

SUPPORTING STATEMENT A
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Age Search Service
OMB Control No. 0607-0117

Abstract

The U.S. Census Bureau requests an approval for a reinstatement and revision of an expired information collection. The revisions are a result of a final rule (RIN: 0607-AA65). The purpose of this service is to provide, upon request, census transcripts of personal data from historical population census records. The Age Search census transcript provides proof of age to qualify individuals for social security or other retirements benefits; proof of citizenship to obtain passports; proof of family relationships for rights of inheritance; or to satisfy other situations where a birth certificate is required but not available. The Age Search is a service provided by the National Processing Center and is a self-supporting operation of the Census Bureau. Expenses incurred in providing census transcripts are covered by the fees paid by individuals requesting a search of the census records.

The Census Bureau seeks to amend the service fee we collect from applicants. In conjunction with this Information Collection Review, the Census Bureau is proposing to amend Title 15, Section 50.5, of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) to increase the fee for conducting an Age Search from \$65.00 to \$155.00, and to increase the additional charge for expedited requests requiring search results within one day from \$20.00 per case to \$50.00 per case. These changes are being made to reflect the actual operating costs associated with processing an Age Search request.

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 Age Search service provides a census transcript of personal data from historical population census records. This transcript contains information such as age, place of birth, household relationship, and citizenship. The transcript may then be used to provide proof of age to qualify individuals for social security or other retirements benefits; proof of citizenship to obtain a passport; proof of family relationships for inheritance purposes; or to satisfy other situations where a birth certificate is required but not available.

The Age Search service is a self-supporting operation of the Census Bureau, conducted in accordance with Title [13 U.S.C. Section 8\(a\)](#). Under this statute, the Census Bureau is authorized to provide authenticated transcripts to authorized individuals upon request. In addition, all expenses incurred in the retrieval of personal information from decennial census records and

the preparation of census transcripts are covered by fees paid by the individuals who request this service. The censuses in custody of the Census Bureau are confidential and protected from disclosure by Title [13 U.S.C. Section 9](#) and Title [5 U.S.C. Section 552a](#). No transcript of any record will be furnished that would violate statutes requiring that information furnished to the Census Bureau be held confidential and not used to the detriment of the person to whom it relates.

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 Age Search service collects information from an applicant requesting a census transcript. The collected information is used to conduct a search of the named individual's census record in the specified single census year, and to ensure the correct individual is located. Searches are only conducted after the service fee has been paid, necessary signatures are provided and/or any additional necessary documentation has been obtained. This is a one-time collection from an applicant that is interested in obtaining a census transcript.

There are no other uses for this information other than to conduct the search of a census record. The collected information is not shared with any other government agency and is processed in accordance with established Title 13 data handling procedures.

The Age Search service uses the following forms to collect the necessary information from an applicant to conduct a search:

- **BC-600 Application for Search of Census Records** – this application is used to request a census transcript. The form can be completed as a fillable PDF or completed by hand. The applicant mails the completed application and fee to the National Processing Center for processing.
- **BC-649(L) Not Found Letter** – this letter is sent to the applicant when an age search was unsuccessful. The letter informs the applicant that an additional search may be corrected for the same census year if the applicant provides a new or corrected address within 90 days. The applicant may provide the additional information by completing fields in this letter and mailing it back to the National Processing Center.
- **BC-658(L) Insufficient Information Received to Proceed with Search** – this letter is sent to the applicant when insufficient information has been received on which to base a search. This letter requests that the applicant provide the address of the place of residence at the time of the census and the name of the person with whom living (head of the household). The applicant may enter this information in the letter and mail it back to the National Processing Center within 90 days of receiving the letter to conduct the search. Otherwise, the request will be closed.

BC-600 Application for Search of Census Records Information Collection Fields

The following information is collected from the applicant using the BC-600 or BC-600(SP):

- **Name of applicant** – this is the name of the person requesting the census transcript.

1. Purpose for which record is to be used – the purpose for requesting this information must be collected to determine whether the provided census transcript is being used for permitted purposes under Title 13 U.S.C. Section 8(a).

- **2. Signature** – each application requires a signature. The applicant must sign the form, even when the application is for a census record concerning another person that is not the applicant. In these cases, the applicant must also provide the required authorization information for the Census Bureau to release the census transcript to the applicant.

If signed by marking (X), the applicant must indicate the name of the person whose mark it is and have witnesses sign the BC-600 form in the spaces provided.

If the applicant's signature is printed, the applicant must indicate this is the usual signature.

The instructions for the signature box are described in items 2 and 3 in the Instruction Section of the BC-600 form.

- **Present mailing address** – address where the applicant wants the census transcript to be mailed.
- **Telephone number** – applicant's area code and telephone number.
- **Email address** – applicant's email address.

IF SIGNED BY (X), TWO WITNESSES MUST SIGN HERE – if applicant signed by marking (X), the two witnesses must sign the BC-600 form in the spaces provided.

3. Address other than the applicant's address – an alternate address where the applicant is requesting the census transcript be sent. Applicant must meet the requirements described in item 3 in the BC-600 form instructions for the Census Bureau to release and mail the census transcript to another person or agency other than the applicant. In these cases, the applicant must specify or provide the following documentation with the BC-600 form:

- A written request from a parent or guardian of a minor who has not reached the legal age of 18-years old.
- A written request from the legal representative of mentally incompetent persons that also includes a certified copy of the court order naming such legal representative.
- For deceased persons, the BC-600 must be signed by a blood relative in the immediate family (parent, brother, sister, or child), OR the surviving wife or husband, OR the administrator or executor of the estate, OR a beneficiary by will or insurance.

In all cases involving deceased persons, a certified copy of the death certificate must be furnished, and the relationship to the deceased **MUST** be stated on the application. Legal representatives must also furnish a certified copy of the court order naming such legal representatives; and beneficiaries must furnish legal

evidence of such beneficiary interest.

4. Fee required – this is the service fee the Census Bureau collects from the applicant to search, prepare and mail the census transcript to the applicant. The Census Bureau fee for this service is:

Fee Description	Cost
Required fee – fee to search one census and prepare one census transcript for one person. This fee covers the return postage of the census transcript by regular mail. Note: The fee is non-refundable once the search has been made and even if the information is not found.	\$155.00
Extra copies fee – fee for an additional copy of a census transcript.	\$2.00
Full schedule fee – fee for a full schedule transcript. This fee will apply if the applicant requests the full schedule (complete personal data recorded for an individual in the requested census year).	\$10.00
Expedited fee – fee to process the case in one business day.	\$50.00
Total amount enclosed – the applicant will enter in this box the total amount for the selections made.	Total of all fees

5. PERSON WHOSE CENSUS RECORD IS REQUESTED – This section is where the applicant provides information about the person whose census record is requested. This section contains the following entries needed from the applicant:

- ***First name, Middle name, Nicknames, Last name (current), and Last name (at time of the census, if different)***
- ***Date of birth (if unknown, estimate)***
- ***Place of birth (State)***
- ***What is this person's sex*** – The applicant will check a Male or Female box.
- ***Father's name (include nicknames)***
- ***Mother's name (include maiden name and/or nicknames)***
- ***First marriage (Name of husband or wife of applicant)***
- ***Year married (approximate)***
- ***Second marriage (Name of husband or wife of applicant)***

- *Year married (approximate)*
- *Name of other persons living in household (include siblings, other relatives, lodgers, etc.)* – The applicant enters here any other person living in the household at the specific census year.

6. PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR APPROPRIATE CENSUS DATE

This section contains 6 columns to provide detailed address information for the requested census date and the name of, and relationship to, the person with whom the requested person was living.

- *Census date* – this column lists the Census dates for each census from 1910 through 2020.
- *Number and street* – the applicant uses this column to provide the house number and street name for the address. The information is entered in the row that corresponds to the specified census.
- *City, town, township* – the applicant uses this column to provide the city, town or township for the address. The applicant will also be asked to enter a ZIP Code when information is entered in the rows for the censuses from 1970 through 2020.
- *County and state* – the applicant uses this column for to provide the county and state for the address. The information is entered in the row that corresponds to the specified census.
- *Name of person with whom living (Head of household)* – the applicant uses this column to provide the name of the person with whom the requested person was living. For many census years, this person would have been referred to as the “head of the family” (1910-1930) or “head of the household” (1940-1970) while from 1980 through 2020 this person may be any adult household member but is often a person who owns or rents the housing unit.
- *Relationship to head of household* - the applicant uses this column to indicate the relationship of the requested person to the person with whom living. For example, an applicant requesting records from when he was a child might provide the name of his father as the person with whom living, and indicate “son” in this column.

7. LOCATOR MAP – to aid with the search of the census record, especially for addresses in rural areas, the applicant may provide a drawing or map that indicates where the requested person lived on the specified census date. The applicant should mark a checkbox to indicate a locator map has been included with the form.

BC-649(L) Not Found Letter Information Collection Fields

The following information is collected from the applicant using the BC-649(L):

- **Census date** – the applicant enters here the census date to continue with the search. It

must be the same census date as the original request, or a new application and fee must be submitted to conduct a new search on a different census date.

- **Address information where the requested person lived at the specified census date:**
 - Number and street
 - City, town, township
 - County and State
- **Name of person with whom living (head of household)**
- **Relationship to head of household**

BC-658(L) *Insufficient Information Received to Proceed with Search Letter* Information Collection Fields

The BC-658(L) contains 5 columns. The following information is collected from the applicant using the BC-658(L):

- **Census date Address information where the requested person lived at the specified census date:**
 - Number and street
 - City, town, township
 - County and State
 - Name of person with whom living (head of household)

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 BC-600 *Application for Search of Census Records* is available online as a fillable PDF form, where the applicant completes the form, prints it and mails it to the National Processing Center to conduct the census record search. The Census Bureau does not plan to offer an electronic alternative for applicants to the Age Search service. The reason for this is that this is a self-funded service to conduct the search and will require a significant fee increase to provide an electronic submission alternative. The current process for the public to request this service is the least burdensome and cost effective to the applicant and the government.

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 Question 2.**

There is no duplication of the information collected. The collection of this information is required to locate a specific census transcript.

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

This collection does not impact 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.

Federal programs including Social Security and the provision of U.S. passports would be affected if this service were provided less frequently or not provided at all. These Federal programs accept official census transcripts from benefit applicants as proof of age and citizenship and would need to find other acceptable sources of this proof.

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 a 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.

There are no special circumstances 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, or requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years. There are no special circumstances 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, no special circumstances 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, and no special circumstances requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, 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.

- 8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications 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.**

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 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Docket ID USBC-2025-0005, was posted in the Federal Register on February 23, 2026, in Volume 91, No. 8395. In this notice, the Census Bureau proposes to amend Title 15, § 50.5, of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) to increase the fee for conducting an Age Search from \$65.00 to \$155.00. The Census Bureau also proposes to increase the additional charge for expedited requests requiring search results within one day from \$20.00 per case to \$50.00 per case. These changes are being made to reflect the actual operating costs associated with processing an Age Search request. In this notice, the Census Bureau also announces the Census Bureau's intent to reinstate the expired Age Search information collection (under OMB Control Number 0607-0117) to continue this service to the public.

- 9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

There are no payments or gifts to respondents to complete and mail an application for the Age Search service.

- 10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a system of records**

notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

The Census Bureau is required by law to protect your information. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your responses in a way that could identify you or your household. Title 13, United States Code, Section 8(a) permits release to the person whom the information pertains or to their legal representative. Several federal laws protect your privacy and keeps your answers confidential (Title 5 U.S.C. Section 552a and Title 13, United States Code, Section 9).

The information provided to us may be shared with other Census Bureau staff for the work-related purposes per the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice COMMERCE/Census-6, Population Census Records for 1910 and All Subsequent Decennial Censuses.

Furnishing this information is voluntary. Failure to do so may affect the Census Bureau's ability to provide the information requested.

- 11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or 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.**

The Age Search service does not require an applicant to provide sensitive information to conduct a search of a census record.

- 12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

- **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. Generally, 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 and aggregate the hour burdens.**
- **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 under 'Annual Cost to Federal Government' (Item #14).**

The number of applicants is based on the average number of people that have requested this

service in the past 3 years. The burden estimate in Table 1 below also includes the estimated number of people that will receive either letter [BC-649(L) or BC-658(L)] and provide the necessary information to continue with the census record search.

The burden hours per response in Table 1 is based on subject matter expert review of the questions. The hourly wage rate for the applicant in Table 1 was taken from the May 2023 median hourly wage from BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook (<https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>) for All Occupations as the applicants might be from any of the positions listed in the BLS Handbook. This wage rate for all occupation nationwide is \$23.11.

Note that the type of respondent for all forms used in this service is the public, those persons needing a census transcript for the approved purposes stated in Section 1.

Table 1 – Estimated Annualized Respondent Burden Hours

Form	# of Respondents (a)	Annual # of Responses/ Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hours/ Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hours (e) = (c) x (d)	Total Burden Costs (f) = (a) x (d) x (23.11)
BC-600	1,614	1	1,614	12/60	322.8	\$7,459.91
BC-649(L)	299	1	299	6/60	29.9	\$690.99
BC-658(L)	7	1	7	6/60	0.7	\$16.17
Total	1,920		1,920		353.4	\$8,167.07

13. Provide an estimate for 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 already reflected on the burden worksheet).

The cost for a person requesting a census transcript from the Age Search service is \$155. The payment must be submitted with the application to start the census record search. This fee covers the cost of searching the applicant's census record in a single census date, for one person and resulting in one census transcript of the applicant's information. Table 2 below describes this fee and other fees the Census Bureau might charge the applicant according to their request for additional services.

Table 2. Age Search fee structure

Type of service	Fee
Searches of one census for one person and one transcript	\$155.00
Each additional copy of census transcript	\$2.00
¹ Each expedited full schedule requested	\$10.00

¹The \$10.00 for each full schedule requested is in addition to the \$155.00 transcript fee.

Note: An additional charge of \$50.00 per case is charged for expedited requests requiring search results within one day.

14. Provide estimates of 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), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

Costs for this service are estimated at \$248,556.00. This includes all direct and indirect costs for conducting a census record search and providing a census transcript to an applicant.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

The Census Bureau is reporting three changes to this reinstatement of the expired information collection from the last renewal done in fiscal year 2022. The changes are total burden change for this reinstatement; fee structure change; and adding minor updates to the forms such as adding the alternative for choosing the 2020 Census for a census record search.

Total burden change

Table 3 describes the burden changes from the last renewal. This change is due to a decrease in the number of requests expected for the Age Search service.

Table 3. Total burden change

Form	# of Average Burden Requests from Last Renewal FY 2022	# of Average Burden Requests for the 3-year Period for this Reinstatement	Difference
BC-600	2,426	1,614	(812)
BC-649(L)	449	299	(150)
BC-658(L)	10	7	(3)

Fee structure change

The Age Search service is a self-supporting operation of the Census Bureau, conducted in accordance with 13 U.S.C. 8(a). Under this statute, all expenses incurred in the retrieval of personal information from decennial census records and the preparation of census transcripts are covered by fees paid by individuals who request this service. There has not been an Age Search fee increase since August 30, 2004. Due to an increase in operating costs over this 20-year period and to help maintain the self-supporting financial status of this service, the Census Bureau proposes a fee structure. Table 4 describes the current and proposed fee structure for the Age Search service.

Table 4. Fee structure change

Type of Service	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	Difference
Search for one person and one	\$65	\$155	\$90

transcript			
Each additional copy of census transcript	\$2	\$2	-
Full schedule for additional person	\$10	\$10	-
Each expedited full schedule requested	\$20	\$50	\$30

Collection form changes

Table 5 describes the changes and the justification of the changes for the forms used in the Age Search service.

Table 5. Collection form changes

Form	Change	Updates
BC-600	Available information by census year table	Added Census 2020 in several rows of this table to indicate that a search can be requested for 2020 Census data.
	Contact information	Updated the contact information if the applicant has questions related to the collection.
	Instruction number 6	Provided clarifying instructions to highlight the importance of providing a complete address where the person lived at the specified census date. A complete address is needed to ensure the census record search is successful.
	Section 4 – FEE REQUIRED	Update this section to reflect the new fee structure.
	PERSON WHOSE CENSUS RECORD IS REQUESTED	<i>Last name (current)</i> – updated this field to reflect the last name needed is the one used at the time of the specified census date. <i>Last name (at time of census, if different)</i> – updated this field from “maiden name” to capture additional reasons last names may be different, including adoption, marriage, etc. <i>Place of birth</i> – deleted city and county as the Census Bureau has only collected State for people born in the 50 states and Washington, DC.
	What is this person’s sex	Updated this field from a write-in box to Male and Female check boxes.
	What is this person’s race and/or ethnicity? <u>Select all that apply</u>	In light of OMB’s March 27, 2026 announcement of a one-year extension to submit an Action Plan for compliance with the updates to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, the Census Bureau will temporarily remove the previous race write-in field and will use the delayed deadline to continue to develop implementation plans for the 2024 standards. Race and ethnicity information is infrequently used in the overall collection process, and its temporary removal is not expected to significantly impact the ability to efficiently search for records, given the availability of other identifying data fields.
	Section 6 – PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR APPROPRIATE CENSUS DATE	- Added a ZIP Code box for the 1970 and 1980 Censuses. - Added a row to include the most recent census, the 2020 Census.
	Section 7 – LOCATOR MAP	- Moved this section from the front of the form to the reverse side of the form. - Updated the instructions to indicate if the applicant is including a hand-drawn or printed map to mark where the person lived at the specified census date.
	DO NOT USE THIS SPACE – OFFICIAL USE	Moved this section from the front of the form to the reverse side of the form.

	ONLY	
BC-658(L)	Table	• Added a row for the 1910 Census. • Added a ZIP Code box for the 1970 and 1980 Censuses. • Added a row for the 2020 Census.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation 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 Census Bureau does not publish tabulations from the information an applicant provides to request the Age Search service.

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 Age Search forms have been in existence for many years with few changes. Stock of Age Search applications can be found outside of the Census Bureau, for example, libraries, genealogical institutes, and passport agencies. Display of the expiration date on the forms would require these institutes to needlessly replenish the supply of forms when the date expires. Therefore, we request that the expiration date not appear on the forms.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

The agency certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).