




Developing an Internet Response Mode for the American Community Survey

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U.S. Census Bureau

FedCASIC
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The American Community Survey (ACS)

- On-going survey in U.S. and Puerto Rico designed to provide reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data every year
- Annual sample allocated into 12 monthly samples of ~250,000 addresses
- Three sequential modes of data collection over a 3-month period for each monthly sample
 - Internet introduced as option during mail month



2011 ACS Internet Test Design

- Objective: Determine best method of offering Internet in mail pieces to maximize self-response
- Notification Strategies: variety of choice and push strategies
- Tested in two strata: Targeted and Non-Targeted



2011 ACS Internet Test Design

- Timing: April 2011 field test
- CATI Follow-up Interview with 2 components
 - Attitudes and Behavior Study
 - Content Reinterview Assessment



Overview of Instrument Design

- Presents stimuli consistent with other modes while taking advantage of technology.
- Follows a linear path with one question per screen to help navigate skip patterns.
- Topic-based for basic demographic questions, person-based for detailed questions with housing questions in between.



Overview of Instrument Design

- Four rounds of usability testing (focusing on specific features of the instrument)
- 508 compliance
- Collects paradata (click data, breakoffs, help usage, error rendering, etc.)



AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

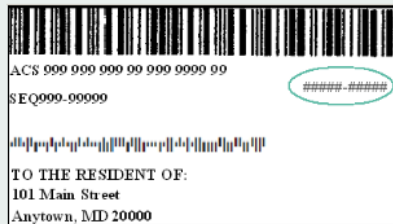


Welcome to the American Community Survey. You will need the materials we mailed to you to start the survey.

All the information that you provide will remain completely confidential.

[Para completar en español, oprima aquí.](#)

Please Log In



Example
User ID

➔ Enter the 10-digit User ID found below the barcode on the materials we mailed to you.

User ID: -

➔ Enter the 4-digit PIN we gave you the first time you entered the survey.

PIN:

Login

The Census Bureau estimates that, for the average household, this survey will take 38 minutes to complete, including the time for reviewing the instructions and answers. You may email comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing burden, to: Paperwork@census.gov. Use "Paperwork Project 0607-0936" as the subject. Or you may send comments to: Paperwork Project 0607-0936, U.S. Census Bureau, 4600 Silver Hill Road, AMSD - 3K138, Washington, D.C. 20233.

Respondents are not required to respond to any information collection unless it displays a valid approval number from the Office of Management and Budget. The 8-digit number appears in the left side of the green bar at the bottom of the survey screen.

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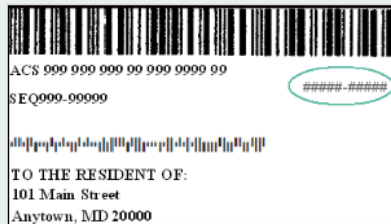


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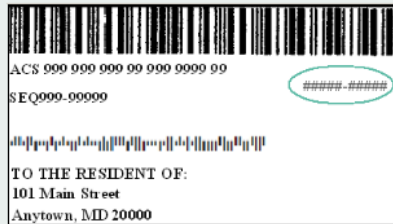


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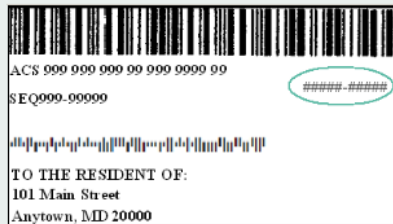


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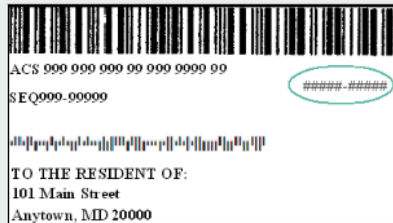


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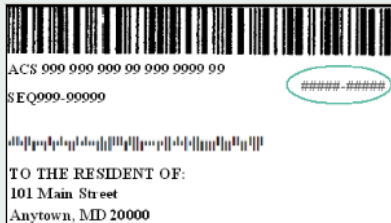
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➔ Are you completing the American Community Survey for:

198 Young Rd
Anytown, MD 03612 ?

Yes
 No

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Where You Are

Basic Info

Housing Questions

Person Info

• John Q Public

• Jane Q Public

• Sarah Q Public

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10 a. At any time IN THE LAST 3 MONTHS, has John Q Public attended school or college?
Include only nursery or preschool, kindergarten, elementary school, home school, and schooling which leads to a high school diploma or a college degree. [\(Help\)](#)

- No, has not attended in the last 3 months
- Yes, public school, public college
- Yes, private school, private college, home school

<< Previous

Next >>



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<< Previous

Next >>

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<< Previous

Next >>

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[<< Previous](#)

[Next >>](#)

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AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY



Instructions

FAQs

Save & Logout

Where You Are

Basic Info

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Person Info

• John Q Public

• Jane Q Public

• Sarah Q Public

47 The next few questions are about John Q Public's income during the PAST 12 MONTHS.

For each type of income John Q Public received, give your best estimate of the TOTAL AMOUNT during the PAST 12 MONTHS. (NOTE: The "past 12 months" is the period from today's date one year ago up through today.)

For income received jointly, report the appropriate share for each person - or, if that's not possible, report the whole amount for only one person and select "No" for the other person.

a. Did John Q Public receive any wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips during the PAST 12 MONTHS? [\(Help\)](#)

Yes

No

➔ What was the amount? Report amount from all jobs before any deductions for taxes, bonds, dues, or other items. [\(Help\)](#)

TOTAL AMOUNT for
past 12 months

\$.00

<< Previous

Next >>

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[Instructions](#)

[FAQs](#)

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a. Did John Q Public receive any wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips during the PAST 12 MONTHS? [\(Help\)](#)

Yes

No

Please enter only numbers.

➔ **What was the amount?** Report amount from all jobs before any deductions for taxes, bonds, dues, or other items. [\(Help\)](#)

TOTAL AMOUNT for
past 12 months

\$50K .00

<< Previous

Next >>

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Instructions **FAQs** **Save & Logout**

➔ **The next questions are about each person in the household. Select a name to begin answering questions about that person. If you cannot answer now for any person on the list, click Save & Logout.**

- John Q Public
- Jane Q Public
- Sarah Q Public

[<< Previous](#) [Next >>](#)

Where You Are

Basic Info

Housing Questions

Person Info

- John Q Public
- Jane Q Public
- Sarah Q Public

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[Instructions](#)

[FAQs](#)

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Where You Are

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[Housing Questions](#)

Person Info

• John Q Public

• Jane Q Public

• Sarah Q Public

48 According to our calculations, John Q Public received **\$50,158** from all income sources during the PAST 12 MONTHS. Is this correct?

Yes

No

[<< Previous](#)

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- ➔ You are almost done. You may choose to review and edit your answers by clicking **REVIEW**.
- ➔ To submit your answers and complete the American Community Survey without reviewing, click **SUBMIT**.

[REVIEW](#) [SUBMIT](#)

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Summary

➔ Please click **Review Answers** below to view a list of your answers.
Then click **SUBMIT** to complete the American Community Survey.

Housing Questions	Review Answers
Person Info	
• John Q Public	Review Answers
• Jane Q Public	Review Answers
• Sarah Q Public	Review Answers

SUBMIT

Review & Edit

Answers to Questions for John Q Public

- ➔ To change a response, click on the underlined answer to return to that question.
- ➔ To complete an unanswered question, click on the underlined [BLANK] to return to that question.

[Print for your records](#)

Sex	Male
Date of birth	05/05/1966
Age	44
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	Not Hispanic/Latino/Spanish
Race	White Japanese
Place of birth	In the United States California
Attended school	Public school/college
Grade level attended	Graduate or professional school
Highest level of school completed	Associate's degree
Ancestry	[BLANK]
Language other than English at home	No
Residence one year ago	This address
Health Insurance:	
a. through employer/union	Yes
b. purchased directly from insurance company	[BLANK]



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[Instructions](#) [FAQs](#) [Save & Logout](#)

➔ The following series of questions refer to John Q Public.

7 Where was John Q Public born? [\(Help\)](#)

In the United States - *Select name of state.*

Outside the United States - *Enter name of foreign country, or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.*

[Return to Review & Edit](#)

[Contact Us](#)

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Review & Edit

Answers to Questions for John Q Public

! Additional information is needed. Please click the link on the highlighted row below to answer an additional question.

↩ To change a response, click on the underlined answer to return to that question.

↩ To complete an unanswered question, click on the underlined [BLANK] to return to that question.

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Sex	Male
Date of birth	05/05/1966
Age	44
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	Not Hispanic/Latino/Spanish
Race	White Japanese
Place of birth	Outside the United States Germany
↩ Citizenship	↩ [BLANK]
Attended school	Public school/college
Grade level attended	Graduate or professional school
Highest level of school completed	Associate's degree
Ancestry	[BLANK]
Language other than English at home	No



Future Research/Next Steps

- Continue testing features of the instrument design and notification options
- Findings from this test, especially the paradata, will help inform future tests



Acknowledgements

- American Community Survey Office Staff
- Programmers
- Usability Lab
- 508 Compliance Review Staff
- Subject Matter Experts

Contact Information

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