

REQUEST FOR RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY		JOB NUMBER <i>NI-257-092</i>	
To NATIONAL ARCHIVES and RECORDS ADMINISTRATION 8601 ADELPHI ROAD, COLLEGE PARK, MD 20740-6001		DATE RECEIVED <i>6/10/08</i>	
1 FROM (Agency or establishment) U S Department of Labor		NOTIFICATION TO AGENCY	
2 MAJOR SUBDIVISION Bureau of Labor Statistics		In accordance with the provisions of 44 U.S.C. 3303a, the disposition request, including amendments, is approved except for items that may be marked "disposition not approved" or "withdrawn" in column 10	
3 MINOR SUBDIVISION Office of Survey Methods Research Behavioral Science Research Center			
4 NAME OF PERSON WITH WHOM TO CONFER Karen Burnette Scot t Fricker	5 TELEPHONE 202-691-6054 202-691-7390	DATE <i>6/13/09</i>	ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES <i>Adrienne Thomas</i>
6 AGENCY CERTIFICATION I hereby certify that I am authorized to act for this agency in matters pertaining to the disposition of its records and that the records proposed for disposal on the attached <u>7</u> page(s) are not now needed for the business of this agency or will not be needed after the retention periods specified, and that written concurrence from the General Accounting Office, under the provisions of Title 8 of the GAO manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies, <input type="checkbox"/> is not required, <input type="checkbox"/> is attached, or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> has been requested			
DATE 10-20-2008	SIGNATURE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE Karen H. Nunley <i>Karen H. Nunley</i>		TITLE Departmental Records Officer
7 ITEM NO	8 DESCRIPTION OF ITEM AND PROPOSED DISPOSITION	9 GRS OR SUPERSEDED JOB CITATION	10 ACTION TAKEN (NARA USE ONLY)
1-11	See attached record series descriptive listing		

**U.S. Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Office of Survey Methods Research**

The **Office of Survey Methods Research (OSMR)** plans and directs activities for improving the quality of both current statistical output and long-term program developments. OSMR evaluates BLS programs emphasizing conceptual, methodological, and technical issues, as well as responsiveness to evolving user needs. OSMR also conducts research on statistical and behavioral science issues relevant to the BLS mission.

OSMR staff evaluates the effectiveness and soundness of the survey methods currently used by BLS programs, investigates alternative methods to determine their appropriateness for BLS programs, and develops new methods for improving the efficiency and quality of BLS programs. They also conduct research on cross-program issues, consult with program offices on a regular basis, and support ongoing improvement activities for the major statistical programs.

Behavioral Science Research Center

Research conducted by the behavioral scientists concentrates on the measurement and reduction of non-sampling error through, for example, questionnaire design studies, investigations into respondent-interviewer interactions, usability studies of computer assisted data collection systems and the development of response-level data quality measures. The records described below relate to the activities conducted in the Behavioral Science Research Center: the design, conduct, interpretation, and dissemination of the results of this field and laboratory research. The project files of the researchers in the Center make up the DOL Privacy Act System of Record *DOL/BLS-14 BLS Behavioral Science Research Laboratory Project Files*.

Phase I. Study Design and Approval.

1. **(N1-257-09-2, item 1) Researcher's Working File.** The working file can include information such as team or project charter, study schedule, study protocol; draft designs of the application(s) or item(s) to be tested. Materials are added to this file as the study proceeds and may include participant consent forms, team meeting notes, and draft reports and comments. The researcher's working files also include research done for non-lab-based publications and papers, and the final dataset(s) in service of those activities.

Teams may set up a collaboration site, such as a team wiki or shared folder structure, during the course of the study.

Some parts of the file may exist in multiple places and media (such as both hard copies and electronic copies, or on both a hard drive and team site.) In addition, data in the working file may be duplicated in the testing lab.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off (additions to) file, including electronic records, at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. If study is iterative, bring forward active material to new files as required. If storage is needed, transfer to WNRC for storage at cutoff. Destroy 5 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later.

2. **Study Related Email.** Researchers and project teams often communicate by email regarding study logistics, scheduling, analyses and so forth.
 - a. **(N1-257-09-2, item 2) Email with Substantive Study Content.** Over the course of the study substantive information such as study justification, methodology, analysis of results, comment on and approval of reports, and the like may be included in email or accompanying attachments. This email (including distribution information and attachments) should be filed in the shared directory for the study.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off (additions to) file at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. Destroy 5 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later.
 - b. ~~**Email of Transitory Interest.** Email of limited content value and short term interest (180 days or less), including email transmitting other documents covered by this schedule that do not add any value to the attachment, or documenting routine activities such as notifications of meetings, and other scheduling related activities.~~

~~**Disposition:** Temporary. Destroy immediately, or when no longer needed for reference. (GRS 23-7)~~
3. **OMB Study Clearance Package.** A package is made up for review and clearance by OMB that includes a description of the study, federal register notice, data collection methodology, guidelines for ensuring confidentiality, copies of project materials such as contact letters, collection instruments and supporting materials. This includes the inventory correction worksheet (OMB Form 83-C). The package is made up electronically and turned in for review in the Office of Survey Methods Research (OSMR). At that time it is filed in the OSMR shared directory. Copies are sent to OMB, the Department of Labor, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics Division of Management Systems. A written decision from OMB and a summary report upon completion of the study are later added to this file.
 - a. **(N1-257-09-2, item 3) OSMR File Copy**

Disposition: Temporary. These packages are a good description of research and have internal agency value as models for researchers developing clearance packages for similar research. Cutoff file when summary report is added to package. Screen annually to bring forward those packages with continuing value. Destroy 15 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed, whichever is later.
 - b. **(N1-257-09-2, item 4) Researcher's Copy**

Disposition: Temporary. Destroy when no longer needed for revision or reference.

Phase II. Conducting Study.

4. **Sample.** Survey respondents are chosen using different methods depending on the need of the study. In some cases, respondents are recruited through flyers or newspaper or on-line advertisements; in other cases, a list is assembled from respondents to a current survey, current BLS data users, or contractors and state agencies involved in data collection.
 - a. **Study Announcement and Recruitment Materials.** Researchers develop the text used to recruit participants in studies (generally 5-60 per study), describing the characteristics needed in participants and giving other pertinent information. A flyer or newspaper advertisement is developed. When the applicants respond, staff will often use a recruiting script to ensure that the applicant meets the needs for the study. Records are kept of the calls. A master schedule is also kept in spreadsheet format that tracks how the recruiting is progressing for each study against the timeline for the study activities and number of participants needed.

Series consists of flyers or the text used in other forms of advertising and recruiting scripts or phone questionnaires or other call records, as well as tracking spreadsheets. Some materials may be duplicated in the researchers' working files. Case files are filed by study number.

Because these records contain identifying information about recruits they are considered sensitive, though no formal confidentiality agreement is in place at this point in the study.

Disposition: Temporary.

- i. **(N1-257-09-2, item 5) Recruiter's Study File.** Close file at end of study participant activities. Retain for 2 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was closed. Destroy using confidential destruction method.
 - ii. **(N1-257-09-2, item 6) Tracking Spreadsheet.** Cut off at end of fiscal or calendar year. Move active studies forward to new spreadsheet. Delete 2 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off.
 - iii. **(N1-257-09-2, item 7) Electronic and extra hard copies of recruiting materials (including email).** Destroy when no longer needed for distribution reference or revision.
- b. **(N1-257-09-2, item 8) Advance Materials.** Information may be sent to individuals in advance of their study participation. These materials can include advance letters describing the purpose and procedures of the study, survey brochures, privacy act and consent forms, and estimates of survey length.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off (additions to) file, including electronic records, at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. If study is iterative, bring forward active material to new files as required. Destroy 5 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later. Copies for reproduction and dissemination may be destroyed as soon as no longer needed for that purpose.

- c. ~~**Remuneration.** Individuals often receive payment for their participation in studies. Records of these transactions include: electronic spreadsheet of study payments (e.g., participant name, date, payment amount); purchase order; Visa card statements; and copies of payment vouchers signed by participants.~~

~~**Disposition:** Temporary. Destroy 3 years after final payment (GRS 3-3(a)(1)(a) Routine procurement files)~~

- d. (N1-257-09-2, item 9) **Participant Database.** A list of potential study participants is maintained by OSMR staff. The electronic database file (currently an Access database) contains contact information for each individual as well as key demographic data that is commonly used as selection criteria for studies. Individuals may be removed from the database, usually for cause such as failure to show for a session or obsolete contact information. Because participants are filed alphabetically by name this is considered a privacy act system of records.

Disposition: Temporary. Individual records in the database may be deleted at staff discretion. Database is cut off every one to two years at the end of the fiscal or calendar year. Move active contacts forward to new file. Delete 2 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off.

- e. ~~**Record of Burden Hours.** Currently kept in an Excel spreadsheet in the OSMR shared directory, the burden hours used for respondents in the survey are tracked against the total approved by OMB and entered into the spreadsheet once the study is completed. Data from the spreadsheet are fed into the BLS report.~~

~~**Disposition:** Temporary. (GRS 16-12 Information Collection Budget Files) Cut off at the end of each fiscal year. Carry active studies forward to new year. Delete 5 years from date of cutoff.~~

5. **Data Collection:** Study data can be collected in a variety of methods, including the use of interviewer-administered protocol, self-administered instruments (paper or electronic), cognitive interviews, and focus groups. When responses are recorded using an automated format, "incidental" responses may be recorded. These are not considered record material and may be discarded as soon as practical. (For example, in the case of a usability study the actual response of the participant is not important, only the data about how easy or difficult it was for them to provide the response.)

- a. (N1-257-09-2, item 10) **Completed Study Materials.** Individual level data (microdata) which includes participants' responses to survey items, satisfaction ratings, and debriefing questionnaires. In some cases files may be duplicated in both paper and electronic format.

Disposition: Temporary. Delete as soon as no longer needed for study.

- b. (N1-257-09-2, item 11) **Interviewer notes.**

Disposition: Temporary. Retain for one year or when no longer needed for study, whichever is later.

- c. **Electronic Recordings of Test Sessions: Audio and Video Files.** In many cases a raw audio and/or video file is generated for every test session. The recording is used by the researcher to recollect or reconstruct the session and user

comments. "Highlight" clips may be made for further reference. The raw recording files are quite large and are generally left on the lab computers for the length of their reference period. The highlight clips are sent to the researcher and incorporated into the researcher's case file. They are disposed of as part of that file. At the current time, files may include, but are not limited to; audio cassettes from external agencies of BLS sponsored surveys, old video files on cassette, and digital recordings.

Disposition: Temporary.

- i. (N1-257-09-2, item 12) Micro cassette and digital recordings of sessions. Delete as soon as no longer needed for transcription.
- ii. (N1-257-09-2, item 13) All Other Audio and Video Files: Cut off file at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. If study is iterative, bring forward active materials to the new file as required. Destroy 1 year after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later.

- d. (N1-257-09-2, item 14) Eye Tracking Database. The eye position information for a session is recorded in coordinates which are stored in a database. This raw data is not referred to after initial analysis.

Disposition: Temporary. Delete as soon as no longer needed for study.

- e. Keystroke recordings. The keystroke recordings are raw data files that are created to record a user's keystrokes during a test session. The researcher, while writing the study report, may refer to these files. On occasion, the recording may be imported into a statistical package for analysis and sent to the researcher. The statistical extract is kept on the researcher's PC or the Office shared directory for reference.

Disposition: Temporary.

- i. (N1-257-09-2, item 15) Raw Database File. Delete as soon as no longer needed for study.
- ii. (N1-257-09-2, item 16) Statistical File. Cut off file at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. If study is iterative, bring forward active materials to the new file as required. Destroy 5 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later.

- f. (N1-257-09-2, item 17) Usability Test Environment (UTE) Files or similar. The UTE software records information about test sessions such as number of page visits, errors, time spent on pages and similar data. The data are output into an Excel spreadsheet. The center may use other software to create similar data.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off file at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. If study is iterative, bring forward active materials to the new file as required. Destroy 5 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later.

- g. (N1-257-09-2, item 18) Aggregated Data files. Electronic files of aggregated participant data (i.e., answers given directly in response to study questions and/or measures collected by researcher) used for the purpose of statistical analysis.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off file at publication or dissemination of results and/or reports. If study is iterative, bring forward active materials to the new file as required. Destroy 5 years after the end of the (calendar/fiscal) year in which the file was cut-off or when no longer needed for current business, whichever is later.

- h. (N1-257-09-2, item 19) Early versions of dataset(s), after next data set is created, and files containing subsets of the larger dataset.

Disposition: Temporary. Dispose of when no longer needed.

Phase III. Interpretation and Dissemination of Results

6. **Final Reports including internal reports and memorandum.** Reports resulting from studies may be formal or informal depending on the purpose of the study. The report is submitted to the team that chartered the study and the researchers maintain a copy. In those cases the report materials become part of the researcher's working file (Item 1(a) of this schedule). The final report is also summarized and added to the OMB file (Item 1(c) of this schedule) and the office has recently started to keep a central office copy of these reports. However in many cases the report can also be released to the public or research community through other means.

- a. (N1-257-09-2, item 20) Office copy of Final Reports.

Disposition: Permanent. These files are to be stored on the shared directory. Cut off file at the end of the calendar year. Provide NARA with "pre-accession" transfers in three year blocks when the youngest record is three years old. Transfer legal custody to the National Archives in 5 year blocks when most recent file is fifteen years old.

7. **MLR Manuscripts.** The researcher may submit the report or related articles to *The Monthly Labor Review* for publication. The submission process involves an editorial review from the magazine staff and may result in draft manuscripts, comment and email communication, as well as a final manuscript version. The MLR is a permanent record of the Office of Publications and Special Studies.

Disposition: Temporary.

- a. (N1-257-09-2, item 21) Drafts. Destroy when superseded or obsolete.

- b. (N1-257-09-2, item 22) Final Manuscripts. Retain for five years after date of publication as part of the record of the study. After 5 years, researchers may incorporate the manuscript into their personal files or destroy.

8. (N1-257-09-2, item 23) Web Publications. The Office of Survey Methods Research often publishes research results through the BLS Public Website. The OSMR research paper page contains several series of papers. The challenging issues series is part of its outreach to the broader survey research community and highlights some important and challenging research issues that arise in BLS work with statistics and survey methodology. The statistical series contains papers written by BLS statisticians and behavioral scientists, including papers

presented at the Joint Statistical Meetings and other conferences, as well as papers appearing in journals and the BLS Statistical Notes series. It also may include series of topical interest such as the bibliography of papers written on the redesign of the Current Population Survey. Opinions expressed in papers are generally those of the authors and do not constitute policy of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The paper and accompanying abstract are prepared for publication in OSMR by transforming the documents into the style and format specified in standards established for the site and submitted to the web staff for posting. (Currently publications in these paper series are produced in PDF format). The office keeps a copy of these papers on the shared server, but this is not a complete collection. The record copies are the copies residing on the web server.

Disposition: Temporary. Destroy when uploaded to the web server and verified or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later.

9. (N1-257-09-2, item 24) Presentations at conferences or other professional meetings. These files include abstracts of the session and PowerPoint presentations as well as session handouts. These files should be stored on the shared directory.

Disposition: Permanent. Cut off file the end of calendar year and bring forward materials with continuing value. Provide NARA with "pre-accession" transfers in three year blocks when the youngest record is three years old. Transfer legal custody to NARA 15 years after cutoff or when no longer needed, whichever is later.

10. (N1-257-09-2, item 25) Articles Published in Professional Journals and Conference Proceedings. Original final drafts of programmatic or mission-related articles written by OSMR personnel and submitted to professional trade, technical, and commercial publications

Disposition: Temporary. These files are to be stored on the shared directory. Destroy 15 years after publication, or when no longer needed for business operations, which ever is later.

11. (N1-257-09-2, item 26) Training Session Materials. Studies may also result in training sessions offered to BLS staff, or international students attending programs offered by the Office of Productivity and Technology (OPT), Division of International Technical Cooperation. File consists of courseware, including manuals, PowerPoint presentations, instructor's notes, class handouts and so on. In the case of international training some materials are incorporated into the Seminar Instruction Materials File in OPT (N1-257-88-1, Item 93). These files should be stored on the shared directory.

Disposition: Permanent. Cut off file the end of calendar year and bring forward materials with continuing value. Provide NARA with "pre-accession" transfers in three year blocks when the youngest record is three years old. Transfer legal custody to NARA 15 years after training or when no longer needed, whichever is later.