

1The U.S. Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will be conducting unstructured interviews for the 2013 Annual Survey of Public Pensions (ASPP). The ASPP is conducted annually, providing revenue, expenditure, financial asset, and membership information for public-employee retirement systems.

Currently the ASPP collects data using three forms. Form F-11 collects data from locally-administered defined benefit plans, while forms F-12 and F-12(S) collect data from state-administered defined-benefit, defined-contribution, and post-employee healthcare pension plans.

The ASPP is exploring the possibility of collecting additional information regarding defined contribution and post-employee healthcare plans from local governments. This research focus on learning how local governments' records are kept, with an eye toward the creation of a new questionnaire. Specifically, testing is being conducted to determine: a) the types of information about defined contribution and post-employee healthcare plans that are available from locally-administered pension plans; b) how those plans store that information; c) how well or how poorly the data requests on the state-administered ASPP questionnaires match what is in local governments' records; and d) how respondents are translating their records into responses to the data requests. Information related to retirement assets, investments, actuarial liabilities, and member information are of particular interest.

During February 2013, the Response Improvement Research Staff (RIRS) will conduct one round of unstructured interviews with up to 15 locally-administered pension systems throughout the state of Florida. The unstructured interviews will focus on the respondents' record formation, ability to provide the requested data, and their understanding of the wording and terminology used on the forms. Copies of the current questionnaires and draft interview protocols are enclosed. The results of the unstructured interviews will be used to understand the feasibility of collecting information about defined contribution and post-employment healthcare plans from locally-administered pension plans in the future.

Staff from the Governments Division will provide RIRS with a list of locally-administered pension systems from which to recruit. Sample cases will include a mix of large and small pension systems with different organizational structures. Unstructured interviews will take place at the respondents' sites and will be conducted by members of the RIRS.

After government entities are recruited, participants will receive follow-up reminders about their appointments by phone or email. Participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by Census Bureau or special sworn employees involved in the research project. We will not be providing monetary incentives to participants in this study.

Subject area specialists from Governments Division will accompany the researcher on most, if not all, of the interviews. They will assist with respondent debriefing, especially in cases where additional clarification of the subject matter is required. We will audio-record the interviews with the participants' permission, to aid researchers in accurately reporting findings and recommendations.

1We estimate that, in most cases, it will be necessary to interview only one respondent at each government agency. We estimate the length of the interview will at most be 1 hour. Thus, the maximum estimated burden for this research is 15 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

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