

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
 - Overall well-being
 - Request receipt of assistance
 - 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

- Availability of financial resources

- Post-secondary education disruptions

- Spending patterns

- Capacity to telework

- Travel practices

Pulse Surveys Interactive Tools

