

**OMB Information Collection Request
Supporting Statement B
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau**

**High Frequency Surveys Program
Household Trends and Outlook Pulse Survey**

OMB Control Number 0607-1029

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

The samples for the July, September, and November 2026 HTOPS surveys will be drawn as independent cross-sectional samples rather than the longitudinal panel design employed in the prior topicals in 2025. To determine the overall sample size, the minimum sample sizes for a given target lower-level geography – a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the 10 largest MSAs or Census Region – was first determined based on an anticipated 10% response rate from recent historical response rate data from the HTOPS. This approach resulted in a national-level sample size for a given data collection period of approximately 135,645 addresses.

- 2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
- **Estimation procedure,**
- **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
- **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and**
- **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

The sample design is a stratified systematic sample of all eligible HUs from the Census Bureau's Master Address File (MAF), which covers all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Auxiliary data from the Demographic Frame (DF), Planning Data Base (PDB), and Community Resilience Estimates (CRE) will be linked to the MAF to stratify the housing units into stratum

based on demographic variables within the four Census Bureau regions. MAF records not stratified into a stratum based on the DF, PDB, or CRE will be defined as their own strata. The sample will be distributed proportionately within regions of the country to each stratum based on the number of housing units within the stratum. We will conduct a subsampling operation in stratum that, based on results of other demographic surveys, have higher response rates. Thus, the stratum where no subsampling occurs will be oversampled.

The final HTOPS survey weights are designed to produce estimates for the total persons aged 18 and older living within HUs (based on the person weight); and occupied household level estimates (based on the household weight). We will create these weights by adjusting the household-level sampling base weights by various factors to account for nonresponse, adults per household, and coverage. The final HTOPS survey weights are created by applying a Housing Unit adjustment, which converts the person level weight back into a housing unit (HU) weight by dividing the person level weight by the number of persons age 18 and older that were reported to live within the household, and the Occupied HU ratio adjustment, which ensures that the final HTOPS weights will sum to the American Community Survey (ACS) one-year, state-level estimates of occupied HUs.

- 3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

HTOPS sample members are invited to respond to monthly surveys. Invitations will be sent by mail, with limited outbound telephone calling to sample members who are less likely to self-respond. Using a unique login, sample members can access the questionnaire by computer, tablet, or smartphone. Sample members who do not have internet access can use in-bound calling to respond to the survey.

Data collection for the survey will take place within an approximately two-week window. Each survey will be approximately 20 minutes long and sample members will receive up to three mailed invitations and up to two phone reminders to complete the survey.

- 4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.**

The September HTOPS survey will include a methodological test of three different methods to log into the internet self-response (ISR) data collection instrument. As one of the first tasks for a respondent to complete in the process of responding to an internet-based survey, the log-in method can have a direct impact on overall survey response. Furthermore, different log-in methods allow for the retention of partially completed surveys for respondents to come back to continue response at a later time. The September HTOPS sample will be randomly divided into three distinct experimental groups receiving one of three log-in method options:

- Group 1 will receive the current HTOPS log-in method asking the respondent to enter the User ID provided to them in the mailed invitation materials.
- Group 2 will receive a method asking the respondent to provide an email or phone number in order to receive a one-time code to enter to verify that email or phone number. The respondent will then be asked to enter the User ID provided to them in the mailed invitation materials. This method will allow a respondent to log in a subsequent times with just their email or phone number and a one-time code.
- Group 3 will receive a method asking the respondent to enter the User ID provided to them in the mailed invitation materials, and the be prompted to provide an email or phone number in order to receive a one-time code to enter to verify that email or phone number. This method will allow a respondent to log in a subsequent times with just their email or phone number and a one-time code.

These three methods are common for web log-in and authentication, but the inclusion of this experiment on the HTOPS allows for direct comparison of the impacts of each method on log-in rates and response to a survey. The results from this methodological test will help all demographic surveys at the U.S. Census Bureau make informed assessments on the trade-offs between the available methods and determinations on the most advantageous ISR log-in method.

5. **Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

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