On average 710 interviews were completed each month during 2021-23, or about 8,520 per year. Each respondent is interviewed in depth about only one day's activities and is not contacted for repeat interviews. A complete interview consists of:

- A brief introduction
- A household roster and employment status update
- Collection of time diary information
- Four summary question series (on paid work, childcare, volunteering, and eldercare)
- An update of additional information—on earnings, occupation and industry, layoff/job search, and school enrollment—collected in the CPS

The mean length of time to complete the main ATUS interview in 2021-23, including the updates of demographic and labor force information as well as the time diary, was approximately 20.2 minutes.

For the proposed three-year collection, the estimated total number of burden hours is 8,605, or 2,868 annually. This accounts for a mean length of 20.2 minutes for the core ATUS interview.

Based on this estimate of annual burden, the overall annualized dollar cost to the respondents for the three-year collection of ATUS data is expected to be about \$172,358,

or \$57,454 annually. This estimate assumes a wage rate for all respondents of \$20.03 an hour, which equals the median hourly earnings for all wage and salary workers (paid hourly rates) in 2024.

Table 1 provides details on the estimated annual respondent burden for the ATUS collection.

Table 1. Estimated Annualized Respondent Cost and Hour Burden

Activity	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden (Hours)	Total Burden (Hours)	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Burden Cost
Three-year collection of ATUS	8,520	1	8,520	20.2/60	2,868	\$20.03	\$57,454

**Costs are rounded to the nearest dollar and calculated using 2024 median hourly earnings (\$20.03) from the Current Population Survey (see Attachment E.)

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers 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 cost to the Federal Government for the ATUS base program in Fiscal Year 2025 is approximately \$6 million. Of this, approximately two-thirds represents the work done by the Census Bureau.

Costs associated with the ATUS cover survey management, questionnaire design, instrument development, training, data collection, incentive payments, data editing, preparation of the files for data users, and support for users of the data files.

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

The estimated number of respondents decreased due to lower response rates. Total burden hours decreased primarily due to lower response rates. BLS has undertaken a number of efforts to maximize ATUS survey response rates with work ongoing (see Supporting Statement Part B).

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 following is the schedule for ATUS data collection:

Full production and data collection	Conducted monthly through October 31, 2028.
Release of the ATUS estimates	Mid-2027 Mid-2028 Mid-2029

Cross tabulation and time-series analyses will be used to analyze the data.

The ATUS news releases will be published electronically. The electronic news release will be posted on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/tus. Additionally, public use data sets will be posted to the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/tus after publication of the news release.

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.

The Census Bureau does not wish to display the assigned expiration date of the information collection because the instrument is automated and the respondent, therefore, would never see the date.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification.