2022 CENSUS OF GOVERNMENTS

Conducting a More Efficient Census of Governments

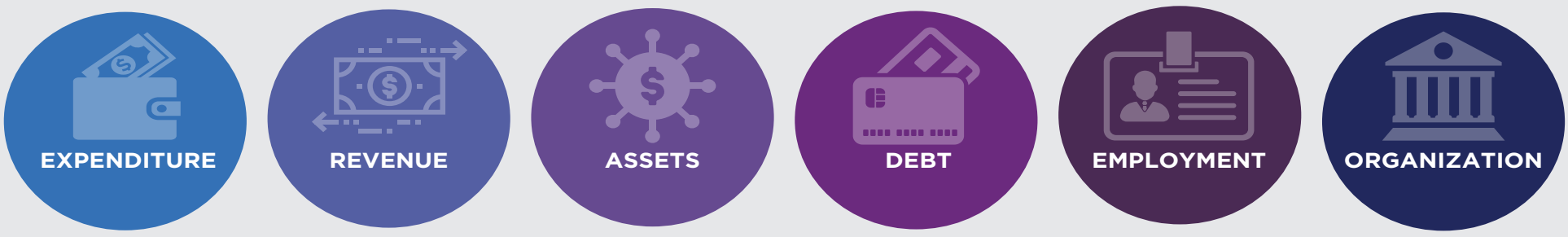
WHAT IS THE CENSUS OF GOVERNMENTS?

The Census of Governments (CoG) is the most comprehensive and precise measure of government economic activity. It identifies the scope and nature of the nation's public sector and provides authoritative benchmark figures of public finance, pensions, and employment. It classifies the complex and diverse state and local government organizations, powers, activities, and measures state and local fiscal relationships. The CoG is comprised of three components—Organization, Employment and Finance.

With the release of each data product, the CoG provides policy analysts, researchers, and the general public with a more complete and clear picture of the public sector. These data products present information to assist in addressing the issues that concern state and local governments and serve as the foundation for developing national economic and public policy.

Improvements to the 2022 CoG will increase efficiency, reduce response burden for state and local governments, and provide data products that reflect our ever-changing U.S. economy.

Public Sector Statistics Include:



Timeline

The program will produce data targeted releases between July 2023 and September 2024. These CoG data products provide unique detailed national, state, and local level statistical measures.

2020

- OMB clearances obtained
- Respondent outreach started.

2021

- Organization component is mailed.

2022

- Employment and Finance components are mailed.

2023

- Organization and Employment Data released.

2024

- Finance Data released.

Goals for Conducting a More Efficient Census of Governments

MODERNIZE

Modernize Content to Reflect the Dynamic U.S. Economy

- Improve data products.
- Accelerate the release of data products where feasible.
- Standardize data products for common data measures.

IMPROVE

Improve the Data Collection Process

- Implement the use of customized questionnaires.
- Enhance collection strategies.
- Build comprehensive outreach plan.

REDUCE

Reduce the Burden for Governments

- Identify and utilize existing publicly available data sources.
- Examine innovative methods to collect existing records.
- Improve governments' employment and finance estimates.

ENHANCE

Enhance Methodology for Data Quality

- Improve data quality information for data users.
- Improve governments' employment and finance estimates.

Increase Efficiency

- Adopt a strategy that will rely more on existing government administrative records and developing innovative methods to collect, edit, and estimate (as necessary) to supplement existing and account for nonresponding entities.
- Promote response by using the successful practices learned from previous CoG cycles. This includes the use of central collection practices and administrative records for large governments.
- Leverage enterprise systems and solutions for data collection and dissemination, use data.census.gov for dissemination of data.

Reduce Respondent Burden for State and Local Governments through Customized Data Collection

- Expand the use of agreements between the U.S. Census Bureau and government units to provide their response in customized formats, and coordinate this centrally-collected data across statistical areas.
- Expand the use of administrative records for data collection for local and state governments.
- Implement the use of customized questionnaires for specific groupings of local governments.
- Explore the use of dynamic questionnaires.

Automate Operations to Increase Productivity

- Increase the use of macro-analytical tools.
- Improve editing and imputation of micro data, specifically, modernizing programs for imputation methods.

Improve Data Products to Reflect Our Ever-Changing U.S. Economy

- Update content to reflect the changing economy and provide a fuller and more relevant picture of state and local governments.
- Accelerate the release of data products, where feasible.
- Conduct outreach and promotion activities for 2022 Census of Governments data products utilizing multiple forums and media.
- Use the Census Bureau's Web-based dissemination platform, data.census.gov, to increase usability and functionality of data product delivery.