

# National Compensation Survey: A Guide for Respondents

## What is the National Compensation Survey (NCS)?

NCS is a survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) designed to produce data on employer-provided wages and benefits for America's workforce.

## NCS produces data on the following:

- Wage levels
- Rates of change in wages and benefit costs
- Employer costs for benefits
- Relative pay levels among metropolitan areas
- Availability of benefits
- Detailed benefit provisions

## How was my establishment selected for NCS?

A sample of 152 areas throughout the United States is selected to represent the entire nonfarm economy. The list of establishments from which a sample is randomly chosen is from State unemployment insurance records. The sample represents all industries and all establishments in your local area.

## How are data collected?

The initial collection is usually by personal visit. Subsequent collections are usually conducted by mail, telephone, or fax and require only minutes of your time.

## What information will BLS request from my establishment?

A BLS economist will discuss the process of collection with you. The following are helpful in the collection process:

- A list of all employees (payroll or phone listings)
- Job titles for all employees
- Most recent payroll data (wages, hours, job codes, and dates of hire)
- Union contracts
- Employee handbooks or benefit descriptions
- Summary plan descriptions for health and retirement plans
- Benefit costs summaries or insurance bills

For a detailed listing of information that BLS economists typically request, please visit the National Compensation Survey Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/collection.htm>.

## Will my establishment's data be shared with the public?

No. Any data you supply will be held in confidence and used for aggregate statistical purposes only.

## Can I provide data electronically?

Yes. BLS encourages you to provide data in electronic format. Data can be accepted in a variety of different formats.

Your BLS representative will tell you more.

## Can I access data online?

Yes. Published and modeled estimates are available at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/home.htm>. Select from among the most requested statistics or create customized tables from BLS databases. By clicking a few buttons, users can obtain wage data in seconds.

BLS hopes you will find the published results of use in developing your establishment's compensation and benefits practices. If you have further questions, contact the closest BLS information office (listed on the back of this brochure).

