

## **National Advisory Committee Consolidated Responses on AIAN Enrollment Question Moderator Guide**

Submitted to Census Bureau on November 13, 2015

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### **NAC Member comments include:**

- Tim Harjo (pages 2-11)
- Desi Rodriguez Lonebear (pages 12-13)
- Carol Gore (pages 14-26 and 11-page Focus Group Handout)

**NOTE:** Formatting is impacted due to consolidation of various documents (PDF, email and Word with track changes).

## **NAC RESPONSE 1: Tim Harjo**

Harjo, Timothy Comments 11/13/15

These comments are submitted as requested to the proposed AIAN moderator guide.

The fourth line of the opening paragraph of the mod guide is presumptuous in that it assumes focus group participants are all "AIAN"s and not other Indigenous peoples of Central and South America as expressly included in the OMB definition of the "AIAN" title name.

Again, in the third paragraph, the language assumes the term "AIAN" applies to all respondents when in fact, many other people having origins under the OMB definition should be participants in the tribal subquestion testing. Many of these potential persons do not identify with the "AIAN" concept nor the "tribes" concept as stated in the paragraph.

Again the issue stated above is in the last sentence of paragraph four of the guide.

Not sure why the Part A has a discussion of villages and corporations. This portion clearly applies to Native peoples from Alaska who make up a small part of the overall AIAN population in the US. If this is a major part of the testing for this exercise, then I would raise concerns about its use, validity for the overall testing, and would ask how this portion of the testing was inserted.

In terms of Part B, I would also raise concerns about the emphasis on asking questions about enrollment to ANY participants simply because the Bureau and OMB cannot verify enrollment of respondents in a tribe nor do these agencies have the resources to do so. Furthermore, the OMB definition of the AIAN title name does not use the word "enrollment" making its use off point and potentially limiting in terms of overall response

rates, especially among respondents from Central and South America who are not familiar with the concept of tribal enrollment.

Again, section 8.0 of the Part B places too much emphasis on enrollment issues among respondents for the reasons explained above.

Section 9.0 goes too far on enrollment as well, especially in light of the fact that the OMB definition does not use the word enrollment nor requires enrollment to check the AIAN box. In addition, respondents have been allowed to check the AIAN box even where they are not enrolled.

For Part C, Section 1., participants being asked these questions won't know that the OMB definition doesn't use the word "Enrollment". For that reason alone, the questions here are inappropriate. Its further inappropriate to ask these questions of respondents from Central and South America who are not familiar with "tribal enrollment" concepts familiar to US based tribal groups.

Also, there are large numbers of respondents with tribal origins from the US who are not "enrolled" in a tribe. Spending a large of portion of this guide on tribal enrollment neglects the larger issue of capturing total overall "AIAN" numbers.

Using "enrollment" language on the questionnaire only serves to confuse respondents and ultimately limits overall response rates for those who would otherwise check the box with a title name that adequately identifies the OMB definition.

That definition is very broad. It covers all peoples having origins in North, Central, and South America. Of course that definition goes on to add those who have community involvement or attachment. (This a borderline racist requirement in that, this racial category is the only one on the questionnaire that requires more from respondents than it does for other respondents with other racial backgrounds. i.e. the questionnaire does not ask "African-Americans" to write in the name of their tribe(s), from their origins in Africa.)

Why do “AIANs” have to go over and beyond in terms on tribal “enrollment”? Again, the requirement isn’t even in the OMB definition.

This section goes on to attempt to elicit a political discussion from respondents on “federal recognition” which is inappropriate in and of itself, but doesn’t even apply to respondents that are not enrolled in a tribe!

The bottom line here is that this moderator guide is ethnocentric in its application to the misplaced political concept of “AIAN” and it really has no sensitivities to non-enrolled respondents and to respondents from Central and South America. The guide comes off as overly concerned about the enrollment of respondents in US based tribes without stopping to think about the appropriateness of the questions, why we are asking them, especially in light of the fact that even OMB, the agency overseeing the standards, does NOT use the word “enrollment” in its definition.

This guide and this whole exercise is unnecessary and can only create a mess, economically and politically for the government and all those involved if it is implemented in any way.

My recommendation it to scrap this guide and start over. What is needed is an honest look at what the OMB definition is really asking for and stick to that. We really need to stop these efforts to concern ourselves with testing a concept that isn’t even used by OMB nor can’t be verified by OMB or the Bureau. The best and only place to get detailed and accurate information on enrollment numbers for US based tribes, is from the tribes themselves, not the census questionnaire.

As the 2010 Decennial numbers show, upwards of 30% of all the AIAN respondents either failed to write in a tribal name or tried to but it wasn’t accepted by the Bureau! That number was over a million people out of 5.2 million! The Bureau has never got this right after over thirty years. Because of the changing and dynamic nature of this moving demographic, it is virtually impossible using the methodologies employed by the Bureau to attain. In light of the fact that OMB doesn’t require enrollment and doesn’t even use the word, it is incredible that we continue this fool’s errand and continue to commit time and resources every ten or so years to it.

Lastly, in response to a concern voiced by Carol Gore during the latest conference call about Alaska Native resources being misappropriated due to potential changes in the tribal subquestion, Lori from Census stated that the tribal subquestion is separate from the "race" question on the census questionnaire. She goes on to state that federal resources allocated to Alaska Natives would not be affected when the racial box and the tribal subquestion are separated out.

How can she say that? How would the bureau know which of its respondents are "AI" or "AN" if not for its tribal subquestion? There is only one racial checkbox and it covers both "AI"s and "AN"s. For too long, policy makers believed the only way for the government to allocate tribal government resources based on census numbers is to use a tribal subquestion. However, there was a 30% error rate on the tribal subquestion in 2010 alone. Such statements demonstrate a serious lack of knowledge of the questionnaire itself and how tribal resources are allocated.

Some federal agencies like the BIA have long recognized this problem and simply asked tribes to submit certified summary tribal enrollment lists to fill in the huge gap between the very low AIAN tribal numbers from the census and what the real numbers were on the ground. If the Bureau really needs enrollment numbers from each tribe, then it should ask the tribes for them. Most tribes update these records monthly.

Lori goes on to say that the [AIAN] race question will not be affected by the tribal subquestion. This statement is categorically not true. We know from the research already done that many respondents having origins from Central and South America do not identify with the term "American Indian/Alaska Native" and when they read it alone on the questionnaire they are confused whether or not they should check the box. Furthermore, the tribal subquestion has shown to have a significant impact on whether the respondent will check the AIAN box. There are potentially tens of millions of people in the US who fall with the OMB definition of AIAN, but fail to check that box due to the overly inclusive wording of the tribal subquestion, the "AIAN" title name itself, and for other reasons.

For more discussion how to begin to solve these and other issues with the AIAN checkbox and tribal subquestion and for explanations for my comments provided above, I am including the following information.

As a result of the recent Alternative Questionnaire Experiment (AQE) conducted in 2010-2014 by the Bureau and the research that came out of it, the qualitative data captured and measured significant confusion and/or apprehension among focus group participants from both mixed race and AIAN only backgrounds about the name of the category title called American Indian/Alaska Native. There was also significant amount of confusion and apprehension with tribal sub-question under the AIAN checkbox and the instructions that come with it.

Based on the results of this testing, my work as a Partnership Coordinator in the Los Angeles Region for the Census Bureau during the 2010 Census, it is my firm conviction that the category title name, the tribal sub-question wording, and the sub-question instructions all combine to negatively affect whether or not a respondent will check the AIAN box and/or write in a tribal name.

During our discussions last year with census subject matter experts who served on the recently dissolved Race and Hispanic Origin Working Group, it was determined that additional research on these issues was required.

On August 13, 2014, the National Advisory Committee approved final recommendations concerning race and ethnic origin issues that were examined during the prior year. These recommendations were developed from a Final Report created by a small working group (Race and Hispanic Origin) consisting of advisory committee members. The Final Report was dated June 10, 2014.

Final Recommendation 1 is as follows:

**Support Further Testing of the Combined Race and Hispanic Origin Question. The Working Group Members support further research and testing of the combined race and Hispanic origin question that offers a write in box for each of the**

**population groups. Per recommendations from the Final Report 1, further quantitative and qualitative testing should examine the effect on detailed information specific to each population, with special emphasis to eliminate the decrease in detailed reporting among some groups that results from the use of the combined question and/or no-detailed-checkbox formats.**

**This includes specific recommendations to conduct additional research on example listings of ethnic identities under the major categories (i.e. African-American/Black 2, American Indian and Alaska Native 3, Asian 4, Hispanic 5, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 6), as well as conducting additional research on example language specified under major categories (i.e. American Indian and Alaska Native 7; Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 8). (Emphasis added)**

Pursuant to this recommendation, the Bureau has undertaken to design and conduct a series of qualitative research activities that were carried out in the fall of 2014. Certainly, the decision to follow through on the submitted recommendations and conduct more research and testing is a welcomed action. However, that research was designed to address the tribal sub-question issues only.

With regard to the detailed response testing described above, there are several concerns about this recent research. The primary concern is that additional testing for the detailed response area of the AIAN category without additional testing of changes to the category (AIAN) title name itself may continue to mask the much larger problem described herein. Since the category title and the example language for the AIAN category are closely related, one cannot test the detailed response area without testing changes to the category title itself.

Although the recommendation above has no mention of testing a change or rewording of the existing AIAN category title, the Final Report does provide an express recommendation to do so. See Final Report at 22.

#### **BASIS FOR TESTING CATEGORY TITLE NAME**

**1. The current category title name for the OMB classification American Indian/Alaska Native is fundamentally flawed because OMB sets forth a definition that is much larger in scope and geography than the current category title name suggests.**

The term “American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN)” is largely viewed and used as a legal term and political status identification for members of federally recognized tribes in the United States. Although the term “AIAN” is rooted in such political classifications, it also serves as a geographical classification. In effect, the term describes persons who are members of federally recognized tribes and it also implies that such tribes are located in the territorial boundaries of the United States. There are no federally recognized tribes located outside the United States.

However, the same term has been used by the U.S. Census Bureau as the title of a racial/origin category title for the last three decennial censuses. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) promulgated both this title and its accompanying definition. The Census Bureau is required by law to use it on the questionnaire for the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). The OMB definition for AIAN is as follows:

**‘American Indian or Alaska Native’ refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.**

In examining the definition, it becomes clear that the title of the category implies a political status within the United States. However, the definition sets forth a much larger

geographical area. That area is North, Central, and South America. By identifying a much larger geographical area and using a title name which denotes a much smaller geographical area, a sizable population of peoples having origins in North, Central, and South America, but who do not have origins from the geographical boundaries of the United States, can and do read the title name in a way that limits their response to the AIAN category and the detailed response area on the decennial and ACS questionnaire.

There is genuine concern about the wording of the AQE sample questions and the existing (control) questions not being adequately designed to test the AIAN category name problem. In a sentence, this problem is illustrated by the fact that there are large numbers of peoples having their origins as one of the original peoples of North, Central and South America living in the United States who have no political, cultural, or language affiliation with federally recognized tribes in the U.S. Accordingly, these types of respondents have no familiarity with the term American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) nor do they identify themselves in such a way.

**2. Past testing has shown that respondents from North, Central, and South America do not identify with the AIAN category title name.**

The recent Alternative Questionnaire Experiment has provided significant data as to problems with focus group respondents who do not identify with the AIAN category even they would otherwise be considered a person fitting within the OMB definition. See AQE Report. While it is true that self-identification is a paramount consideration for the questionnaire, the AQE has shown that these types of respondents would choose a category on the questionnaire that reflects a larger scope title than that of the limited AIAN title name, if one existed. The bottom line is that many respondents having origins from outside the U.S. simply do not have familiarity with and therefore do not identify with the AIAN category name even the current OMB definition would classify them as AIAN.

Even within the U.S., a stateside example of this problem stems from the Indigenous peoples who have origins in what is now the State of Alaska who do not identify with the term American Indian. For years these groups have advocated a change in the title category American Indian and were successful. The new title name that has come down over the last thirty years to reflect the issue here is known as “Alaska Native”, which is recognized as American Indian/Alaska Native (“AIAN”).

**2. The Instructions used in the detailed response for the AIAN checkbox on the questionnaire have no legal basis and ultimately raise the bar to potential respondents who may otherwise check the AIAN box and/or write in the name of a tribe.**

Neither the Census Bureau nor OMB have any viable way to prove which respondents maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. Humes and Hogan (2009) report that “OMB Race and Ethnic Standards are silent as to the classification of American Indians who do not maintain ‘cultural identification through affiliation or community

recognition.” See Measurement of Race and Ethnicity in a Changing, Multicultural America. Pg. 123 at FN 6. Yet the tribal affiliation and community attachment language in the OMB definition was ultimately used as a baseless standard from which to promulgate a detailed response question (tribal name).

However, a detailed tribal name response may not be as problematic as one might expect if its accompanying instructions were not even more problematic. For instance, when a respondent checks the AIAN box, the questionnaire then asks the person to write the name of his/her tribe. The term “Print name of enrolled or principal tribe” is used as the primary instruction to respondents here. The first set of AQE test questions did not test alternative instructions. Even test subjects at this stage in the research made it known that the instruction was problematic.

Another problem identified with the first round of AQE testing was that the test subjects appeared to be mostly if not all, enrolled members of federally recognized tribes. Of course the situation appears to have limited and even biased the results of that testing on this issue because there were no participants who were racially AIAN but not enrolled members of tribes. There are millions of people with multiracial backgrounds who fit in the OMB definition for AIAN but are not enrolled in a tribe. That is to say that many of these people have a racial connection, may have a tribal affiliation, and even community involvement, but are not enrolled in a tribe.

It must be pointed out the word enrollment is more inclusive than the word affiliation and respondents read the instruction here as requiring enrollment before they write in the name of a tribe or even check the AIAN box. The wording of the instructions is thought to be a significant barrier to self-identification for these respondents.

The word “enrollment” is not found anywhere in the OMB standards. This word strongly imputes a political status with the federal government whereas the words “affiliation” and “community attachment” which are found in the OMB standard and are much more inclusive to respondents. Thus, making it easier to self-identify as AIAN. The word “principal” in the current instruction is primarily used to guide respondents who descend from more than one tribal group.

According to the Census 2010, some 1,545,963 respondents did not write a tribal name and an additional 264,253 respondents did write in a tribal name but the written name did not match with existing Census Tribal Classification lists and were rejected. See Table 7. 2010 AIAN Census Brief FN 4, (C2010BR-10)(2010 Summary AIAN Data Sheet). These numbers represent about 35% of the total AIAN respondent population. At this level, the use of the word “enrollment” in the detailed response instructions, and indeed, the use and purpose of the tribal sub-question come into serious question.

### **3. Current and past experience of persons from outside the United States with institutionalized discrimination in their home Countries effects the response rates for the AIAN category.**

Many Indigenous peoples of the Americas, who are from Countries outside the US, often deny being “Indios”. It is a well-known fact that the governments in countries like Mexico and Guatemala have perpetuated institutionalized forms of racism and discrimination against the Indigenous peoples located there. As a result, many other respondents apart from those identified above, who emigrated to the U.S. do not identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, even though they may understand that their racial background is more related to the AIAN category than any other category on the questionnaire.

Since there are no other surveys using an alternative category title name based in a similar definition, it is unclear whether or not changes to only to the detailed response area would have a significant effect. The best way forward is for the Bureau to test changes in detailed response (instructions) and most importantly, to test changes to category title itself. This can be done separately and together with different test groups.

Based on the express definition provided by OMB, the category title name should be changed to reflect the larger scope definition. Such a change may provide greater response rates among respondents. If the goal of the Bureau is to achieve greater response and accuracy, then it becomes clear that this issue must be examined, tested, and depending of the results of the testing, changed appropriately. Below are some examples for alternative category title names for testing.

#### EXAMPLES OF NEW TITLE CATEGORY

1. American Indian, Alaska Native or Indigenous
2. American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous of the Americas
3. American Indian, Alaska Native, or Central/South American Indigenous
4. Original Peoples of North, Central or South America (OPNCSA)
5. Original Person of the Americas
6. Native Person of the Americas

The broad OMB definition includes these types of respondents within the limited AIAN category title. As a result, the AIAN population, as defined by OMB, is much larger than what the Census Bureau reports it as. While it is true that the mantra of enumeration is self-identification, the fact is, the mantra rings hollow where respondents are confused about what they can report, should report, or have their responses not counted at all.

The direct way to address this problem is to either rename the current AIAN category title to something that is more broad based as the definition suggests or change the OMB definition. The latter solution would entail significant time and resources and is very dangerous to implement, while the former solution maybe something the Bureau could do in collaboration with OMB. Therefore, research needs to be designed and carried out on this problem, which could provide a firm basis to make justifiable decision, one way or the other.

For all the reasons described above, the tribal sub-question work should be completed and followed through, but more importantly, the AIAN category title name issue must be properly researched.

We must get past the thinking that AIAN is a catch all phrase for the Indigenous peoples of the Americas, that each AIAN person is enrolled in a tribe, that AIANs are not multi-racial, and that Indigenous peoples from other countries somehow know of and agree with the OMB definition and should know that they are racially AIAN.

Holding such positions, illustrates a fundamental lack of understanding about the socio-economic and cultural-political background of these groups. These communities deserve fair opportunity to be enumerated accurately and appropriately.

In closing, I would like to thank the Bureau allowing this discussion outlet. These are very difficult issues indeed. I trust that the issues raised here will be given due consideration. I would be happy to provide further detail and documentation about the issues presented above.

Tim Harjo  
JD/MBA/MPP

## NAC RESPONSE 2: Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear

Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear, Member  
Census National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations

November 13, 2015

Director John Thompson  
United States Census Bureau  
4600 Silver Hill Road  
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Director Thompson,

Firstly, thank you for your phone call last week and the extension of time to submit feedback on the tribal enrollment question research project. My comments are summarized below. I appreciate your consideration and that of the research team.

### Methods:

There are glaring methodological and interpersonal issues with the proposed Recruitment Plan. First and foremost, the decision to ensure such extensive diversity within each focus group goes against standard focus group practice where homogeneity among participants is important. The literature on this point is vast to which a basic literature search will attest. Homogeneity can reduce inhibitions, contribute to feelings of safety, and elicit deeper conversations amongst individuals in the focus group.

At the very least, **I strongly urge that the research team reconsiders mixing enrolled and non-enrolled tribal members in the same focus group.** If efforts continue as planned, the Census Bureau will essentially pit enrolled vs. non-enrolled individuals against each other in these focus groups. Do you realize the trauma that could result? Tribal membership and enrollment is arguably the most contested issue in Indian Country. It has divided families and severed traditional kinship systems! Focus group recruitment needs to be handled with the utmost sensitivity and tact, otherwise the Bureau is perpetuating even further trauma in Indigenous communities.

Secondly, the locations of the proposed focus groups are problematic. **Not a single focus group is scheduled on a reservation!** All of the focus groups and all of the cognitive interview locations, except one in Window Rock AZ, are in urban areas. Due to geographic constraints, participant recruitment will be heavily biased towards urban Indians.

Cities like Billings, Minneapolis, Albuquerque, Rapid City, etc., are hours away from reservations. Unless the Bureau is willing to make accommodations (i.e. travel costs) to get reservation participants to these cities for the focus groups and interviews,

there is slim chance of achieving any measure of equity between off-reservation and onreservation participants.

Additionally, one of the focus group measures of diversity is “varying levels of tribal engagement.” How will that be measured in an objective way? No details are provided.

Moderator Guide:

Page 4, Part B, Bullet Point 5.0: “To your knowledge, does an American Indian or Alaska Native need to be enrolled in a tribe to be considered a member of that tribe?”

This is problematic. Considered a member of a tribe by whom?

Page 6, Bullet Point 8.1: A “BIA card” is incorrect terminology. Tribal ID’s are issued by tribes. Certificates of Degree of Indian Blood are issued by the BIA.

Page 6, Bullet Points 9.0-9.4: These have the potential to invoke trauma. Need to reconsider.

Page 7, Bullet Point 2.0: What about importance of being able to mark being a member of more than one tribe?

Respectfully submitted,

Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear, MA

*Citizen of the Northern Cheyenne Nation*

Dual PhD Candidate

| Sociology, University of Arizona and Demography, University of Waikato New Zealand

## NAC RESPONSE 3: Carol Gore

### Moderator Guide for AIAN Enrollment Question Research - Alaska Natives

#### INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

##### GREETING:

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am your moderator today. We will be here for about two hours. The purpose of our group is to talk about the relationships and memberships you may have with Alaska Native tribes, villages, village corporations, and regional corporations. The Census Bureau is interested in learning about how you think about these relationships and memberships as part of our effort to develop a new question for the 2020 Census.

##### SELF-DISCLOSURE:

I'm a researcher at the Census Bureau. My job is to improve the collection of census data from a wide variety of people and groups by coming out to talk with them. By asking questions and listening, I can help the decision makers hear the voices of respondents like you and apply that information to improve the census.

I am very interested in hearing your thoughts and opinions on your relationships and memberships with Alaska Native tribes, villages, village corporations, and regional corporations. I will ask you some questions about how you define some terms. It's likely that you may have different ways of looking at some concepts and I would like us to discuss similarities and differences, as well as any other terms you may use.

There are no wrong answers to these questions. Feel free to make any positive or negative comments about any of the things you discuss today. We are aiming for each of you to be heard and it is okay if people do not agree. We do not need to reach consensus. To moderate this discussion, I will be looking at each of you. I recognize this may be somewhat outside

**Comment [AK1]:** Alaska Natives more broadly describe their tribal entities. In Alaska, all of the following are among the entities that have become federally recognized tribes:

- Tribe
- Tribal Government
- Village
- Native Village
- Organized Village
- Traditional Village
- Community
- Native Community
- Community Association
- Cooperative Association
- Indian Association
- Indian Corporation
- Council
- Tribal Council
- Village Council
- Traditional Council
- Traditional Native Council
- Elders' Council

See:

<http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/OIS/TribalGovernmentServices/TribalDirectory/index.htm>

**At a minimum, every reference to Alaska Native tribal entities should be expanded to also include "councils, associations, and communities."**

how you may talk with others and I hope you will help me with this. If I happen to say something that is not appropriate about Alaska Natives, let me know and I will correct myself.

#### GROUND RULES:

For those who have never been in a room like this, let me tell you something about it. There are many rooms like this around the country. They have equipment for tape recording and for video-recording, so that an accurate report can be written later. This room has a one-way mirror and other research team colleagues will be observing and listening from the back room. The observers and I have been sworn to protect your confidentiality. Only those who work on this project and have been sworn to protect your confidentiality may view or listen to the recordings of this group.

So that the conversation flows smoothly, I have the following ground rules, so we will all move together in the same direction and to make sure we will end on time.

#### [ALSO PASS THESE GROUND RULES OUT BEFORE THE FOCUS GROUP SESSION STARTS]

- Please talk one at a time
- Please talk as loudly as I talk, so everyone can hear
- Avoid side conversation with your neighbor
- I want to hear from everyone; however, you do not have to answer all questions
- It's okay to respond to each other or piggyback on what others have said
- Work for equal time so no one talks too much or too little
- There are no wrong answers and we are not aiming for consensus
- Say what you believe, whether or not anyone agrees with you; diversity of opinions is fine

- Only one person up from the table or out of the room at a time. The restrooms are [SAY RESTROOM LOCATION HERE].
- To get through all the material and finish on time, I may need to redirect the conversation at times.

SELF-INTRODUCTIONS: Please introduce yourself to the group and tell us:

- Your first name
- Where you live
- What you enjoy doing in your free time

Who would like to start? [LET RESPONDENTS SPEAK IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE COMFORTABLE]

Before we begin, are there any questions?

**PART A: BASELINE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION ON  
TRIBE/VILLAGE/CORPORATION REPORTING  
(15 MINUTES)**

**I am going to pass out a form now and when you receive one, write your first name or initials on the upper right side of form. Then please read the question and write down your answer.** [PASS OUT THE FORM. PROCEED WHEN EACH PERSON HAS ONE.]

**We want to know what each of you thinks on your own, so please answer this form without checking to see how anyone else is answering.** [WAIT TWO MINUTES FOR RESPONDENTS TO GIVE AN ANSWER. IF ANYONE IS STILL NOT FINISHED, LET RESPONDENTS KNOW THEY HAVE ABOUT 15 MORE SECONDS TO GIVE AN ANSWER.]

**On this form, there is an instruction on the American Indian or Alaska Native line for you to print an answer.**

1.0 Now I'd like to hear from each person what you wrote, if anything, on the line for the American Indian or Alaska Native checkbox. I'd also like to know if you wrote anything related to being Alaska Native on any of the other race category lines. Finally, please tell me the reasons for how you answered. We'll go around the room, starting to my right. [AS MODERATOR, YOU ALSO HAVE THE OPTION TO LET RESPONDENTS SPEAK IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE COMFORTABLE.]

[IF RESPONDENTS GIVE COMMENTS ON AIAN RACE CATEGORY EXAMPLES, PROBE RESPONDENTS AND ALLOW A SHORT DISCUSSION]

**PART B: DISCUSSION ON TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP AND ENROLLMENT**  
**(40 MINUTES)**

1.0 Now the discussion will turn to the relationship you may have with a **tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation**. On Question 1 of your Focus Group Questions handout, please list the **tribes, villages, village corporations, or regional corporations** you are associated with, and **whether you are a member of these groups**. [WAIT TWO MINUTES FOR RESPONDENTS TO GIVE AN ANSWER. IF ANYONE IS STILL NOT FINISHED, LET RESPONDENTS KNOW THEY HAVE ABOUT 15 MORE SECONDS TO GIVE AN ANSWER.]

**What did you write to answer Question 1? From now on, anyone can jump in and answer.**

2.0 For those of you who are members of the groups you mentioned, how did you become a member of those groups?

3.0 For those of you who are not "members" of any **tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation**, how would you describe your relationship with groups you listed?

4.0 Please list the **tribes, villages, village corporations, and regional corporations** in which you are enrolled for Question 2 of your Focus

**Comment [AK2]:** See comment AK1 above. Critical for purposes of this section to expand this reference to include, at a minimum, Alaska Native councils, associations, and communities, since many of these organizations are federally recognized tribes.

Also, consider including framing the actual question as follows:

Tribe: \_\_\_\_\_  
Village: \_\_\_\_\_  
Village Corporation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Regional Corporation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Native Council: \_\_\_\_\_  
Native Association: \_\_\_\_\_  
Native Community: \_\_\_\_\_

This reminds respondents of the various categories of entities that they should consider.

**Comment [AK3]:** The answer is different for different types of organizations. May need to break this question down to gather info for each type of entity.

Also, the term "member" will be confusing as it does not describe the relationship between a person and some of these entities. Unfortunately, there is no uniform term for those relationship. Perhaps "members of or otherwise affiliated with," though even that is imperfect.

Group Questions handout. [WAIT 20 SECONDS.] For those of you who are members of **any of these groups**, are you **enrolled** in any of them?

**Comment [AK4]:** ANCSA corporations have Alaska Native shareholders. No person can “enroll” in an ANCSA corporation, so there is no reason to ask if they are enrolled in a corporation. This further highlights the problem with asking about enrollment in Alaska when some Alaska Native entities that are tribes for purposes of federal programs do not have enrollment at all.

**5.0** Now please turn to Question 3 and answer this question in your Focus Group Questions handout. [WAIT 20 SECONDS.] To your knowledge, does an Alaska Native need to **be enrolled in order to be considered a member of that tribe?**

**Comment [AK5]:** Consider expanding this question, for the reasons noted above, to ask the same with respect to Alaska Native councils, communities, and associations.

**5.1. What about villages? Does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in order to be considered a member of that village?**

**5.2. What about village corporations? Does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in order to be considered a member of that village corporation?**

**5.23. What about regional corporations? Does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in order to be considered a member of that regional corporation?**

**Comment [AK6]:** Suggest deleting this question.

The term “village” has two different meanings in Alaska. First, it is a small community of people who live in proximity to one another, typically in a rural environment. Second, it is a political entity that has been recognized as a tribal government by the United States.

When this question is asked, it is unclear which definition of the term “village” is implied. One could read this as asking whether a tribe and a village (political entity) have the same name. This would be confusing because they would be one and the same. In this sense, the village IS the tribe. However, if someone interprets this as referring to the first definition of “village” above, they are likely to answer “sometimes” because the recognized tribe may or may not have the same name as a nearby community of people living in proximity to one another.

**6. Do tribes and villages ever share the same name? [IF YES] What are some instances of where this happens?**

**7.0** So far we have used the word “tribe” when talking about Alaska Native ethnic groups. What does the word “tribe” mean to you?

**Comment [AK7]:** So far, there has been no reference in this document to Alaska Native ethnic groups, such as Dena’ina or Alutiiq. The references have been to entities with a recognized political status of some nature. Consider asking instead, “What term is appropriate to use when referring to Alaska Native ethnic groups?”

**7.1** Is the term “tribe” appropriate to apply to most Alaska Natives? For what reasons?

**7.2** What other terms are similar to, but might be more appropriate, than “tribe” to describe Alaska Native ethnic groups? For what reasons? [IF THE FOCUS GROUP AGREES THAT A NEW TERM IS BETTER, CONSIDER SUBSTITUTING THAT TERM FOR “TRIBE” FOR THE REST OF THE DISCUSSION.]

**Comment [AK8]:** Again, because this question focuses on “tribes,” it is unlikely to elicit responses about some types of Alaska Native entities that are federally recognized as tribes, for example ANCSA corporations. Consider including a separate question about “shareholder” status, which is how Alaska Natives describe “membership” in an ANCSA corporation.

**8.0** What does enrollment in an Alaska Native tribe mean to you?

**8.1** What do you think the difference is, if any, between being enrolled in a tribe and being a member of a tribe?

**8.2** What are some other words you have used or heard being used to describe being part of a tribe other than “member” or “enrolled?” [PROBE ON THE MEANINGS OF ALL TERMS THAT RESPONDENTS NAME.]

**9.0** What are the specific requirements, if any, to be eligible to enroll in your tribe or become a tribal member? [IF REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MENTIONED, PREFACE WITH “BESIDES THE REQUIREMENTS ALREADY MENTIONED”.]

**9.1** What about BIA cards? Is getting a BIA card necessary for enrollment or tribal membership, or is it possible to enroll or become a tribal member without one?

**9.2** What are some of the reasons why some people who apply for enrollment or tribal membership might not be accepted?

**9.2.1** Are these reasons the same across tribes?

**9.3** What are the benefits of being enrolled in or a member of a tribe?

**9.4** What are the responsibilities of being enrolled in or a member of a tribe?

**10.0** Once a person is enrolled in or a member of your tribe, are there circumstances in which someone’s enrollment or membership status might change?

**10.1** If yes, what would those circumstances be?

**10.2** In your opinion, how often do enrolled people in your tribe become dis-enrolled (or tribal members cease being members), either by themselves or by your tribe?

**Comment [AK9]:** This question is unlikely to elicit responses regarding ANCSA corporations and possibly some other of the various types of entities identified above (which constitute tribes). That’s simply the implication when questions are posed about “tribes” specifically.

**Comment [AK10]:** At last count, there were 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska, excluding ANCSA corporations. Their circumstances, benefits, and requirements are all unique. It is extremely hard to get a good cross section of tribal representatives in any sample or focus group, so you are likely to have significant gaps in the responses you receive for these questions.

**10.3 Can people who are dis-enrolled from your tribe, or who cease to become members, -later re-enroll in your tribe or be reinstated as members?**

**10.4 Are people who are dis-enrolled still considered members of that tribe or affiliated with that tribe?**

**11.0 Can Alaska Natives be enrolled in more than one tribe?**

**12.0 Now I'd like to you all to talk about villages. What does enrollment in a village mean to you?**

**13.0 What are the specific requirements to be enrolled in a village?**

**13.1 What are the benefits of being enrolled in a village?**

**13.2 What are the responsibilities of being enrolled in a village?**

**14.0 Once you are enrolled in a village, are there circumstances in which someone's enrollment status might change?**

**15.0 Can Alaska Natives be enrolled in more than one village?**

**16.0 Next let's talk about village corporations. What does enrollment in a village corporation mean to you?**

**17.0 What are the specific requirements to be enrolled in a village corporation?**

**17.1 What are the benefits of being enrolled in a village corporation?**

**17.2 What are the responsibilities of being enrolled in a village corporation?**

**18.0 Once you are enrolled in a village corporation, are there circumstances in which someone's enrollment status might change?**

**19.0 Can Alaska Natives be enrolled in more than one village corporation?**

**Comment [AK11]:** This question indicates that census seems to be trying to determine whether there is a distinction between tribal enrollment and tribal membership. Really, the terms tend to be synonymous. For that reason, we suggest eliminating this question and modifying the foregoing questions as proposed above.

**Comment [AK12]:** It appears this guide is structured to run through tribes, villages, village corporations, and regional corporations, in succession. That's good. However, we suggest doing the same for at least the three additional descriptors for Alaska's federally recognized tribes: Native councils, Native associations, and Native communities. It may turn out that members of the tribes that use the foregoing identifiers will respond to "village" or "tribe," but we simply do not know.

**Comment [AK13]:** See comment AK11 above. This line of thinking persists through the remainder of Part B.

**20.0 Now let's talk about regional corporations. What does enrollment in a regional corporation mean to you?**

**21.0 What are the specific requirements to be enrolled in a regional corporation?**

**21.1 What are the benefits of being enrolled in a regional corporation?**

**21.2 What are the responsibilities of being enrolled in regional corporation?**

**22.0 Once you are enrolled in a regional corporation, are there circumstances in which someone's enrollment status might change?**

**23.0 Can Alaska Natives be enrolled in more than one regional corporation?**

**PART C: CENSUS BUREAU DATA COLLECTION ON TRIBAL ENROLLMENT**  
**(55 MINUTES)**

**1.0 Please answer Question 4 on your Focus Group Questions Handout.**

[WAIT 20 SECONDS.] **As you know, the Census Bureau collects American Indian and Alaska Native tribal information. Do you think the Census Bureau should ask Alaska Natives whether they are enrolled in a tribe?**

[MODERATOR: WRITE OUT THEIR RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ON AN EASEL.]

**1.1 Let's talk about the reasons why the Census Bureau should or shouldn't ask a tribal enrollment question. First, what are some reasons you think the Census Bureau should ask for tribal enrollment? [WRITE EVERYONE'S ANSWERS UNDER THE HEADING "PROS."]**

**Comment [AK14]:** Unless an individual understands the highly technical details of how the federal government would use data on tribal enrollment and the complex challenges associated with gathering that data in Alaska, it will be difficult to get a truly informed response. Indeed, the sense of pride surrounding tribal membership is a nearly visceral reaction that almost certainly will be voiced prior to significant consideration of the technical implications.

**1.2 What are some reasons you think the Census Bureau should not ask for tribal enrollment?** [WRITE EVERYONE’S ANSWERS UNDER THE HEADING “CONS.”]

**1.3 Did anyone go back and forth on choosing whether the Census Bureau should ask a tribal enrollment question?**

**1.3.1 (If yes) For what reasons were you undecided?** [MAKE SURE TO GET EVERYONE’S REASONS.]

**2.0 How important is it TO YOU to be able to mark on the 2020 Census form whether you are enrolled in a tribe? For what reasons?**

**3.0 How important is it TO YOUR TRIBE for you to be able to mark on your census form whether you are enrolled or not enrolled in that tribe? For what reasons?**

**4.0 Suppose that the Census Bureau’s number of persons enrolled in your tribe is different than the tribe’s number of enrolled. What would you think if the Census Bureau’s enrollment count of your tribe were considerably higher than your tribe’s own records?**

**4.1 On the other hand, what would you think if the Census Bureau’s enrollment counts of your tribe were considerably lower than your tribe’s own records?**

**5.0 What would you think if the Census Bureau asked to see the tribes’ own enrollment lists to check how well a new census question worked in counting the enrolled population?**

**Please turn to Question 5 of your Focus Group Questions Handout. This page has the same race or origin question that you filled out earlier.**

**Imagine that you got this form at home, and it had a race question with this American Indian or Alaska Native checkbox and this write-in instruction [POINT TO THESE FEATURES]. However, it is missing a question that asks whether the person is enrolled in or a member of a tribe, village,**

**Comment [AK15]:** Again, when the question is asked this way, participants will not consider some categories of tribal entities that are considered tribes for the purposes of federal programs. Hence, the suggested expansion, which we recommend be carried over through Part C, Question 7.2.1.

Native corporation, Native council, Native association, or Native community. What would be the best way to ask this question? What

words would you use that best make sense for you or your tribe? You can come up with any kind of wording you think is best. If you wish, you can use a combination of questions to ask about enrollment, or you can also add additional questions after the race question. You can also come up with more than one way to ask this question. There are no wrong answers. **[IF RESPONDENTS WISH, ALSO ALLOW THEM TO WRITE QUESTIONS THAT ASK ABOUT ENROLLMENT IN VILLAGES, VILLAGE CORPORATIONS, AND REGIONAL CORPORATIONS].**

Please respond to Question 5 and then write an enrollment question or questions that best asks whether a person is **enrolled in a tribe**. You can write your question or questions anywhere on the page. We want to know what each of you thinks independently, so please do this on your own without talking to anyone else or looking at anyone else's form. Go ahead and start. [WAIT 3 MINUTES FOR RESPONDENTS TO ANSWER. IF ANYONE IS STILL NOT FINISHED, LET RESPONDENTS KNOW THEY HAVE ABOUT 30 MORE SECONDS TO GIVE THEIR ANSWERS.]

Comment [AK16]: See Comment AK 15 above.

For this exercise, I asked you to come up with written questions to ask whether an American Indian or Alaska Native person is enrolled in a tribe.

**7.0 What question wordings did you come up with?** [WRITE OUT THEIR WORDINGS ON AN EASEL.]

**7.1 For what reasons did you use this (these) wording(s)?**

**7.2 [ASK IF MORE THAN ONE WORDING IS DISCUSSED] Of all the question wordings we have, which one do you think most clearly asks about your enrollment status? For what reasons? What are some potential problems with the way this question is worded?**

**7.2.1 Of all the question wordings we have, which one do you think would best measure enrollment for Alaska Natives in the Census? For what reasons?**

**8.0 Please answer Question 6 in your Focus Group Questions handout. [WAIT 20 SECONDS.] Are you familiar with the term “federally recognized tribe?”**

**8.1 What does it mean for a tribe to be recognized by the federal government?**

**9.0 Please answer Question 7 in your Focus Group Questions handout. [WAIT 20 SECONDS.] Are you familiar with the term “state-recognized tribe?”**

**9.1 What does it mean for a tribe to be recognized by a state government?**

**10.0 Is there any term that you have used, or heard others used, to refer to tribes that are neither federally recognized nor state-recognized?**

**10.1 What does it mean for a tribe to not be recognized by either the federal government or any state government?**

**10.2 How would you suggest we refer to tribes that are neither federally recognized nor state-recognized?**

**11.0 What would you think if the Census Bureau asked on the census form if a person is enrolled in a federally recognized tribe?**

**11.1 For what reasons?**

**11.2 This is one of the ways we are thinking about asking this question for federally recognized tribes: “Are you enrolled in a federally recognized tribe?” Is this an appropriate way to ask the question?**

**11.2.1 For what reasons do you think this is an appropriate way?**

**11.2.2 For what reasons do you think this is not an appropriate way?**

**Comment [AK17]:** See Comment AK14 above. Many individuals may not understand, for example, that ANCSA shareholders are “tribal members” under NAHASDA. Therefore, they may support asking the enrollment question in terms of federally recognized tribes without knowing that thousands of Alaska Native shareholders could be excluded from the counts used for a program that is intended to serve them. It is difficult to believe that asking this question of your average Alaska Native person will provide responses based upon the actual implications.

**12.0 Please answer Question 9 of your Focus Group Questions handout.  
[WAIT 20 SECONDS.] Do you think the Census Bureau should ask if a person is enrolled in a state-recognized tribe?**

**12.1 For what reasons did you say “yes” or “no?”**

**13.0 Please answer Question 10 of your Focus Group Questions handout.  
[WAIT 20 SECONDS.] Do you think the Census Bureau should ask if a person is enrolled in a tribe not recognized by either the federal government or any state government?**

**13.1 For what reasons did you say “yes” or “no?”**

**14.0 What would you think if the Census Bureau asked about enrollment for each of these three types of tribes when collecting enrollment data?**

**15. What about village corporations? Do you think the Census Bureau should ask whether Alaska Natives are enrolled in a village corporation? For what reasons?**

**16. Do you think the Census Bureau should ask whether Alaska Natives are enrolled in a regional corporation? For what reasons?**

**17.0 Based on what we’ve talked about today, what do you think are the most important things for the Census Bureau to remember from this discussion?**

**18.0 Does anyone have any additional comments?**

**Thank you very much for your participation!**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

### FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS HANDOUT

1. What tribes, villages, village corporations, ~~and~~ regional corporations, Native councils, Native associations, and Native communities are you associated with? Please list the names of the groups with which you are associated. For each group, also answer whether you are a member.

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, ~~or~~ regional corporation, Native council, Native Association, or Native Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member?

- Yes
- No

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member?

- Yes
- No

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member?

- Yes
- No

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member?

- Yes

**Comment [AK18]:** Would replicate this language for the additional blanks below. Alternatively, the Bureau could consider inserting one or more blanks for each type of Native tribal entity, which would lead to more blanks but possibly clearer responses.

No

I am not associated with any tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please list the tribes, villages, village corporations, and regional corporation in which you are enrolled.

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Comment [AK19]:** See Comment AK18 above.

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation: \_\_\_\_\_

I am not enrolled in any tribe, village, village corporation, or regional corporation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

3.

A. To your knowledge, does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in a tribe to be considered a member of that tribe?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Something else

B. To your knowledge, does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in a village to be considered a member of that village?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Something else

C. To your knowledge, does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in a village corporation to be considered a member of that village corporation?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Something else

D. To your knowledge, does an Alaska Native need to be enrolled in a regional corporation to be considered a member of that regional corporation?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

**Comment [AK20]:** See comments AK5-AK13. Ultimately, in Alaska the question is less about whether someone must "enroll" to become a member of a tribal entity and more about asking the right questions so that persons realized they should identify their membership in or affiliation with tribal entities that are considered "tribes" for purposes of federal programs like NAHASDA. If the Bureau still desires to frame the question in this manner, it should do the same for the following tribal entities: Native council, Native association, Native community.

#### 4. Something else

Name \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you think the Census Bureau should ask Alaska Natives whether they are enrolled in a tribe?

A. Yes

B. No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

5.

**What is your race or origin?** *Mark all boxes that apply AND print your specific origin(s) in the lines below. Note, you may report multiple groups.*

**White** – *Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Polish, French, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin** – *Print, for example, Mexican or Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, Salvadoran, Colombian, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Black or African Am.** – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Ghanaian, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Asian** – *Print, for example, Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**American Indian or Alaska Native** – *Print, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Mayan, Doyon, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Middle Eastern or North African** – *Print, for example, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Algerian, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – *Print, for example, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, and so on.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Some other race or origin** – *Specify.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are you familiar with the term “federally recognized tribe?”

A. Yes

B. No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

7. Are you familiar with the term “state-recognized tribe?”

A. Yes

B. No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

8. This is one of the ways we are thinking about asking this question for federally recognized tribes: "Are you enrolled in a federally recognized tribe?" Is this an appropriate way to ask the question?

A. Yes

B. No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you think the Census Bureau should ask if a person is enrolled in a state-recognized tribe?

A. Yes

B. No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you think the Census Bureau should ask if a person is enrolled in a tribe not recognized by either the federal government or any state government?

A. Yes

B. No