American Community Survey (ACS)

Why We Ask: Work Status

We ask about how many weeks a person worked in the last year, and how many hours he or she worked each week to produce statistics about full-time and part-time workers, as well as full-year and part-year workers. These statistics help federal agencies understand trends and differences in wages, benefits, work hours, and seasonal work.

Examples of Federal Uses

- Required to examine the labor force participation and income status of all service-connected (SC) veterans compared to service-connected (NSC) veterans and non-veterans. This comparison is important to compensate and care for SC veterans.
- Used to enforce nondiscrimination provisions in employment by private employers, employment agencies, and labor organizations. Required in federal affirmative employment programs, to identify under-representation in job categories, including veterans and people with disabilities.
- Used in the formula that determines the allocation of funding to states and territories for the Mental Health Services Block Grant, and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant.

Examples of Other Uses

State and local agencies use these statistics to identify the percentage of people employed full-time, and the percentage of residents who work in each community year-round.