

designed to inform on a range of topics related to households' experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. Topics to date have included employment, facility to telework, travel patterns, income loss, spending patterns, food and housing security, access to benefits, mental health and access to care, intent to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, and educational disruption (K-12 and post-secondary). The requested revision, if approved by OMB, will remove selected items from the questions for which utility has declined and add questions based on information needs expressed via public comment and in consult with other Federal agencies. The overall burden to the public will remain unchanged.

The Household Pulse Survey was initially launched in April, 2020 as an experimental project (see <https://www.census.gov/data/experimental-data-products.html>) under emergency clearance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) initially granted April 19, 2020; regular clearance was subsequently sought and approved by OMB on October 30, 2020 (OMB No. 0607-1013; Exp. 10/30/2023).

*Affected Public:* Households.

*Frequency:* Households will be selected once to participate in a 20-minute survey.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* Title 13, United States Code, Sections 8(b), 182 and 196.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0607-1013.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

*Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Commerce Department.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Census Bureau

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; American Community Survey (ACS) Methods Panel Tests

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information

collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on February 9, 2021 during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

*Agency:* U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

*Title:* American Community Survey Methods Panel Testing.

*OMB Control Number:* 0607-0936.

*Form Number(s):* ACS-1, ACS-1(GQ), ACS-1(PR)SP, ACS CAPI(HU), and ACS RI(HU).

*Type of Request:* Regular submission, Request for a Revision of a Currently Approved Collection.

*Number of Respondents:*

Test	Estimated number of respondents
Self-Response Mail Messaging and Contact Strategies Testing .....	Test A-60,000. Test B-60,000. Test C-60,000. Test D-60,000. Test E-60,000. Test F-60,000.
Respondent Feedback Pilot .....	100,000.
Use of Administrative Data Test .....	100,000.
Group Quarters Testing .....	2,000 administrators. 30,000 residents.
Content Testing .....	Test A-70,000. Test B-70,000.
Content Testing Followup Interview .....	Test A-40,000. Test B-40,000.
Internet Instrument Testing .....	Test A-60,000. Test B-60,000. Test C-60,000. Test D-60,000. Test E-60,000. Test F-60,000.
Respondent Help Testing .....	40,000.
Nonresponse Followup Data Collection Testing .....	100,000.

*Average Hours per Response:*

Test	Estimated time per response (in minutes)
Self-Response Mail Messaging and Contact Strategies Testing .....	40.
Respondent Feedback Pilot .....	42 (40 minutes for the production ACS interview and 2 minutes for the optional followup questions).
Use of Administrative Data Test .....	40.
Group Quarters Testing .....	15 for the administrator interview 25 for the resident interview.
Content Testing .....	40.
Content Testing Followup Interview .....	40.
Internet Instrument Testing .....	40.
Respondent Help Testing .....	10.
Nonresponse Followup Data Collection Testing .....	40.

*Burden Hours:*

Test	Estimated number of respondents	Estimated time per response (in minutes)	Total burden hours
Self-Response Mail Messaging and Contact Strategies Testing.	Test A-60,000 .....	40	Test A-40,000.
	Test B-60,000 .....		Test B-40,000.
	Test C-60,000 .....		Test C-40,000.
	Test D-60,000 .....		Test D-40,000.
	Test E-60,000 .....		Test E-40,000.
	Test F-60,000 .....		Test F-40,000.
Respondent Feedback Pilot .....	100,000 .....	42	70,000.
Use of Administrative Data Test .....	100,000 .....	40	66,667.
Group Quarters Testing .....	2,000 facility administrators ....	15	13,000.
	30,000 residents .....	25	
Content Testing .....	Test A-70,000 .....	40	Test A-46,667.
	Test B-70,000 .....		Test B-46,667.
Content Testing Followup Interview .....	Test A-40,000 .....	40	Test A-26,667.
	Test B-40,000 .....		Test B -26,667.
Internet Instrument Testing .....	Test A-60,000 .....	40	Test A-40,000.
	Test B-60,000 .....		Test B-40,000.
	Test C-60,000 .....		Test C-40,000.
	Test D-60,000 .....		Test D-40,000.
	Test E-60,000 .....		Test E-40,000.
	Test F-60,000 .....		Test F-40,000.
Respondent Help Testing .....	40,000 .....	10	6,667.
Nonresponse Followup Data Collection Testing .....	100,000 .....	40	66,667.
Total (over 3 years) * .....	1,312,000 .....		849,667.
Average per year .....	437,333 .....		283,222.

\* **Note:** This is the maximum burden requested for these tests. Every effort is taken to use existing production sample for testing when the tests do not involve content changes.

*Needs and Uses:* The U.S. Census Bureau requests authorization from OMB for the American Community Survey (ACS) Methods Panel Tests.

The ACS is an ongoing monthly survey that collects detailed housing and socioeconomic data from about 3.5 million addresses in the United States and about 36,000 addresses in Puerto Rico each year. The ACS also collects detailed socioeconomic data from about 195,000 residents living in group quarters (GQ) facilities in the United States and Puerto Rico. Resulting tabulations from this data collection are provided on a yearly basis. The ACS allows the Census Bureau to provide timely and relevant housing and socioeconomic statistics, even for low levels of geography.

An ongoing data collection effort with an annual sample of this magnitude

requires that the ACS continue research, testing, and evaluations aimed at improving data quality, reducing data collection costs, and improving the ACS questionnaire content and related data collection materials. The ACS Methods Panel is a research program designed to address and respond to survey issues and needs. As part of the Decennial Census Program, the ACS also provides an opportunity to research and test elements of survey data collection that relate to the decennial census. As such, the ACS Methods Panel can serve as a testbed for the decennial census. From 2021 to 2024, the ACS Methods Panel may test ACS and decennial census methods for reducing survey cost, addressing respondent burden, and improving survey response, data quality, and survey efficiencies. Testing may also include revising content or

testing new questions. The ACS Methods Panel may also address other emerging needs of the programs. Currently, plans are in place to propose several tests:

Self-Response Mail Messaging and Contact Strategies Testing are focused on studying methods to increase self-response. The proposed tests would evaluate changes to the mailings, such as using plain language to improve communication, changing the look and feel of the materials, updating messages to motivate response, and adding or removing materials included in the mailings. Changes to the contact method, the number of contacts, and the timing of the contacts may also be tested. The Strategic Framework Field Test will be conducted in the fall of 2021 to test new mail materials that were developed building on research

into best practices in messages. The test will identify which set of new mail materials is most successful at increasing self-response.

The Respondent Feedback Pilot is designed to collect respondent feedback at the time of the interview, with the pilot focusing on internet respondents. Respondents will not be required to answer the feedback question.

The Use of Administrative Data to reduce burden of existing questions by allowing for modification of the questions will be tested. A field test is proposed for questions that may need to remain on the questionnaire but be modified in conjunction with the use of administrative records.

Group Quarters Testing will focus on evaluating an internet version of the ACS available to non-institutional group quarters residents, especially in college dorms, military barracks, and group homes.

Content Testing is conducted by the Census Bureau periodically to improve data quality. The current proposal includes changes to the following questions: Household roster, educational attainment, health insurance, disability, means of transportation to work, income, weeks worked, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), condominium fees, and home heating fuel. Additionally, three new questions on solar panels, electric vehicles, and sewage disposal were proposed. The objective of content testing is to determine the impact of changing question wording and response categories, as well as redefining underlying constructs, on the quality of the data collected.

Internet Instrument Testing is proposed to test and evaluate revised features of the internet instrument.

Respondent Help Testing will focus on methods to answer respondent questions about the survey and improve operational efficiency, specifically testing updates to the Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) system as well as exploring the use of other methods such as online chat.

Nonresponse Followup Data Collection Testing is proposed to evaluate the use of adaptive survey design techniques for the ACS Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) Nonresponse Followup operation.

**Affected Public:** Individuals or households.

**Frequency:** Multiple one-time tests over a 3-year period.

**Respondent's Obligation:** Mandatory.

**Legal Authority:** Title 13 U.S.C. Sections 141, 193, and 221.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0607–0936.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Census Bureau

#### **Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions**

**AGENCY:** Census Bureau, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection, request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment on the proposed extension of the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions prior to the submission of the information collection request (ICR) to OMB for approval.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before August 23, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit written comments by email to [Thomas.J.Smith@census.gov](mailto:Thomas.J.Smith@census.gov). Please reference Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions in the subject line of your comments. You may also submit comments, identified by Docket Number USBC–2021–0014, to the Federal e-

Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments received are part of the public record. No comments will be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> for public viewing until after the comment period has closed. Comments will generally be posted without change. All Personally Identifiable Information (for example, name and address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. You may submit attachments to electronic comments in Microsoft Word, Excel, or Adobe PDF file formats.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Phillip Vidal, Chief, Pensions Statistics Branch, Economy-Wide Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Headquarters, Washington, DC 20233; email: [phillip.m.vidal@census.gov](mailto:phillip.m.vidal@census.gov); 301.763.1749.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **I. Abstract**

The Census Bureau plans to request clearance for the form necessary to conduct the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions. The quarterly survey was initiated by the Census Bureau in 1968 at the request of both the Council of Economic Advisers and the Federal Reserve Board.

The Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions currently provides national summary data on the asset holdings of the largest pension systems of state and local governments.

These data are used by the Federal Reserve Board to track the public sector portion of the Flow of Funds Accounts. Economists and public policy analysts use these data to assess general economic conditions and state and local government financial activities.

Data are collected from a panel of defined benefit plans of the 100 largest state and local government pension systems as determined by their total cash and security holdings reported in the 2012 Census of Governments. The defined benefit plans of these 100 largest pension systems comprise 87.2 percent of financial activity among such entities, based on the 2012 Census of Governments.

##### **II. Method of Collection**

Survey data are collected through the Census Bureau's web collection system that enables public entities to respond to the questionnaire via the internet.