

Revisions to the Federal Standards for Race and Ethnicity Data Collection

July 15, 2024

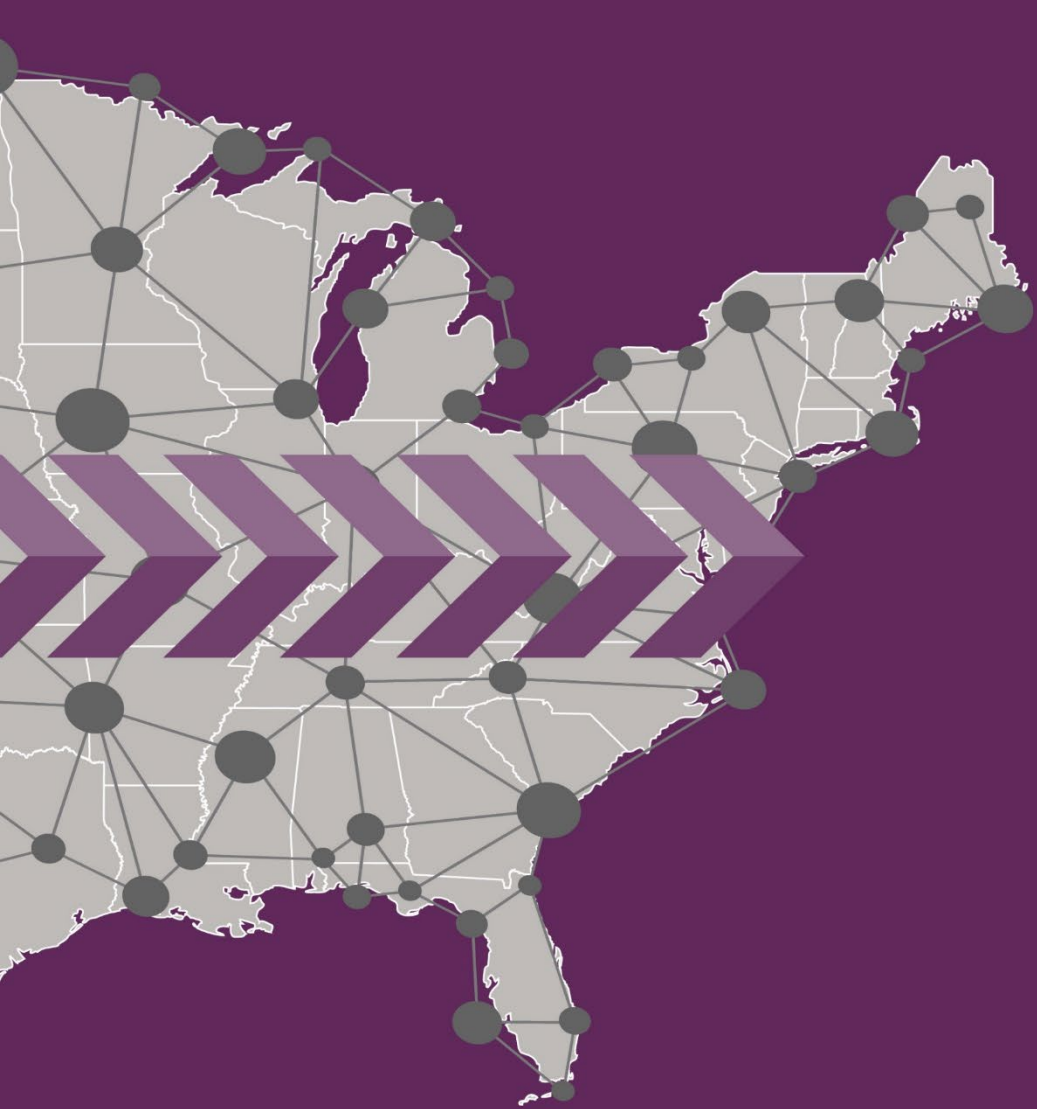
2:00 – 3:00 p.m. ET

Please stand by, this webinar will begin shortly

STATE
Health & Value
STRATEGIES

*Driving Innovation
Across States*

A grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



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About State Health and Value Strategies

State Health and Value Strategies (SHVS) assists states in their efforts to transform health and healthcare by providing targeted technical assistance to state officials and agencies. The program is a grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, led by staff at Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs. The program connects states with experts and peers to undertake healthcare transformation initiatives. By engaging state officials, the program provides lessons learned, highlights successful strategies, and brings together states with experts in the field. Learn more at www.shvs.org.

Questions? Email Heather Howard at heatherh@Princeton.edu.

*Support for this webinar was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation.*

About State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC)

SHADAC is an independent, multi-disciplinary health policy research center, housed in the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota, with a focus on state policy. SHADAC produces rigorous, policy-driven analyses and translates its complex research findings into actionable information for states. For more information visit: www.shadac.org.

About Health Equity Solutions

Health Equity Solutions (HES) advances health equity through anti-racist policies and practices so all people can attain their optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. HES works with State Health and Value Strategies (SHVS) to guide the program's health equity work generally while also providing targeted technical assistance to states. HES is based in Hartford, Connecticut and focuses its work outside of the support it provides to SHVS on achieving health equity in Connecticut. Learn more at www.hesct.org.

Housekeeping Details

- Use the 'Q&A' function in Zoom to submit questions and comments to the meeting facilitators. **Note that you must select to submit a question anonymously.**
- All participant lines are muted.
- After the webinar, the slide deck and a recording will be available at www.shvs.org.

Agenda

- **Background**
 - History of Statistical Policy Directive 15
 - Revision Process

- **Review of Updated Collection Standards**

- **Review of Data Analysis and Reporting Standards**

- **Equity Impact**

- **State Perspective: Massachusetts**

- **Discussion**

Statistical Policy Directive (SPD) 15:

Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity.

- Initially developed in 1977 and revised in 1997.
- **Does not require** federal government agencies to collect information on race and ethnicity.
- Provides a **minimum set of categories** that all federal agencies must use if they collect information on race and ethnicity, regardless of the collection mechanism (e.g., federal surveys versus program benefit applications).
- **Does not directly apply to state level** data collection and reporting (including state Medicaid programs) but we know the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) standards influence state level collection.

Figure 1. 1997 SPD 15's Two-Questions Format for Self-Response

Are you Hispanic or Latino?

No, not Hispanic or Latino

Yes, Hispanic or Latino

What is your race? *Select one or more.*

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

Updated Standards

1. Collect race and ethnicity information using one combined question.
2. Add Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) as a new minimum category.
3. Require the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.
4. Terminology updates.
5. Implementation guidance.
6. Future research.

Source: [Revisions to OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity.](#)

Revision 1: Combined Race and Ethnicity Question

Initial Proposal

- Combine race and ethnicity into a single combined question that allows respondents to select one or multiple categories.

Public Input

- The majority of comments expressed support.
- Concerns about potential loss of data about Afro-Latino/a populations.

Working Group Response

- National Content Test findings did not find a significant difference in a combined versus separate question for Afro-Latino/a populations.
- Conducted cognitive interviews with Afro-Latino/a participants; recommended future research.

Final Revision

- Same as the initial proposal.
- A single selection is considered a complete response (e.g., Hispanic or Latino/a respondents are not required to select an additional category).

Revision 2: Add a MENA Category

Initial Proposal

- Add Middle Eastern or North African as a distinct category.
- Edit the current definition of the “White” reporting category to remove MENA from the definition.

Public Input

- Nearly all comments addressing the MENA category supported the proposal.

Working Group Response

- No change from the initial proposal.

Final Revision

- Same as the initial proposal.

Revision 3: Require Detailed Categories

Initial Proposal

- Require data collection on the six most common countries of origin within each of the main categories (except for American Indian or Alaska Native).
- Encouraged agencies to collect and provide more granular data than the minimum categories.

Public Input

- The majority supported collecting detail beyond the minimum categories.
- Some calls for flexibility to allow agencies to determine what additional data to collect.

Working Group Response

- Require detail beyond the minimum categories as the default, but allow agencies the flexibility to determine what additional data to collect.

Final Revision

- Agencies are required to collect the detailed categories described as a default.
- Agencies may submit a request for an exemption or a variance to the detailed categories (only approved with sufficient justification).
- Agencies may collect the detailed categories used on the American Community Survey without further justification.

Example: Self-Response Data Collection

What is your race and/or ethnicity?

Select all that apply and enter additional details in the spaces below.

- American Indian or Alaska Native** – *Enter, for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, Aztec, Maya, etc.*

- Asian** – *Provide details below.*

- Chinese Asian Indian Filipino
 Vietnamese Korean Japanese

Enter, for example, Pakistani, Hmong, Afghan, etc.

- Black or African American** – *Provide details below.*

- African American Jamaican Haitian
 Nigerian Ethiopian Somali

Enter, for example, Trinidadian and Tobagonian, Ghanaian, Congolese, etc.

- Hispanic or Latino** – *Provide details below.*

- Mexican Puerto Rican Salvadoran
 Cuban Dominican Guatemalan

Enter, for example, Colombian, Honduran, Spaniard, etc.

- Middle Eastern or North African** – *Provide details below.*

- Lebanese Iranian Egyptian
 Syrian Iraqi Israeli

Enter, for example, Moroccan, Yemeni, Kurdish, etc.

- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander** – *Provide details below.*

- Native Hawaiian Samoan Chamorro
 Tongan Fijian Marshallese

Enter, for example, Chuukese, Palauan, Tahitian, etc.

- White** – *Provide details below.*

- English German Irish
 Italian Polish Scottish

Enter, for example, French, Swedish, Norwegian, etc.

Terminology Updates

- Remove outdated/offensive terminology, including:
 - “Negro” from the Black or African American definition.
 - “Far East” from the Asian definition, replacing with “East Asian.”
 - “Other” from the “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander” definition.
 - The phrasing “who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment” in the American Indian or Alaska Native definition.
 - Discontinuing the use of the terminology “majority” and “minority.”
- Required use of updated instructions.
 - “What is your race and/or ethnicity? Select all that apply and enter additional details in the spaces below.”

Updated Guidance for Data Analysis and Reporting

- Tabulation procedures must result in as much information on race and/or ethnicity as possible, including data on people reporting multiple categories.
- The seven minimum categories should be treated co-equally.
 - If categories must be combined to reach sample size thresholds, combinations should be labeled with the list of combined categories rather than “other.”
- Federal agencies are encouraged to use one or more of the following approaches:
 1. Alone or in combination.
 2. Most frequent multiple responses.
 3. Combined multiracial and/or multi-ethnic groups (should only be used in conjunction with approach one or two).

Bridging 1997 to 2024

- The Working Group developed and made public [an initial, basic bridging program](#).
- More robust methodology, once additional data are collected under the new standards, are expected to follow.
- Agencies are not required to use these tools.

OMB Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 on Race and Ethnicity Data Standards > Bridging Data Tools

Bridging Data Tools

-  [Annex 6. Bridging Team Methods Report \[1.1 MB\]](#)
-  [ITWG Bridging Team Methods Report: Technical Documentation \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Bridging 1997 to 2024 Factors \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Bridging 1997 to 2024 Program \(.py\) \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Bridging 1997 to 2024 Program \(.sas\) \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Bridging 2024 to 1997 Factors \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Bridging 2024 to 1997 Program \(.py\) \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Bridging 2024 to 1997 Program \(.sas\) \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Race and Ethnicity Data Example 1 \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Race and Ethnicity Data Example 2 \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Race and Ethnicity Data Example 3 \[<1.0 MB\]](#)
-  [Race and Ethnicity Data Example 4 \[<1.0 MB\]](#)

Timeline for Federal Agencies

March 28, 2024

- SPD 15 published in the Federal Register.
- The standards are effective for all new federal record keeping or reporting that include race and ethnicity data.

September 28, 2025

- Federal agencies must submit an Action Plan on Race and Ethnicity Data describing how they plan to bring their agency into compliance.
- Federal agencies must make Action Plans publicly available on their website.

March 28, 2029

- All federal programs are required to bring their collection of data into compliance.

Topics for Future Research

- An Interagency Committee on Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards will be established to carry out a research agenda and undertake reviews of SPD 15 on a 10-year cycle.
- Topics for future research include:

Data processing procedures.

How to encourage respondents to select multiple race and/or ethnicity categories.

How to collect data related to descent from persons who were enslaved in the U.S.

The optimal order of presentation for the minimum categories.

Collecting race and ethnicity across different languages and translations.

Evaluating detailed checkboxes as demographics shift.

How respondents interpret each of the SPD 15 categories and definitions.

How to better align the American Indian or Alaska Native category with its definition.

Implementation Considerations for States

- Although optional, the revised OMB standards will likely influence your data collection efforts.
- Align timing of revisions across agencies, if possible.
- Ensure any additional detailed choice options provided “roll-up” to one of the seven minimum categories.
- Consider the pros and cons of offering a “some other race” option.
- Make a clear plan for bridging and policies for managing historical data.
- Review and test the impact of revised coding methodologies.



Equity Opportunities and Considerations

What Does This Mean for Equity?

- Improved visibility of different racial/ethnic groups in data.
- Illuminates information that was not previously available.
 - Intergroup disparities (differences across populations).
 - Intragroup disparities (differences within populations).
- Offers individual agency in responding to self-identification questions on race/ethnicity .

Equity: You May Ask, but Will They Answer?

- **TRUST:** Hesitancy exists around race/ethnicity data collection and government use.
- **EDUCATION:** Systems and tools need to be in place to ensure individuals feel comfortable responding to questions about granular racial/ethnic data.
 - Start with answering **why** this is important.
 - Follow with **how** the data will be used.
- **POWER:** How will/can a population group access their own data, either collectively or individually?

Equity: Trusted Partners

- Most effective ways to encourage responsiveness to new questions:
 - Rely on trusted communicators.
 - Public education programs.
 - Campaigns that mirror “we ask because we care” initiatives in Connecticut and New York.
 - Have open stakeholder meetings/sessions to gain feedback and input on the best education tools.

State Response: Massachusetts



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Offices of Equity, Quality and Population
Health.

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Discussion

The slides and a recording of the webinar will be available at www.shvs.org after the webinar



Thank You

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