



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Information Collection Activities; Comment Request

AGENCY: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed revision of the "Current Population Survey (CPS)." A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below in the Addresses section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the Addresses section of this notice on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Erin Good, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20212. Written comments also may be transmitted by email to BLS_PRA_Public@bls.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Erin Good, BLS Clearance Officer, 202-691-7763 (this is not a toll-free number). (See Addresses section.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The CPS has been the principal source of the official Government statistics on employment and unemployment for over 75 years. The labor force information gathered through the survey is of paramount importance in keeping track of the economic health of the Nation. The survey is the only source of monthly data on total employment and unemployment. The Employment Situation news release contains data from this survey and is designated as a Principal Federal Economic Indicator (PFEI). Moreover, the survey also yields data on the characteristics of persons not in the labor force. The CPS data are used monthly, in conjunction with data from other sources, to analyze the extent to which,

and with what success, the various components of the American population are participating in the economic life of the Nation.

The labor force data gathered through the CPS are provided to users in the greatest detail possible, in conjunction with the demographic information obtained in the survey. In brief, the labor force data can be broken down by sex, age, race, ethnicity, marital status, family composition, educational level, certification and licensing status, disability status, and other characteristics. Through such breakdowns, one can focus on the employment situation of specific population groups as well as on general trends in employment and unemployment. Information of this type can be obtained only through demographically oriented surveys such as the CPS.

The basic CPS data also are used as an important platform on which to base the data derived from the various supplemental questions that are administered in conjunction with the survey. By coupling the basic data from the monthly survey with the special data from the supplements, one can get valuable insights on the behavior of American workers and on the social and economic health of their families.

There is wide interest in the monthly CPS data among Government policymakers, legislators, economists, the media, and the general public. While the data from the CPS are used in conjunction with data from other surveys in assessing the

economic health of the Nation, they are unique in various ways. Specifically, they are the basis for much of the monthly Employment Situation report, a PFEI. They provide a monthly, nationally representative measure of total employment, including farm work, self-employment, and unpaid family work; other surveys are generally restricted to the nonagricultural wage and salary sector, or provide less timely information. The CPS provides data on all job seekers, and on all persons outside the labor force, while payroll-based surveys cannot, by definition, cover these sectors of the population. Finally, the CPS data on employment, unemployment, and on persons not in the labor force can be linked to the demographic characteristics of the many groups that make up the Nation's population, while the data from other surveys often have limited demographic information. Many groups, both in the government and in the private sector, are eager to analyze this wealth of demographic and labor force data.

II. Current Action

Office of Management and Budget clearance is being sought for a revision of the Current Population Survey (CPS). This survey is being revised to temporarily add five questions to the Current Population Survey (CPS) to collect data on the effects of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and the attempts to constrain the spread of the illness. These questions ask about responses to COVID-19 during the previous 4 weeks - specifically, whether respondents teleworked due to COVID-19, were unable to work because an

employer closed or lost business, and were paid for hours not worked. A question for people not in the labor force will ask if respondents did not look for work in the previous 4 weeks because of COVID-19. In addition, respondents will be asked whether any household members needed non-coronavirus-related medical care in the previous 4 weeks but did not get it because of the pandemic.

Also, while letters are typically sent to households entering the CPS sample for the first time to inform them that they have been selected for the survey, those letters may be suspended during periods where the Census Bureau's National Processing Center, which handles mailings, is closed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

These data were approved for monthly collection for 180 days under Emergency OMB Clearance Package 1220-0194, which expires on October 31, 2020.

The revision of 1220-0100 requests approval to extend collection of the CPS for three years, but the additional COVID-19 data are not intended to be collected for that full timeframe. A non-substantive change request will be submitted to remove the COVID-19 questions and the associated respondent burden from the survey when the BLS determines they are no longer relevant to this collection.

III. Desired Focus of Comments

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility.
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used.
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected.
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

Title: Current Population Survey (CPS).

OMB Number: 1220-0100.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Households.

Total Respondents: 49,500 per month.

Frequency: Monthly.

Total Responses: 594,000.

Average Time Per Response: 9.6 minutes.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 95,040 hours.

Total Burden Cost (capital/startup): \$0.

Total Burden Cost (operating/maintenance): \$0.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they also will become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on May 8, 2020.

Mark Staniorski,

Chief, Division of Management Systems.

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