

# American Community Survey

## Population: Questions on Labor Force Status

Questions as they appear in the questionnaire.

**29** a. **LAST WEEK, did this person work for pay at a job (or business)?**

Yes → *SKIP to question 30*

No – Did not work (or retired)

b. **LAST WEEK, did this person do ANY work for pay, even for as little as one hour?**

Yes

No → *SKIP to question 35a*

**35** a. **LAST WEEK, was this person on layoff from a job?**

Yes → *SKIP to question 35c*

No

b. **LAST WEEK, was this person TEMPORARILY absent from a job or business?**

Yes, on vacation, temporary illness, maternity leave, other family/personal reasons, bad weather, etc. → *SKIP to question 38*

No → *SKIP to question 36*

c. **Has this person been informed that he or she will be recalled to work within the next 6 months OR been given a date to return to work?**

Yes → *SKIP to question 37*

No

**36** **During the LAST 4 WEEKS, has this person been ACTIVELY looking for work?**

Yes

No → *SKIP to question 38*

**37** **LAST WEEK, could this person have started a job if offered one, or returned to work if recalled?**

Yes, could have gone to work

No, because of own temporary illness

No, because of all other reasons (in school, etc.)

**38** **When did this person last work, even for a few days?**

Within the past 12 months

1 to 5 years ago → *SKIP to L*

Over 5 years ago or never worked → *SKIP to question 47*

Source: ACS-1(2009)KFI

## MEETING FEDERAL NEEDS

Labor force status is key to understanding work and unemployment patterns and the availability of workers. Based on labor market areas and unemployment levels, the U.S. Department of Labor identifies service delivery areas and determines amounts to be allocated to each for job training. The impact of immigration on the economy and job markets is determined partially by labor force data, and this information is included in required reports to Congress. The Office of Management and Budget, under the Paperwork Reduction Act, uses data about employed workers as part of the criteria for defining metropolitan areas. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses this information, in conjunction with other data, to develop its state per capita income estimates used in the allocation formulas and eligibility criteria of many federal programs such as Medicaid.

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### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

#### Employment

For local areas with substantial unemployment, labor force data are used to allocate funds and identify programs that create new jobs.

Data are used to target state and local areas with a labor force surplus

for programs that promote business opportunities.

Within the U.S. Department of Labor, data about the labor force are needed to evaluate job complaints reported on the basis of disability.

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