



Medical Expenditure Panel Survey

Household Component EMPLOYMENT DATA & FILES



Employment Section Design

- MEPS design reflects predecessor National Medical Expenditure Survey framework
- Emphasis on having a continuous time line of employment history over the panel for each person
 - Need complete information on employer-based health insurance
- Also interested in:
 - Indicators of job quality
 - Demographic data that relates to earnings

- Job quality indicators include availability of retirement plans, paid sick leave, and similar characteristics.
- Demographic information related to earnings includes occupation and industry.



Who & When

- Employment data collected for each person age 16 and older in each round
- Most people report employment information beginning in Round 1 of panel
 - Exceptions:
 - ◆ People who turn 16 after Round 1
 - ◆ People who join MEPS sample in later round



Job Situations At Initial Interview

- At time of initial interview, a person can have
 - One job
 - Multiple jobs
 - Held a job earlier in round that ended before the interview date
 - Not held a job at any time in round, but had one earlier
- Categories not all mutually exclusive

In order to minimize the cost of survey design for our computerized collection instrument, MEPS has tried to fit these different situations into a few structures.



One-Job Person

- Most workers have only one job at time of initial interview
- Collect substantial data on this Current Main Job when first reported

Types of information collected include:

- Earnings
- Industry & Occupation
- Paid leave (vacation, sick)
- Establishment type & size
- Health insurance availability and coverage
- Job tenure



Multiple Job Holders

- Some people have more than one job at time of initial interview
- Respondent designates one as Current Main Job
- Other jobs are Current Miscellaneous Jobs

Not as much information is collected for Current Miscellaneous Jobs as for Current Main Jobs. For example, health insurance status is determined but not the availability of paid leave.



People Who Held Job Earlier in Round

- Job held in the round that ended before interview is “Former” job
- Person with Former Main or Miscellaneous job(s) may also have Current job(s)



Remaining Situations

- No job in round, but left (Last) or retired (Retirement) from job earlier
- Never worked, then no job-related data can be collected

Minimal information is collected for Last or Retirement jobs -- health insurance coverage and industry and occupation data.



Job Subtypes in 2002

Job Subtype	Percent of job records
Current Main Job	61.6%
Current Misc. Job	5.6%
Former Main Job	3.7%
Former Misc. Job	0.3%
Retirement Job	2.9%
Last Job	26.0%

- Data for Panel 7/ Round 1
- All jobs reported

Some persons reported more than one job in the round (e.g., all persons with miscellaneous jobs had at least one other job).



Employment Updates

- Special update module used for EMPL in Rounds 2-5
- If person not working in previous round, asked if working in current round
 - If yes, then collect complete information
- If Current job continues from prior round, limited update

The update module only covers those persons who were both in MEPS and age 16 or older in the previous round.

Unless a job was "Current" in the prior round, it is not reviewed. There is a slightly different collection pattern for Main v. Miscellaneous jobs. For example, wages are updated only for Main jobs.



Job Changes

- If prior round Current Main or Miscellaneous job does not continue at interview
 - Becomes Former Main or Miscellaneous job
- If new Current job added, then collect complete data



Employment (EMPL) Data Files

- Several MEPS files contain EMPL data
 - Full-Year Population/Consolidated File
 - JOBS File
 - Point-In-Time File
 - Person Round Plan File
 - HC/IC Link (not publicly released)
- All references will be to 2002 data



Point-In-Time File

- Person level file for first Round of calendar year
- Includes all people in MEPS sample
- Earlier release than other MEPS files
- 9 EMPL variables including employment status, hourly wages, health insurance coverage

The 2002 file covers Panel 7/Round 1 & Panel 6/Round3. It contains a limited number of data elements and provides an early glimpse of what the full-year estimates are likely to be.



Person Round Plan File

- Includes only people with private health insurance
- One file record for each unique combination of
 - Private insurance source
 - Policyholder
 - Interview Round
 - Covered person (policyholder or dependent)
- EMPL variables include Job ID, establishment type

This is a calendar year file.



HC/IC Link File

- MEPS attempt to collect household and establishment data for the same individual
- Many difficult issues in collection and matching
- File not publicly released; selected years available at MEPS Data Center
 - Codebook on website



Full-Year Population or Consolidated File

- MEPS releases two versions of Full-Year file
 - 2nd version (consolidated) contains expenditure & income data not available at time of first release (population)
 - EMPL variables on both versions; values do not change
- Records at person-level (DUPERSID identifier)

- There have been additions & deletions of variables since the first file release of 1996 data; all references here pertain to 2002 data.
- EMPL variables pertain to specific rounds, such as 3/1. For the 2002 file,
 - “3” refers to Panel 6/Round 3 (panel begun in 2001)
 - “1” refers to Panel 7/Round 1 (panel begun in 2002)
 - Same pattern holds for 4/2 & 5/3



Employment Status Variable

- EMPST3/1; EMPST4/2; EMPST5/3 are round level
- Four mutually exclusive positive values
 - 1 'Employed at Round Interview Date'
 - 2 'Job to Return to at Round Interview Date'
 - 3 'Job During Round Reference Period'
 - 4 'Not Employed During Round'
- Current Main Job (CMJ) = 1 or 2
- Most EMPL variables pertain to the Current Main Job

- The file contains indicators as to whether a person holds multiple jobs and ever retired from a job.
- Current Main Job data pertain to the interview date.



Variables Describing CMJ

- Hourly wages (HRWG##X)
- Hours per week (HOUR##)
- Temporary (TEMPJB##) & Seasonal (SSNLJB##) status
- Industry (INDCAT##) & Occupation (OCCCAT##)
 - Classification codes changed in 2002; not comparable with 1996-01
- Number of employees (NUMEMP##) & locations (MORE##)
- Union Status (UNION##)
- Start Date (STJBMM##;STJBYY##; STJBDD##)
- Establishment type (JOBORG##)

The use of '##' indicates that the variable is available for rounds 3/1, 4/2 and 5/3.



Employment Source

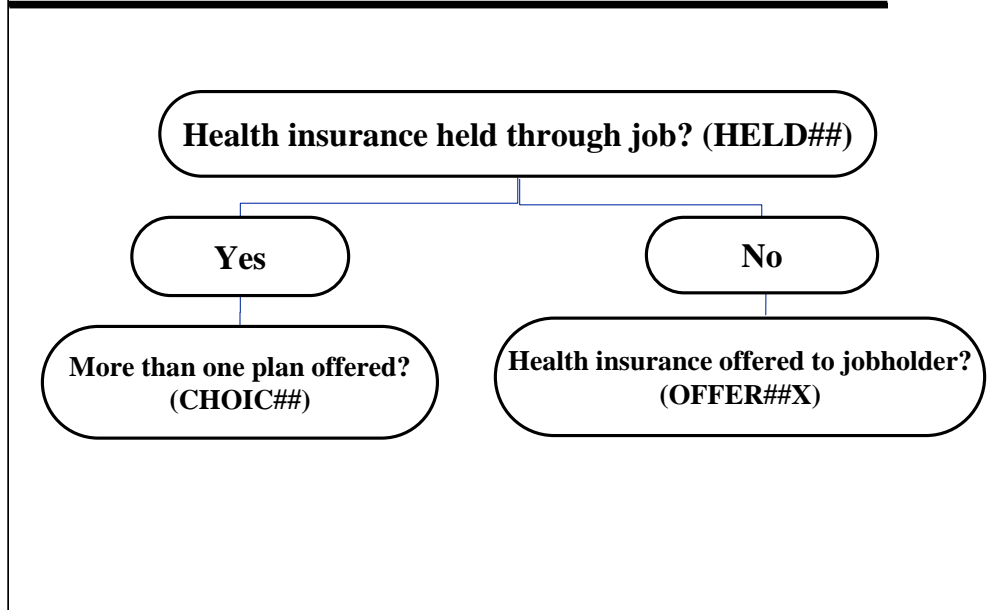
- Self-employed or not? (SELFCM##)
- Some variables not available for self-employed workers
 - PAYDR##; RETPLN##;
HRWG##X; MORE##
- Business organization (BSNTY##) only determined for self-employed

Data not available for the self-employed include:

- Leave
- Pension
- Hourly Earnings
- Multiple locations
- Establishment Type



Health Insurance Coverage



Additional data can be found in separate MEPS Health Insurance module (which follows EMPL in collection).



Health Insurance (con't)

Health insurance offered to jobholder? (OFFER##X)

Yes

No

Offered to other employees? (OFREMP##)

No

Yes

Why jobholder not eligible? (YNOINS##)



Data Updates

- Report complete data on CMJ in first round on file
- If same job continues in later rounds, limited variables updated
 - e.g., Wages

Updated variables are:

- EMPST##;
- HRWG##X;
- TEMPJB##;
- SSLJJB##;
- DISVW##;
- HELD##X;
- OFFER##X;
- OFREM##;
- YNOINS##



Data Values

- -10: HRWG## and NUMEMP## topcoded to maintain confidentiality
- If question not asked in update of continuing job, variable coded as '**-2 = Determined in previous round**'
- Must go back on file to round first reported to get data

However, on the 2002 file, for example, Panel 6/Round 3 data for CMJs first reported in Round 1 or Round 2 are included on the file for ease of us. It is not necessary to go back to the 2001 file to get the information.



Example of '-2' Value

- In Panel 7/Round 1, “Does person receive paid sick leave for doctor’s visits at CMJ?” (PAYDR##)
- Allowable responses: yes; no; refused; don’t know
- In Rounds 2 & 3, if CMJ continues, then PAYDR## = -2



JOBS File

- Each JOBS file covers one calendar year
- All jobs, not just Current Main Job, included on file
- No editing done to JOBS variables
- No weights on file

- People with no job data (less than age 16 or never worked) are not on this file.
- Any inconsistencies reflect what was reported by the respondent.
- Users need to link to file with person-level weights to compute estimates.
- Review the file documentation for more information.



JOBS records

- **Records are at person/job/round level**
 - **If same job continues for more than one round, a separate record for each round will be on file**
 - **Person reporting multiple jobs in round will have multiple records for that round on file**

If a person has the same Current Main Job for an entire year, then there are three records (one per round) on the file for that job for that person. If a person has a Current Main Job and a Current Miscellaneous Job in a round, there are two records on the file for that round for that person.



JOB SUBTYPE variable

- **SUBTYPE indicates job type identified during collection**
 - 1 = Current Main Job
 - 2 = Current Miscellaneous Job
 - 3 = Former Main Job
 - 4 = Former Miscellaneous Job
 - 5 = Last Job
 - 6 = Retirement Job

- If job SUBTYPE is 3 through 6 in a round, then that job will not be on the file after that round.
- RETIRJOB is a flag variable indicating a retirement job. Not all retirement jobs have SUBTYPE=6.



JOBSIDX Variable

- JOBSIDX (e.g., 00002025501) is unique identifier for each record
 - Person identifier (DUID & PID): 00002025
 - Round (RN): 5
 - Job number (JOBSN): 01

The panel number must also be used to separate Panel 7/Round 3 from Panel 6/Round 3 (using 2002 as an example).



JOB SN Variable

- **JOB SN is assigned using 2-digit counter**
 - If job continues for more than one round in year, JOB SN for that job stays the same in each round
 - If new job introduced in round, then its JOB SN set to one greater than highest JOB SN for a job in round

If the highest continuing JOB SN value is '02' for a person/round, then the next new job in the round for that person will have JOB SN=03.



Multiple Jobs with same JOBSN

- Two different jobs can have the same JOBSN in different rounds
- Does not happen often

Round 1: Current Main Job (01) plus Former Main Job (02)

Round 2: same Current Main Job (01)

Round 3: same Current Main Job (01), plus new Current Miscellaneous Job (02, but not the same job as previous 02)



An Example of Records for a Person Changing Jobs

- **At Round 1 interview: Holds one bookkeeper job**
 - **Round 1 record:**
 - **Current Main Job (JOBSN=01 & SUBTYPE=1)**
- **At Round 2 interview: Resigned from bookkeeper job reported in Round 1; took new accountant job**
 - **Round 2 records:**
 - **Round 1 bookkeeper job becomes Former Main Job (still JOBSN=01, but now SUBTYPE=3)**
 - **New accountant job is Current Main Job (JOBSN=02 & SUBTYPE=1)**
- **At Round 3 interview: Round 2 accountant job still main job; took second job as tutor on weekends**
 - **Round 3 records:**
 - **Accountant Current Main Job continues (still JOBSN=02 & SUBTYPE=1)**
 - **Tutoring job is Current Miscellaneous Job (JOBSN=03 & SUBTYPE=2)**
 - **Bookkeeper Job (JOBSN=01) from Round 1 & 2 has no Round 3 record**



Continuing Jobs

- STILLAT (Main) and STILLWRK (Misc.) indicate if job continues from prior round
- If STILLAT or STILLWRK job, many variables coded as -1 (inapplicable)
 - Look back to previous round's data if -1

- Only Current Main and Miscellaneous jobs are included for rounds after they are first reported.
- There are minimal data updates for continuing jobs.
- Exceptions to the '-1' rule are noted in the file documentation.
- In '-1' situations, using the 2002 JOBS file as an example, if a Panel 6 job was first reported in Round 1 or 2, then users will need to go back to 2001 JOBS file for data on that job.



Earnings Data

- Data on file reflect variety of ways that people are paid
- Earnings variables include gross salary, bonuses, tips, etc.

Earnings data are not collected for all jobs (e.g., retirement job).
Earnings variables include:

- BONSAMT (bonuses)
- COMMAMT (commissions)
- GROSSPAY (gross salary)
- TIPSAMT (tips)
- WKLYAMT (usual gross weekly)
- HRLYWAGE (per hour rate)
- DAYWAGE (daily wage rate)
- MAKEAMT (other types)
- OTHRWAGE (overtime rate)



Earnings Data (con't)

- Earnings variable types
 - Does job pay bonus? (EARNBONS)
 - Bonus amount (BONSAMT)
 - What time period does the bonus cover (monthly, annual, etc.)? (BONSUNIT)
- Job may have more than type of earnings associated with it
 - Hourly wage plus tips
 - Annual salary plus commission

Remember that earnings are job-specific. To get total earnings, sum them for all jobs held.



Health Insurance Variables

- Health insurance coverage collected for each job type in initial round reported
- EMPLINS & JOBHASHI indicate health insurance coverage through job
- For continuing jobs, if did NOT get health insurance in prior reporting round, then updated in later rounds

NOWTAKE1 & OFFTAKE1 only pertain to update rounds.



Initial v. Update

- Variables differ for health insurance depending on whether based on initial round job reported or update round

Initial	Update	Description
OFFRDINS	ESTBTHRU	Offered, if didn't take
ANYINS	INSESTB	Offered to any employees
ELIGINSR	NELIGINS	Reason not eligible



Other Variables

- Contain same data as on Full-Year file for Current Main Job, but names different
- Some pertain only to self-employed; some only if working for someone else
- -10 value: Earnings and “Number of employees” variables topcoded for confidentiality

Other job characteristics variables include:

- Paid sick leave for doctor’s visits (PAYDRVST)
- Paid vacation (PAYVACTN)
- Union status (INUNION)
- Occupation (OCCCODEX) & industry (INDCODEX)
- Full-time or part-time (WORKSTAT)

TOTLEMP is the establishment size variable the self-employed.
NUMEMPS is the establishment size variable for those working for someone else.