

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Census Employment Inquiry
OMB Control No. 0607-0139

A. Justification

1. Necessity of Information Collection

The Census Bureau requests continued OMB approval for the BC-170A, BC-170B, and the BC-170D, Census Employment Inquiry forms for Field Division.

The BC-170 is used throughout the census and intercensal periods for the special census, pretests, and dress rehearsals for short-term time limited appointments. Applicants completing the form for a census related position are applying for temporary jobs in office and field positions, such as clerks, enumerators, crew leaders, and supervisors. In addition, as an option to the OF-612, Optional Application for Federal Employment, the BC-170 may be used when applying for temporary/permanent office and field positions, such as clerks, field representatives, and supervisors on a recurring survey in one of the Census Bureau's 12 Regional Offices (ROs) throughout the United States.

During the decennial census, the BC-170 is intended to expedite hiring and selection in situations requiring large numbers of temporary employees for assignments of a limited duration. The use of this form is limited to only situations which require the establishment of a temporary office and/or involve special, one-time or recurring survey operations at one of the ROs. The form has been demonstrated to meet our recruitment needs for temporary workers and requires significantly less burden than the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Forms that are available for use by the public when applying for federal positions. For the 2010 Census, we expect to recruit 3,000,000 applicants for census jobs.

The recurring survey form is identified as the BC-170A. The form for special censuses is identified as the BC-170B, and the form for decennial as the BC-170D. The variation of forms by operation, is to collect specific data needed based on the nature of the operation. The major area of difference relates to the collection of work history. A cover sheet will be attached to each respective BC-170 to provide applicants with a brief description of their prospective job duties with the Census Bureau; the cover sheet message will vary for decennial, special censuses, or recurring survey positions. The modified cover sheet is attached to each form (Attachments 1, 2, and 3).

The changes to the forms for this period included updating the identification that is allowed to be used as employment eligibility verification, the addition of place of birth, and the collection of the name of the educational institution the applicant attended.

This collection is authorized by Title 13, United States Code, Section 23 a and c, additional officers and employees.

2. Needs and Uses

The BC-170 (A, B, and D) is completed by job applicants before or at the time they are tested. Selecting officials will review the information shown on the form and determine the applicant=s employment suitability. Failure to collect this information could result in the hiring of unsuitable and/or unqualified workers.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of the information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau’s Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to the information collections conducted by the Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

3. Use of Information Technology

Investigation is currently underway to make the BC-170 available on-line. Interested applicants will be able to download and print the application.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

The BC-170 (A, B, and D) is intended to facilitate speedy hiring and selection in situations requiring large numbers of temporary employees for assignments of a limited duration. Accordingly, the use of the BC-170 will be limited to only situations which require the establishment of a temporary office and/or involve special, one-time or recurring survey operations. This will avoid undue paperwork.

5. Efforts to Minimize Burden

The proposed form has been demonstrated to meet our needs for hiring temporary workers and requires significantly less burden than the OPM Optional Forms that are available for use by the public when applying for a federal position.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

Completion of this form is a one-time collection.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

The Census Bureau's Human Resources Division has consulted with the Office of Human Resource Management, Department of Commerce, on an ongoing basis since 1984. Since that time, several revisions have been suggested and incorporated. Currently, the Census Bureau's Human Resources Division has approval from the Department of Commerce to use this form for employment purposes.

A notice announcing our intention to submit this request was published in the Federal Register on July 26, 2007, page 41054. No comments were received.

9. Paying Respondents

We do not pay applicants or provide them gifts for applying for a federal position.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The confidentiality of information contained on the BC-170 will be maintained according to the provisions of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C., 552a. The applicants are provided a copy of the Privacy Act Statement that appears on page 6 of the BC-170A, on page 4 of the BC-170B, and on page 3 of the BC-170D.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The BC-170 contains questions of a sensitive nature relating to criminal charges and indebtedness to the Federal government. These questions are necessary to determine the applicants' suitability for census jobs.

12. Estimate of Hour Burden

The respondents complete the BC-170 only once. Based on past experiences, the BC-170 on average takes about 15 minutes to complete. The annual burden would be 250,000 hours (1,000,000 multiplied by 15 minutes).

13. Estimate of Cost Burden

There are no costs to the respondents other than of their time for completing the BC-170.

14. Cost to Federal Government

The estimated cost for printing and keying the BC-170 is \$500,000. This cost was estimated based on the current cost of printing the form. The cost is budgeted and paid for by the Census Bureau.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

The increase in reporting burden is due to the increase in the recruitment efforts for the 2010 Decennial Census.

16. Project Schedule

As mentioned earlier, the BC-170 (A, B, and D) is used throughout the census and intercensal periods for the special censuses, pretests, and dress rehearsals for short-term time limited appointments. The recruiting efforts for 2010 Census will begin in July 2008, and will continue until September, 2010.

17. Request not to Display Expiration Date

Since the BC-170 is used frequently and does not change often we have discontinued displaying the expiration date of the collection on the form to avoid needless reprinting. We would like to continue in this manner.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions.

Attachments

1. Form BC-170A
2. Form BC-170B
3. Form BC-170D