



STATE OF WASHINGTON

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DATE: August 22, 2002

TO: Agency Directors

FROM: Wolfgang Opitz, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: STANDARDS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING ON RACE/ETHNICITY

NOTE: (1) THESE STANDARDS APPLY ONLY TO THOSE AGENCIES COLLECTING RACE AND ETHNIC DATA ON THEIR EMPLOYEES AND CLIENTS. (2) PROPOSED TIMELINES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ARE STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) serves as Washington State's liaison with the U.S. Bureau of the Census. One of our responsibilities has been to ensure that the information that we collect as Washington State government reflects the race and ethnic classifications of the federal census. By having our information correspond with the federal classifications we are able to compare the characteristics of our clients, students, and personnel with those of the overall population of the state.

The race and ethnic questions that were used in the 2000 Census were changed from those that were used in the 1990 Census. The most significant change was the addition of a multi race question. The changes in the census questions reflected standards on the collection of information on race and ethnicity that were issued by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1997.

OFM established a Task Force in 2001 to provide advice on the approach that we should take in Washington State on the implementation of the 2000 Census standards on race and ethnicity. The Task Force was comprised of representatives from state agencies and higher education institutions. Based upon the work of the Task Force, OFM has adopted data collection and reporting standards for race and ethnicity for Washington State. Valuable information received from task force members concerning resource and technical constraints were considered and helped shape the standards.

The standards are described in the attachment to this memorandum. Since the implementation of the standards may necessitate changes to forms and information systems, OFM has set an implementation deadline of December 2005. Given this extended timeframe for implementation,

we expect that any changes can be made with existing resources. OFM continues to work with higher education institutions to resolve several unique issues that may affect the timing for final implementation.

Questions about the standards may be directed to Yi Zhao of OFM (360) 902-0592, or at yi.zhao@ofm.wa.gov.

Attachment

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Standards for Data Collection and Reporting on Race/Ethnicity In Washington State

Office of Financial Management August 2002

I. Background

In 1997, the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) made the decision to change the standard for race and ethnicity data collection. The new changes include (a) allowing respondents to select multiple race choices and (b) require data collection agencies to separate Hawaiian Native and other Pacific Islanders from Asians. In addition, “some other race”, though not an OMB category, was allowed in data collection for Census 2000 for the purpose of enhancing the response rate. The “some other race” responses are reported in Census 2000 redistricting and Summary File One (SF1) and Three (SF3) data sets. OMB 1997 guidelines require other agencies to implement the changes starting from 2003.

Beginning with the 1990 Decennial Census, OFM has worked with state agencies and higher education institutions on the development of standards for the collection of data on race. In the early 1990s, a Minority Data Task Force chaired by OFM worked with state agencies and higher education institutions to ensure that collection of race data at the state level was consistent with questions on race and ethnicity asked in the 1990 Census. Consistency with the Census questions ensured that race data collected in state government could be compared with and used together with Census data.

The State of Washington collects racial/ethnic data on items like K-12/post secondary enrollment, vital statistics, state personnel, and other important subjects. Those data are vital in allocating funds, forecasting future program needs, and meeting both state and federal reporting requirements. For example, the following laws and programs now require collection of data on race and ethnicity: the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act, Public Health Act, Healthcare Improvement Act, Job Partnership Training Act, Equal Credit Opportunity Act, Fair Housing Act, Census Redistricting Data Program, Food Stamp Program, Child Welfare Reporting Program, and the Temporary Assistance for Needed Families (TANF) Reporting Program.

In order to work toward consistency with the 2000 Census and with OMB standards, OFM again formed a Minority Data Task Force in 2001. The Task Force included representation from the four-year universities, community colleges, and state agencies such as Office of Superintendent of Public Instructions (OSPI), Department of Health (DOH), and Department of Personnel (DOP). The Task Force provided OFM with valuable input on the challenges of changing state data collections and reports to reflect the new federal standards. The challenges included how to reconcile federal and state data needs, how to update capacity of our information systems to adapt the changes, and how to determine the level of detail needed for multiracial reporting.

II. Minimum Standards:

Based upon the work of the Task Force, OFM has decided that state standards should be in line with the 2000 Census categories for both data collection and reporting by December of 2005. Many policy and program decisions are based on analyses, which use census data as their benchmark. In addition, race/ethnicity data are often exchanged among state agencies and used together with census data. Therefore, being able to report race and ethnic data corresponding to the census categories is important for both state and federal programs.

The collection and reporting of data according to the 2000 Census categories will be more complex than it was for the 1990 categories. The minimum set of race and ethnicity categories now consists of twelve groups (six race groups by two ethnicities), while the maximum includes 62 groups (31 race combinations by two ethnicities with “some other race” being eliminated). OMB has established minimum data collection and reporting requirements for race and ethnic information. Since many federal departments have yet to determine their specific reporting requirements, OFM has decided that the following OMB standards be met:

1. Minimum Categories

- 1) ***Respondents must be allowed to mark one or more races.*** Data on multiple races should be collected and recorded as multiple selections from each single response, rather than from a fixed multiracial category.
- 2) The minimum categories established in the 1997 OMB Standard for Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity are:
 - American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN),
 - Black or African American,
 - Asian,
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (NHOPI),
 - White.
 - The minimum ethnic group is Spanish, Hispanic or Latino.

2. Race and Ethnic Data Collection

- 1) ***Placing the Spanish/ Hispanic/Latino question before the race question is required.*** For the 2000 Census the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question was listed before the race question. Research conducted under OMB guidance indicates that placing this question before the race question can significantly improve the response rate. Previously, the Census Bureau and Washington State had placed this question after the race question.
- 2) ***Including specific subgroups in the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question is optional.*** For the 2000 Census the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question included further subgroup questions. Collection of more detailed information about subgroups may be beneficial for state programs. In the past, however, more

than twenty community college and universities have collected Hispanic data without subgroups. Before a decision is made, state agencies should evaluate the benefits of including subgroups as part of the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question.

- 3) ***Adding a help line in front of the race question is recommended.*** Some Spanish/Hispanic/Latino people do not recognize Hispanic as an ethnic group. OFM proposes that the following statement be placed before the race question if the collection forms have enough space:

“The Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question is about ethnicity, not race. Please continue to answer the following question by marking one or more boxes to indicate what you consider your race to be.”

- 4) ***Alaska Native or American Indians must be one category in the race question and the collection of tribal affiliation is optional.*** State agencies must use “Alaska Native or American Indian” as one category on the form. The ability to reconfigure computer systems and the cost of these changes may limit some agencies from collecting information on tribal affiliation. Given these constraints, OFM proposes that the collection of tribal affiliation be optional and that agencies evaluate the benefits of collecting this more detailed information. Tribal affiliation could be tied to state or federal funding or be a factor in evaluating work training programs. In these cases, tribal affiliation should be kept on the questionnaire.
- 5) ***Separating Asian and Pacific Islanders into two categories is required.*** State agencies must separate the Asian and Pacific Islanders into two categories for data collection and reporting.
- 6) ***Including Asian and Pacific Islander (API) subgroups in the race question is optional.*** Due to complication caused by recording multiracial category, and the technical and budgetary constrains, OFM allows agencies to collect API data without their subgroups. However, like the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino subgroups, information on API subgroups may be beneficial or even necessary to some programs. State agencies currently gather information on these sub groups with some variation from Census Bureau’s standard list. If this subgroup information is collected, the questionnaire should list the subgroups used for the 2000 Census. This approach ensures that the categories collected are mutually exclusive and can be aggregated into the minimum classifications set forth by OMB.
- 7) ***Using a “Some other race” question is optional.*** The 2000 Census included a “some other race” question, which allows respondents to specify their race or ethnicity. Including such an open-ended question has proven to increase response rates. If this information would be beneficial, state agencies should decide to include a “some other race” question. Certain agencies have been collecting “some other race” as a check box. Such practice is allowed in order

to maintain their data consistency over time. Since OMB does not report “some other race” as a standard category, the responses to this question may have to be redistributed to the standard race categories in certain reporting procedures.

3. Tabulation and Reporting

State agencies must at least be able to report the OMB minimum categories:

- White alone
- Black alone
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Asian alone
- Hawaiian Native and Other Pacific Islanders alone
- Two or more races
- Repeat above list of racial categories by Hispanic Origin (i.e. Non Hispanic White alone, Non Hispanic Black alone, etc.).

OFM will use the minimum categories listed above in its population estimates for the state and counties and for initial reports from the Washington State Population Survey.

OMB has indicated that race data should be reported in a manner to provide meaningful and useful information. State agencies should decide if there is a need for presenting race data in formats more detailed than the categories that OFM will use for population estimate reports. State agencies may include as much detail on race and ethnicity as possible, so long as the reporting does not compromise data integrity or confidentiality.

4. Coding

The Census Bureau has made significant changes to the codes assigned to racial and ethnic categories used for the 1990 Census. Since the cost of switching to the 2000 codes could be substantial for state agencies, OFM proposes the continued use of the 1990 structure. Usage of the 1990 codes will not affect data integrity or consistency or the ability to collect and report data consistent with the 2000 Census race question.

When reporting requirements do not allow “Some other race”, this category will have to be allocated through a coding scheme. OFM will provide a coding procedure later, which agencies that collect this category should follow unless they have instructions from their federal corresponding agencies.

Agencies can develop or adopt the help screens that the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Personnel (DOP) have maintained to make the coding more automatic and consistent. Help can be obtained by contacting Karen Lathrop of DOH at (360) 236-4350, or the DOP Help Desk at (360) 664-6400.

5. Bridging

As a result of differences between the 1990 and 2000 Census questions, race data collected according to the 2000 Census categories will not be strictly comparable with data based on the 1990 Census. Unless two race questions are asked on state forms – which is not recommended – statistical “bridging” techniques will be required to compare 1990 based race data with 2000 based race data.

Statistical adjustments between the 1990 and 2000 Census questions are only necessary for responses that identify two or more races. OFM will develop a bridging methodology from the results of the 2002 Washington State Population Survey. The survey asked respondents who identified themselves as multiracial to also select only one race that best describes their racial heritage.

Appropriate bridging methods may vary with the type agency clientele. For example, the Department of Health vital statistics will require different bridging approaches than higher education. If the OFM bridging methodology is not applicable to specific data collected by a state agency, then agencies may use the methods listed in OMB’s “Provisional Guidance on the Implementation of the 1997 Standards for federal data on Race and Ethnicity”. This document will be posted on the OFM web site and a printed copy will also be available upon request.

III. Time frame for converting to OMB 1997 standard

State agencies should complete the full implementation of the standards set forth in this document by December of 2005. By January of 2006 state agencies will then be able to provide reports about their clients, students, and personnel according to the minimum single and multiracial categories described in this document. OFM continues to work with higher education institutions to resolve several unique issues dealing with federal IPEDS requirements, limitations associated with special vendor software, and other issues.

Attachment I

The following is the questionnaire for minimum data collection. In 1990 census coding, code 748 is reserved for Hispanic Origin, 650 is for any Asian, and 681 for Pacific Islanders. In this questionnaire, they are used to refer to the three-race/ethnic groups in general. "Some other race" is optional and subject to decision made by each agency.

OPTION 1

Are you or are you not of Hispanic Origin?

- Yes (748)
 - No (999)
-

The Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question is about ethnicity, not race. Please continue to answer the following question by marking one or more boxes to indicate what you consider your race to be:

- White (800)
- Black or African American (870)
- American Indian or Alaska Native (597)
- Asian (650)
- Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (681)
- Some Other Race (optional) (799)

Should a state entity decide to collect all the optional items, the following questionnaire format is proposed:

OPTION 2

Are you or are you not of Hispanic Origin?

- No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (999)
 - Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano (722)
 - Yes, Puerto Rican (727)
 - Yes, Cuban (709)
 - Yes, Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (Specify)_____
-

The Spanish/Hispanic/Latino question is about ethnicity, not race. Please continue to answer the following question by marking one or more boxes to indicate what you consider your race to be:

- White (800)
 - Black or African American (870)
 - American Indian or Alaska Native (597)
(Name of the enrolled or principal tribe)_____
 - Asian Indian (600)
 - Chinese (605)
 - Filipino (608)
 - Japanese (611)
 - Korean (612)
 - Vietnamese (619)
 - Other Asian (Specify)_____

 - Native Hawaiian (635)
 - Guamanian or Chamorro (660)
 - Samoan (655)
 - Other Pacific Islander (Specify)_____

 - Other (Specify)_____
-