U.S. Census Bureau Pulse Surveys
Experimental Surveys to Address Data Needs During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Two Populations, Two Surveys

- Small Business Pulse Survey (SBPS) – Designed to understand the effect of the pandemic on operations and financial situation of small businesses and measure their federal program participation as well as their outlook.

- Household Pulse (HPS) – Designed to understand impacts of Covid-19 on American families relating to employment, food security, housing, health and educational disruption.
Impetus for the Pulse Surveys

- With circumstances changing rapidly, surveys address urgent need for near real time data as American families and businesses experienced rapid and unprecedented disruptions.
- Designed to deploy quickly and efficiently
  - Leverage existing Census Bureau infrastructure and data assets for current surveys.
  - Engagement with federal agencies to solicit questionnaire content important to multiple federal and state programs with a minimum of public burden.
SBPS Content: 2 Phases

- Phase 1 included questions about:
  - Operations and finance
  - Request receipt of assistance
  - Overall well-being
  - Expectations for recovery

- Phase 2 carried over core concepts, but included updated content to reflect the changing circumstances faced by small businesses

- Updated Phase 2 content:
  - Rehiring laid off or furloughed employees
  - Work from home
  - Changes in the capacity of the business
  - Use of online platforms to offer goods or services

- Phase 2 new content expanded federal assistance questions to include tax deferrals and credits, along with future program needs.
HPS Content: 2 Phases

- Phase 1 included questions about:  
  - Basic demographics  
  - Physical and mental health  
  - Access to health care  
  - Food security  
  - Access to health care  
  - Housing  
  - Educational disruption  
  - Employment status

- Phase 2 carried over many questions to allow users to understand how these domains are changing as the pandemic continues

- Additional Phase 2 content:  
  - Application and receipt of benefits  
  - Spending patterns  
  - Availability of financial resources  
  - Capacity to telework  
  - Post-secondary education disruptions  
  - Travel practices
Pulse Surveys Interactive Tools

The Household Pulse Survey is designed to deploy quickly and efficiently, collecting data on a range of ways in which people’s lives have been impacted by the pandemic. Data will be disseminated in near-real-time to inform federal and state response and recovery planning.

**Measure Definition:** Percent of adults in households where someone had a loss in employment income since March 13, 2020.

**Note:** Percentages are based on reporting distributions and do not include the populations that did not respond to specific items.