

2021 Household Pulse Survey User Notes

Phase 3

Date: February 24, 2021

[Release Note on Updated Interactive Data Tool](#)

The measurement label for Housing Insecurity has been updated to better describe how the indicator is defined. The old label defined Housing Insecurity as “Percentage of adults who are not current on rent or mortgage payment, **or** who have slight or no confidence that their household can pay next month’s rent or mortgage on time.” The new label has been updated to replace the “or” with “and.”

New Label:

Housing Insecurity
Percentage of adults who are not current on rent or mortgage payments and who have slight or no confidence that their household can pay next month’s rent or mortgage on time

[Release Note on Updated Interactive Data Tool](#)

The bar graph feature of the [Household Pulse Data Tool](#) has been adjusted to no longer display confidence intervals below a given estimate’s zero point. For all estimates displayed in the data tool, a negative lower bound for the confidence interval does not make sense, therefore the lowest possible bound is now displayed as zero. For more information please see the January 20, 2021 – February 1, 2021 Source and Accuracy Statement available on the survey’s [Technical Documentation](#) page (specifically the “Standard Errors and Their Use” section on page 10).

[Release Note on Renaming of the Household Pulse Survey Public Use Files](#)

The [Household Pulse Public Use Files](#) are now named pulse2021 in the zipped files.

- pulse2021_data.dictionary_CSV_XX
- pulse2021_puf_XX
- pulse2021_repwgt_puf_XX

where XX represents the week of the release.

[Release Note on Data Dictionaries for Week7-Week12 Public Use Files](#)

On February 10, 2021, the Household Pulse is releasing the Week 22 Public Use File (PUF). During the update to the Data Dictionary to incorporate the new content added for Week 22 (see Release Note on New Content and Updated Questionnaire dated January 27, 2021), an error was discovered for Q19 which asks about what the respondent spent their stimulus payment on. This question, along with the preceding question Q15, was previously asked in Week 7 to Week 12.

Q15 In the **last 7 days**, if you or anyone in your household received a “stimulus payment,” that is a coronavirus related Economic Impact Payment from the Federal Government, did you:
Select only one answer.

- Mostly spend it (1)
- Mostly save it (2)
- Mostly use it to pay off debt (3)
- Not applicable, I did not receive the stimulus payment (4)

Q15 yields the variable EIP with four answer categories.

<If Q15 = 1, 2, or 3, then display Q19>

Q19 What did you and your household mostly spend the most recent “stimulus payment” on?
Select all that apply.

- Food (groceries, eating out, take out) (1)
- Clothing (clothing, accessories, shoes) (2)
- Household supplies and personal care products (3)
- Household items (TV, electronics, furniture, appliances) (4)
- Recreational goods (sports and fitness equipment, bicycles, toys, games) (5)
- Rent (6)
- Mortgage (scheduled or monthly) (7)
- Utilities and telecommunications (natural gas, electricity, cable, internet, cellphone) (8)
- Vehicle payments (scheduled or monthly) (9)
- Paying down credit card, student loans, or other debts (10)
- Charitable donations or giving to family members (11)
- Savings or investments (12)
- Other, specify (13) _____

Q19 is a “select all that apply” that yields the variables EIPSPND1-EIPSPND13.

The Week 7 to Week 12 PUF Data Dictionaries mistakenly stated the universe for Q19 was when EIP=1. The Data Dictionary for Week 22 correctly states the universe for Q19 is when EIP in 1:3.

This User Note is to alert data users to this correction but we are not currently planning to re-release the Week 7 to Week 12 PUF zipped files.

Date: January 27, 2021

[Release Note on Continuation of Phase 3 Data Collection](#)

Following a two-week break in data collection, Phase 3 of the Household Pulse Survey has been extended from its original end date of December 21, 2020 to run through March 1, 2021. Beginning with the Week 22 release (collection period January 6, 2021 – January 18, 2021), there are multiple changes to the [questionnaire](#), including the addition of questions regarding individuals' intention to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and the removal of some questions for which utility has declined over time (see Release Note on New Content and Updated Questionnaire below). Questions related to stimulus payments have also resumed. We expect further revisions to the survey in March.

[Release Note on New Content and Updated Questionnaire](#)

Beginning with the Week 22 (collection period January 6, 2021 – January 18, 2021), the Household Pulse Survey questionnaire changed to include the following items:

QV1 Have you received a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

<If QV1 = 1 then display QV2>

QV2 Did you receive (or do you plan to receive) all required doses?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

<If QV1 = 2 then display QV3>

QV3 Once a vaccine to prevent COVID-19 is available to you, would you...

- Definitely get a vaccine (1)
- Probably get a vaccine (4)
- Probably NOT get a vaccine (5)
- Definitely NOT get a vaccine (6)

<If QV2 = 2 OR QV3 = 2, 3, or 4 then display QV4>

QV4 Which of the following, if any, are reasons that you {QV4fill} {QV4fill2}? *Select all that apply.*

- I am concerned about possible side effects of a COVID-19 vaccine (1)
 - I don't know if a COVID-19 vaccine will work (2)
 - I don't believe I need a COVID-19 vaccine (3)
 - I don't like vaccines (4)
 - My doctor has not recommended it (5)
 - I plan to wait and see if it is safe and may get it later (6)
 - I think other people need it more than I do right now (7)
 - I am concerned about the cost of a COVID-19 vaccine (8)
 - I don't trust COVID-19 vaccines (9)
 - I don't trust the government (10)
 - Other (please specify) (11)
-

<If QV4 = 3 then display QV4>

QV5 Why do you believe that you don't need a COVID-19 vaccine? *Select all that apply.*

- I already had COVID-19 (1)
 - I am not a member of a high-risk group (2)
 - I plan to use masks or other precautions instead (3)
 - I don't believe COVID-19 is a serious illness (4)
 - I don't think vaccines are beneficial (5)
 - Other (please specify) (6)
-

QV6 Has a doctor or other health care provider ever told you that you have COVID-19?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not Sure (3)
-

Q15 In the **last 7 days**, if you or anyone in your household received a "stimulus payment," that is a coronavirus related Economic Impact Payment from the Federal Government, did you:
Select only one answer.

- Mostly spend it (1)
 - Mostly save it (2)
 - Mostly use it to pay off debt (3)
 - Not applicable, I did not receive the stimulus payment (4)
-

<If Q15 = 1, 2, or 3, then display Q19>

Q19 What did you and your household mostly spend the most recent "stimulus payment" on?
Select all that apply.

- Food (groceries, eating out, take out) (1)
 - Clothing (clothing, accessories, shoes) (2)
 - Household supplies and personal care products (3)
 - Household items (TV, electronics, furniture, appliances) (4)
 - Recreational goods (sports and fitness equipment, bicycles, toys, games) (5)
 - Rent (6)
 - Mortgage (scheduled or monthly) (7)
 - Utilities and telecommunications (natural gas, electricity, cable, internet, cellphone) (8)
 - Vehicle payments (scheduled or monthly) (9)
 - Paying down credit card, student loans, or other debts (10)
 - Charitable donations or giving to family members (11)
 - Savings or investments (12)
 - Other, specify (13) _____
-

During this same collection period, the following questions were removed from the survey due to a decline in their continued utility:

Q14 Are you receiving pay for the time you are not working? *Select only one answer.*

- Yes, I use paid leave (1)
 - Yes, I receive full pay but do not have to take leave (2)
 - Yes, I receive partial pay (3)
 - No, I receive no pay (4)
-

Q14c Including yourself, how many people in your household received Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits since **March 13, 2020**? *Please enter a number.*

Q21d Were any of these trips canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic? Include trips you had not made travel reservations or arrangements for in your answer. *Select only one answer.*

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Q23 Getting enough food can also be a problem for some people. Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household **before March 13, 2020**? *Select only one answer.*

- Enough of the kinds of food (I/we) wanted to eat (1)
 - Enough, but not always the kinds of food (I/we) wanted to eat (2)
 - Sometimes not enough to eat (3)
 - Often not enough to eat (4)
-

Q27b In which month(s) were SNAP or food stamp benefits received? *Select all that apply.*

January 2020 (1)

February 2020 (2)

March 2020 (3)

April 2020 (4)

May 2020 (5)

June 2020 (6)

July 2020 (7)

August 2020 (8)

September 2020 (9)

October 2020 (10)

November 2020 (11)

December 2020 (12)

Q30 How confident are you that your household will be able to afford the kinds of food you need for the **next four weeks**? *Select only one answer.*

- Not at all confident (1)
 - Somewhat confident (2)
 - Moderately confident (3)
 - Very confident (4)
-

Q31 Would you say your health in general is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor? *Select only one answer.*

- Excellent (1)
 - Very good (2)
 - Good (3)
 - Fair (4)
 - Poor (5)
-

Q40a How many bedrooms are in your home? *Please enter a number.*

[Release Note on Updates to the HPS Interactive Tool](#)

The [HPS Interactive Tool](#) has been updated to include the following two indicators:

- Received a COVID-19 Vaccine - Percentage of adults who have received a COVID-19 vaccine
- Likelihood of Receiving a COVID-19 Vaccine - Percentage of adults who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine (but who definitely will once available)

All other indicators in the tool remained unchanged.

[Release Note on Table Sourcing Specification](#)

A sourcing specification for the continuation of the Phase 3 Detailed Tables is now available on the [Technical Documentation](#) website of the Household Pulse Survey. Please see the file labeled “Household Pulse Survey Table Specifications – Beginning January 26, 2021” for more detail. This updated sourcing document includes the new and modified items described above.

Date: December 16, 2020

[Release Note on Updated Public Use File Data Dictionaries](#)

The Public Use File (PUF) data dictionaries were updated for Weeks 13-18 and re-released. The answer categories for both the EVICT and the FORCLOSE variables should have been listed as very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, and not at all likely. The previous data dictionaries incorrectly listed the answer categories as extremely likely, very likely, somewhat likely, and not at all likely.

The issue was only in the data dictionary. The datafiles in both CSV and SAS were correct.

Date: November 18, 2020

[Release Note on Phase 3 Collection of the Household Pulse Survey](#)

The Household Pulse Survey (HPS) ended Phase 2 on 10/31/2020. We entered Phase 3 to continue collecting information on how the coronavirus pandemic is impacting households across the country. Working with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Census Bureau was approved to continue collecting the HPS with an expiration date of 10/31/2023.

Despite entering a new phase in collection marked by a new clearance from OMB, for the time being the Phase 3 content is the same as the Phase 2 content and will continue as is through 12/21/2020. We continue to collect and disseminate data on employment status, food security, housing, physical and mental health, access to health care, educational disruption, application and receipt of benefits, spending patterns, availability of financial resources, capacity to telework, and travel practices. In Phase 3, we continue to collect and disseminate data on a bi-weekly basis. The distinction between the phases is the approval to collect the HPS by OMB. Content is being reviewed and changes are being considered for early 2021.

[Release Note on Corrected Standard Error Tables](#)

Due to the errors discovered earlier for the Food Sufficiency and Food Security Tables, we are re-releasing the Food Sufficiency and Food Security Standard Error Table 2a, Standard Error Table 2b, Standard Error Table 3a, and Standard Error Table 3b with correct standard errors (SEs) for the “Did not report” category under “Currently caught up on mortgage or rental payments.” The previously calculated SEs for the “Did not report” was incorrectly calculated. The re-release of these tables affected Week 13 to Week17.

Phase 2

Date: November 4, 2020

[Release Note on Detailed Tables and Table Sourcing Specification](#)

The Week 13 through Week 16 Food2a, 2b, 3a, and 3b detailed tables were updated for the “Did not report” category under “Currently caught up on mortgage or rental payments.” This category is a combination of three questions on the Household Pulse Survey. It combines the housing status (TENURE), whether the respondent is currently caught up on rental payments (RENTCUR), whether the respondents is currently caught up on mortgage payments (MORTCUR).

The original Week 13 to Week 16 tables were calculated if a respondent didn’t respond to any of the items, which artificially inflated the “Did not report” population. The correct calculation of “Did not report” was the combination of these three variables. This correct calculation now makes the “Currently caught up on mortgage or rental payments” mutually exclusive. These tables have been re-run and re-released. The other estimates in these tables were not affected by this change.

Additionally, the Table Sourcing Specification on the [Technical Documentation](#) website was updated with this clarification.

[Release Note on Updated Questionnaire](#)

New updated English and Spanish questionnaires that include skip patterns were released on November 4, 2020 and are available from our main [Household Pulse Survey](#) website.

Date: October 21, 2020

[Release Note on Public Use File \(PUF\)](#)

The Household Pulse Survey started creating household-level weights for Phase 2. We went back and created these household-level weights for the previously released Public Use Files (PUF) from Phase 1 as individual SAS and CSV datasets. Data users can merge these household-level weights to the PUF using the record identifier variable SCRAM.

[Release Note on Updates to the HPS Interactive Tool](#)

The Household Pulse Survey updated the [Interactive Tool](#) with the following enhancements.

1. Included a new column in the table grid to show the denominator for each indicator.
2. Updated the definition for the Likelihood of Eviction or Foreclosure indicator.
3. Updated the tool notes and created a direct link to the Phase 1 Data Tool Indicators spreadsheet.

Date: October 7, 2020

[Release Note on Table Sourcing Specification](#)

A sourcing specification for the Phase 2 Detailed Tables is now available on the [Technical Documentation](#) website of the Household Pulse Survey. Please see the Phase 2 Household Pulse Survey Table Specification for more detail.

[Release Note on Corrected Standard Error Tables](#)

An error was discovered in the Week 13 and Week 14 Food Sufficiency and Food Security Tables Standard Error Table 2a, Standard Error Table 2b, Standard Error Table 3a, and Standard Error Table 3b. The standard errors for “Housing owned or payment not required” in these tables were incorrectly calculated due to a change in the table specifications from Phase 1 to Phase 2. All other cells in the Food Standard Error tables are correct as are the estimates in the detailed tables.

Currently caught up on mortgage or rental payments
Yes
No
Housing owned or payment not required
Did not report

DATE: September 9, 2020

[Release Note](#)

Phase 1 of the Household Pulse Survey (HPS) was collected and disseminated on a weekly basis. Phase 1 collection ended July 21, 2020. Phase 2 started collection August 19, 2020 but with a two-week collection and dissemination period. Despite going to a two-week collection period, the Household Pulse Survey continues to call these collection periods Weeks for continuity with Phase 1.

Phase 1 of the Household Pulse Survey asked individuals about their experiences in terms of employment status, food security, housing, physical and mental health, access to health care, and educational disruption. Phase 2 carried over many of these questions to allow users to understand how these domains are changing as the pandemic continues. Additional content included application and receipt of benefits, spending patterns, availability of financial resources, post-secondary education disruptions, capacity to telework, and travel practices.

Users can access the Phase 2 questionnaire on the [Measuring Household Experiences during the Coronavirus \(COVID-10\) Pandemic website](#).