

The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). The objective of this research is to conduct cognitive testing of two alternative versions of the American Community Survey (ACS). These ACS questionnaires are part of the 2013 ACS Questionnaire Design Test (QDT). Alternate ACS designs are being developed to accommodate additional content that may be introduced on ACS mail questionnaires in the future. The purpose of the QDT is to determine how alternative questionnaire designs affect response rates, data quality, and cost. Cognitive test results of these ACS questionnaires will be used to inform quantitative test results from the QDT.

Two ACS questionnaires will be cognitively tested. Draft copies of these forms are attached. The forms are identical in their content, but differ in their layout. Their differences are as follows:

- 1) 36-page paper ACS
 - a. 10.25" x 10.5" page size
 - b. Three-column layout for housing and detailed person questions
 - c. Three blank pages at the back of the form
- 2) 44-page paper ACS
 - a. 8.5" x 11" page size
 - b. Two-column layout for housing and detailed person questions
 - c. Zero blank pages at the back of the form

Between August and September 2012, staff from the Center for Survey Measurement (CSM) will conduct a maximum of 30 interviews among respondents with low internet experience (that is, people who use the internet less than 2-3 times a week for activities such as searching for information, shopping online, or completing web surveys). These respondents will be recruited because we want to test the questionnaire with the types of people who are likely to complete the mail questionnaire rather than an Internet form. To the maximum extent possible, within these specific criteria we will attempt to interview respondents of varying ages, genders and educational levels. We will use a multi-pronged strategy to recruit the respondents needed for this study, such as posting ads in free local newspapers and contacting local associations. Respondents will be screened to ensure that they have low internet experience.

Interviews will be conducted using interviewer observations and the retrospective probing method. Each respondent will complete one version of the ACS, and will be shown the other version for comparison at the end of the interview. During the cognitive test, each respondent will complete printed paper-and-pencil versions of the experimental ACS forms.

The interviews will be conducted in the Washington DC metropolitan area. The interviews will be conducted at the Census Bureau's cognitive laboratory, offices of community associations, and locations convenient to respondents.

Cognitive interviews will be tape-recorded, with the participants' permission, to facilitate a summary of the results. All participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential. Respondents will receive \$40 for their participation.

The estimated time for completion of each of the cognitive interviews is 90 minutes. Thus, the estimated burden for this research is 45 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and study design is:

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