

**NWX-US DEPT OF COMMERCE**

**March 10, 2022**

**2:00 pm ET**

Operator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. All lines are in a listen-only mode until the question-and-answer sessions. At that time, please press Star 1 and record your name as prompted. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn today's meeting over to Michael Cook. Thank you. You may begin.

Michael Cook: Good afternoon. I'm Michael Cook, Chief of the Public Information Office at the US Census Bureau. Thank you for joining us for today's webinar.

Today we'll be giving you a preview of what to expect for the 2016-2020 American Community Survey, five-year estimates data released next week. As you may know, the American Community Survey is an important source of information providing key social, economic, housing and demographic data about the United States population.

Quick note off the top, if you'd like to ask a question today, you need to dial in to the phone line at 1-888-606-9802 and use the passcode that you see on your screen. We'll have two rounds of question-and-answer sessions over the phone.

In addition, subject matter experts will also be answering questions by chat. Send your questions through the Q&A panel on the right corner of your screen. You may need to activate the Q&A by clicking on the Q&A icon.

Our presenters today are; Donna Daily, Chief of the American Community Survey Office, Gretchen Gooding, Branch Chief in the American Community Survey Office, and Tyson Weister, Survey Statistician in the Center for Enterprise Dissemination.

During the presentation be sure to keep an eye on the chat box. We'll be dropping links for the ACS release throughout the webinar. We'll have the first round of Q&A after Gretchen Gooding's presentation.

Then a second round after Tyson Weister's demonstration of [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) where the data will be posted when it's released.

Without further delay. I'll turn it over to Donna Daily. Donna?

Donna Daily: Thank you, Michael. Thank you, Michael. So I'd like to welcome everybody to the 2016 - 2020 ACS Five-Year Pre-release Webinar today. While the COVID19 pandemic presented us with data collection challenges during 2020 the Census Bureau remained committed to producing high quality data.

And we delayed the five-year data release from December 2021 to next week, March 2022. I'd like to thank everyone for their patience. We used the additional time to refine our methodology to reduce the impact of the non-response bias in data collected during 2020.

You'll hear more about the methodology during the webinar. After evaluating the effectiveness of this methodology, we have determined the resulting data are fit for public release, government and business uses and understanding the social and economic characteristics of the US population and economy.

And I, again, want to thank you for attending today. And with that, I will hand it over to Gretchen Gooding to begin the webinar.

Gretchen Gooding: Thank you, Donna. I want to quickly outline what we'll be covering today. First, I'll cover next week's American Community Survey Data Release and our upcoming releases later this month. I'll also cover changes for this release.

I'll walk through various tools used to access our products and where in our website you can find much of the information covered in today's webinar. After a question-and-answer session, Tyson will demonstrate how to access zip code tabulation area data, or ZCTAs, in our data dissemination tool [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

We'll have one more question-and-answer session then wrap up today's webinar. Next Tuesday, the 2016-2020 ACS five-year data will be available for early access embargo ahead of the public release next Thursday.

These estimates cover the 2016 through 2020 time period for all geographic areas, regardless of population size. Our media embargo will be available on Tuesday, March 15 at 10:00 am Eastern Daylight Time. All products on [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) will be available through our embargo site.

Please visit the press kit link available on this slide to five - find the five-year data products available for media. Our public release will be Thursday, March

17 at 12:01 am Eastern Daylight Time. This will include all the five-year products such as the comparison profiles, subject tables and visualization.

Also included on the 17th will be our narrative profiles that are available through the ACS website. Existing tools like the API, Quick Facts and My Tribal Area will be updated with the new five-year data.

While the focus right now is on our five-year release I want to take the opportunity to promote several products that will be coming up soon that are also part of the state of release season. The 2016 through 2020 ACS five-year public use microdata sample, or PUM, and variants replicate estimate tables will be available on Thursday, March 31.

The ACS PUM files are a set of untabulated records about individual people or housing units. PUMs data are made available to data users at the nation, region, state and public use microdata area, also known as PUMA. PUMAs or non-overlapping geography, which contain at least 100,000 people.

These files allow data users to create custom tables that are not available through pre-tabulated ACS data products. PUMs data can be found on the Census Bureau's FTP server or through the microdata tool that's available on [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

Finally, the variance replicate estimate tables allow data users to calculate margins of error, which include the covariance term when combining ACS estimates within a table or between geographies. They can be found on ACS website. Before we dive into information on the release coming next week, I want to first go over some basics about the ACS.

The American Community Survey is the nation's most current, reliable and accessible data source for local statistics and critical planning topics such as age, children, veterans, commuting, education, income and employment.

The ACS samples approximately 3.5 million addresses each year. These data are collected continuously throughout the year to produce annual social, economic, housing and demographic estimates. The data collected through the ACS are used to inform the distribution of more than \$675 billion dollars of federal government spending each year.

The ACS is designed to produce critical information on small areas and small population groups previously collected once every ten years as part of the decennial census long form. With the introduction of the ACS, communities and businesses received more current data.

And the census questionnaire sent to all residents over the ten years has been significantly shortened. Our estimates covering more than 40 topics support more than 300 known federal uses and countless non-federal uses.

Businesses and communities use these 11 billion estimates each year to make vital decisions, including where to locate hospitals and schools, what transportation needs exist and what goods and services businesses should provide to customers.

The ACS typically releases three different sets of - so sorry, the Census Bureau typically releases three different sets of ACS data estimates each year in the form of one-year and five-year period data sets, as well as one-year supplemental estimates.

The content collected by the American Community Survey can be grouped into four main types of characteristics; social, demographic, economic and housing. Let's take a closer look at the type of information each of these categories contain.

Social characteristics includes topics such as disability status, education and language spoken at home. The ACS also collects basic demographic characteristics such as sex, age, race and Hispanic origin. Economic characteristics include topics such as commuting to work, employment status and income.

Housing characteristics include computer and internet use, housing costs and vehicles available. These topics are used to produce more than 1000 tables for local communities each year. And they power countless news stories each day. We want to send a special thanks to our media partners for powering their stories with ACS data.

In addition to the 40 plus topics covered on the ACS, another strength of the survey is the number of geographies available from the national level all the way to your local community. Our survey provides data from more geographies on an annual basis than any other household survey.

The five-year data release includes more than 620,000 geographic areas. And these geographic areas go even as granular as the census tract and block group levels. And there are 87 different summary levels available for this release.

Unlike the one-year release, geography's in the five-year release do not have a particular population threshold in order to be published. Now let's cover some guidance specifically for the five-year estimate.

First, it's important to understand the concept of a period estimate because all ACS estimates are in fact period estimates. Period estimates describe the characteristics of an area over a specific period of time, not a single point in time, like the decennial census. In the case of ACS one-year estimates the period is 12 months.

The estimates in the five-year release are pulled together across 60 months to create five-year data. Five-year estimates are not an average of the one-year ACS estimates. The release of the five-year data next week will describe the population and housing characteristics from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2020.

After the data are pulled together, they are updated with the geographic boundaries of the last year of the period, in our case 2020, and then assigns the appropriate weight to produce population and housing estimates.

Weights are adjusted using the population and housing control - sorry, housing totals controlled for age, sex, race and Hispanic origin. Which are derived from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates program.

Also, income in dollar estimates are then adjusted for inflation based on the most recent year of the period. The latest five-year estimates are adjusted just \$1 to \$20. We have a blog all about period estimates in the ACS that was just released today. The link is on the slide.

Now a question you may be asking is when should I use five-year estimates? You'll want to use five-year estimates when no one-year or one-year supplemental estimate is available.

Remember one-year estimates cover geographic areas with a population greater than or equal to 65,000. Or there's a supplemental table available for those populations with 20,000 or more. But if the geography you are seeking does not meet these population thresholds, you'll have to rely on the five-year estimates.

Because we did not release standard ACS one-year estimates in 2020, if you use our one-year estimates each year, you'll want to pay special attention to the differences between our one-year and five-year estimates before making the decision whether to use the ACS five-year estimates.

There are differences and those we'll cover on the next slide. We do not recommend comparing one-year estimates to five-year estimates. Another instance where you want to use five-year estimates is when the margin of error for the annual estimates are larger than desired.

A margin of error is the measure of sampling variability that is presented along with all ACS estimates. For example, five-year estimates are helpful when analyzing small population groups because of the higher margins of error associated with them.

Also, if you're comparing several geographies where one or more of the geographies do not receive one-year estimates due to the population size being too small you'll have to use their five-year estimate to compare those geographies.

If you're interested in comparing five-year data, we encourage you to make comparisons only with non-overlapping data. This year, you can compare the 2016 to 2020 five-year data with the 2011 to 2015 five-year data.



These non-overlapping data sets allow a comparison of unique data. So only compare estimates of the same data set. For example, compare one-year with one-year and five-year with five-year non-overlapping data.

Please do not compare one-year estimates with five-year estimates. Five-year estimates are helpful when comparing across geographies because all geographies are represented in the five-year estimates. As opposed to a one-year where there's a population threshold of at least 65,000.

For example, all homes are available in the five-year, regardless of population size. This cannot be said for the one-year. Similarly, five-year estimates are also great for making comparisons across subpopulations like ancestry and language groups. One more note, when making comparisons, percent estimates are often more reliable than count estimates they are based on.

When a population estimate program estimate is available, such as the total population or number of females in a county, this estimate is the official value and is preferred. However, ACS count estimates may always be compared if the need of the data user requires it.

Specific guidance on comparing the 2011 to 2015 and 2016 to 2020 ACS five-year estimates will be available on March 17 at the URL you see on this slide. So we've wrapped up the basics of the American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Now let's talk about what's been updated for this year's five-year release, starting with the impact of data collection challenges. When the pandemic hit, we had to temporarily stop many of our operations in order to comply with national, state and local health guidelines and to protect our staff and ACS survey respondents.

This impacted the ACS data collection operation in 2020, which ultimately impacted ACS' data quality in 2020. Due to the limitation of the NR data collection during the pandemic we were unable to collect information from certain segments of the population.

The people who did respond to our survey had significantly different social, economic and housing characteristics from those who didn't, resulting in non-response bias in the data. For example, people who responded to the 2020 ACS had higher income, higher education and were more likely to own their own home.

While all surveys have non-response bias, our standard methods for mitigating the non-response bias were insufficient for the 2020 ACS data year.

We released a report on October 27, which described how the pandemic disrupted ACS data collection in 2020 and gives data users insight into why the Census Bureau decided to release the 2020 ACS one-year estimates as an experimental product.

Given the presence of the increased non-response bias in the 2020 data, we delayed our five-year release in order to refine our methodology. The ACS five-year housing unit weighting was modified to enhance our ability to mitigate the non-response bias present in the ACS data collected in 2020.

We incorporated entropy balance weighting, or EBW, into our standard production methodology. Entropy balance - balancing uses additional information such as the decennial census, administrative, and third party data to adjust the survey weight to make the data more representative of the entire population.

Our goal was to leverage the EBW to reduce the bias in the 2020 portion of the five-year data to keep our standard methodology as intact as possible to support producing estimates for all of our standard five-year geographies.

We partially processed the data from 2016 to 2019 using our standard methodology before combining those data with the data produced using the EBW methodology. Once the data from 2016 to 2020 were pooled together, we applied population and housing unit control totals.

If you're interested in more details, there's more information in the technical working paper and accuracy of the data document, both referenced at the bottom of the slide.

Turning to geography and population control. The ACS typically publishes estimates using the latest available geographic boundaries, also known as vintages. Many geographic areas, such as tracts and block groups, will use 2020 census boundaries.

There are some exceptions, with geographies referencing 2010 census boundaries. We're planning to up - publish updated boundaries for zip code tabulation areas, or ZCTAs, with the 2021 ACS release. And updated boundaries for the public use microdata areas, or PUMAs, and urban rural definition with the 2022 ACS release. This is the same schedule we followed after the 2010 Census.

Switching to population controls, the 2016 to 2020 ACS five-year estimates will use the Vintage 2020 postcensal estimates.

The Vintage 2020 estimates are based on the 2010 Census and were created without incorporation or consideration of the 2020 Census results.

Before we discuss specific tables data users should know there were multiple improvements made to the question design, processing and coding for the Hispanic origin question and the race question.

Please refer to the user notes entitled Improvements to the Hispanic Origin Question and Improvements to the Race Question to learn more information and full details. They'll be available on March 17.

Several significant changes were made to the 2020 ACS questions on race and ethnicity. We also improved the ways we process the data and how we code responses to these questions.

The improvements and changes enable a more thorough and accurate depiction of how people self-identify using a more accurate portrait of how people report their Hispanic origin and race within the context of a two-question format.

The changes implemented in the 2020 ACS are the same as those implemented in the 2020 Census. So the Hispanic origin question, we updated the instructions and the example groups provided in order to represent the largest Hispanic origin population groups and the geographic diversity of Hispanic and Latino categories.

We also made several design improvements to the race question for the 2020 ACS. In response to community feedback over the past decade we added dedicated write-in response areas and examples for the White and Black or African-American racial categories.

We provided six example groups for each of the white, black or African American and American Indian or Alaska Native racial categories. These examples represent the largest population groups within each of the geographically diverse population groups of each race category, as defined by the 1997 OMB Standard.

We made updates to the detailed Asians and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander check boxes by reordering the check boxes by population size and updating “Guamanian and Chamorro” to “Chamorro.” We also made updates to the instructions for “Some Other Race category.

Given these changes for this release, let's talk about some of the guidance for using these estimates.

Data users should use caution when comparing the 2016 to 2-20 ACS five-year estimates with other ACS data or 2020 Census data. If you plan to make comparisons, we encourage you to compare five-year estimates to five-year estimates and to make comparisons only with non-overlapping data.

In this case, you'd want to compare 2016 to 2020 five-year estimates with the 2011 to 2015 five-year estimates. Given the data collection challenges we encountered in 2020 the ACS collected only two-thirds of the number of responses it usually collects in a survey year.

This reduced the number of interviews in the 2020 portion of the 2016 to 2020 five-year estimates caused an increase in the margin of error by approximately 15% to 20% in relative terms.

Data users should take the margins of error into account when making comparisons, especially for smaller geographies or populations. And use caution when using estimates with high margins of error.

There are several challenges when making comparisons with the 2016 to 2020 ACS five-year estimates including changes to the weighting methodology implemented to address the non-response bias issues in the 2020 data, actual changes within the population and our ability to capture those changes, the tendency of multi-year estimates to smooth out sudden changes and the fact that the ACS population controls were not informed by 2020 Census results.

And therefore you may notice differences between the ACS estimates and 2020 Census totals. Now let's transition to discussing specific table changes.

This year we have four new detailed tables covering industry and computer and internet. Tables B24134, 135 and 136 provide estimates for detailed industry for the civilian employed population 16 years and over. These estimates are known for - are shown for the total population for males and for females, respectively. Detailed Table B28012 provides estimates of computer ownership and internet subscription for household population.

For the population aged three and over it further breaks down individuals by enrollment status and grade enrolled. If you're interested in the information provided in each of these tables please use the address below to access the shells for these tables.

We also have modifications to tables for a variety of topics; revised race and Hispanic origin codes were used to create categories for race and Hispanic origin detailed tables, detailed tables for all other topics that were iterated by race and Hispanic origin, Comparison Profile 05 and Data Profile 05.

The full list of tables is too numerous to show, but a description of the tables is shown here for illustrative purposes.

Other topics also had modifications to their tables. The row labeled Universe and Estimates for Line 2 of Table F2302 were changed from Married Couple Families to Opposite Sex, Married Couple, Families.

The Nativity of Parents Tabulation was corrected to include same sex spouse for Table B05009 and B05010.

Total mover rate was added to Forward Journeys, Work and Migration table. And changes were made to multiple lines in the B25081 to allow those without a mortgage to have a home equity loan.

A row was also added for housing units with only a home equity loan. Multiple updates were made to row labels and estimates for F2506 to better account for those without a mortgage to have a home equity loan.

A row was added for home equity loan only without a primary mortgage. The topics listed here also had modifications to tables such as updates to a few categories or row labels for the complete list of changes see the link at the bottom of this slide.

Let's move into what data products are available for next week's release and how to access the new 2016 to 2020 five-year data. Before we specifically dive into how to access the data, let's first go over the data products that will be made available for the five-year release.

On the slide the number in parentheses next to the product's name is the number of products available in this release. Data products show both estimates and percentages for a particular geography on a variety of topics in one table.

There are four profiles for social, economic, housing and demographic characteristics. There's also a selected social characteristic profile, Puerto Rico.

Comparison profiles which are identical to data profiles, but also comparisons of data profile estimates across different ACS years providing side-by-side data from two different five-year periods. For example, comparing 2016 to 2020 and 2011 to 2015.

This product allows you to compare estimates over time. Subject tables all select profiles, but these tables include more detailed ACS data classified by topic. So these tables are topic specific.

Detailed tables contain estimates and margins of error only organized by topic and are the most detailed tables in the product package. All the products I covered will be made available through [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

Other products, such as the narrative profile, can be found on the ACS website and will be made available on Thursday, March 17. Also, March 17 data tools like the API, Quick Facts and My Tribal Area will contain the 2016 to 2020 ACS five-year data.

The Census Business Builder tool will also be refreshed with this five-year ACS data in late May. [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) is the primary platform to access data



from the Census Bureau and includes data for next week's release.

Data.census.gov will contain most of the data products and data you seek.

Later in today's webinar, Tyson Weister will demonstrate how to access the five-year data using data.census.gov. As well as show you how to find more granular level geographies such as the zip code tabulation areas available in the five-year data.

You can also visit the link on the bottom of this slide to find resources on data.census.gov such as FAQs, how-to materials, video tutorials and more. The web page is a great resource for learning how to use data.census.gov and other tools associated with it, like the Microdata Access Tool.

A few slides ago I mentioned the narrative profile. I want to point out that this product will be available on release day. But the difference is narrative profiles are not made available on data.census.gov. However, these profiles are made available on the ACS website.

To provide some context the five-year narrative profile is one of our more popular products, and it is a pre-generated report that describes the geographic area by providing text and graphics for roughly 15 different ACS topics.

If wanted, users can choose to produce a report on all 15 topics or simply a subset of topics for their selected geography. Narrative profiles help novice users interpret the data they find.

On this slide are some example topics of what can be found in the profile. But you may notice these images have 2015 to 2019 data. But on Thursday, March 17, the narrative profiles will be updated to the 2016 to 2020 five-year data.

I mentioned the five-year summary file is available next week during our embargo period. If you try to access it during the embargo period, which is for approved media only, you'll need to access it through the press kit link that was provided at the beginning of this presentation.

However, the summary file is a tool that's available to all users on the official release date of March 17. The summary file is a set of comma-delimited text files that contain all of the Detailed Tables for the five-year release. The summary file contains estimates, margins of error, and geography files for each release. The detailed tables are stored in a series of files called sequences, with only the data from the tables, and without such information as the title, description of roads, or geographic identifiers. That information is located in the other files user must merge with the data file in order to reproduce full tables.

This is the last release of the current summary file format. Starting with the 2021 ECS only the new format will be used. Instead of splitting the files by state in sequence number, the new format will be by table ID. We'll post a file for each table containing the estimates and margins of error for all available geographies. This will reduce the complexity of the summary file from over a 140,000 files to about 1000 files.

You can access the data in both the current and new format, as well as the supporting documentation for the summary file, by visiting our website at the link provided on the slide. There's also more information available about the new format. Another tool available to access ACS data is the API, or the Application Programming Interface. This is a tool that presents data in a standardized way and by standardizing API query language across multiple datasets, the learning curve for developers is reduced.

Researchers and developers from both inside and outside the census, use the API because of its simple format and use the API to access Census Bureau data within their programs and applications. Within the API you can select any variable and multiple datasets and place them in raw format or the format of your choice. The API includes many Census Bureau data sets, including ACS one year and five year data sets, as well as migration flows and supplemental data.

I'm showing a visualization created from the API - what can you learn about counties from the American Community Survey? This will be updated with the latest five year data and available on release day. To learn more about the API, you can view our webinar on the ACS website, and it can be found at the bottom of the slide.

Earlier, I mentioned several of our data tools that will also be updated with the 2016-2020 ACS five year data. Quick facts in My Tribal Area, are scheduled to be updated on Thursday, March 17th.

Quick Facts is a quick and easy to use application that shows tables, maps, and charts of our most frequently requested information for more than ten census surveys and programs. Quick Facts provides data for geographic areas with a population of 5000 or more. My Tribal Area has a similar look and feel of My Congressional District, for those of you who use that tool. But My Tribal Area gives five year ACS characteristic estimates for tribal areas across the U.S.

So if you're looking for data on areas such as tribal reservations, trust lands, this is a good tool to use to find this information quickly. Also, in late May, we'll have the 2016 to 2020 ACS data loaded into Census Business Builder. Census Business Builder is a mapping tool geared towards users needing data

to help start or grow a business, or to better understand an area of regional landscape. There are two editions - the Small Business Edition, as well as the Regional Analyst Edition.

Now that we've discussed the products for this release and where you can find them, I'd also like to show you where you can find some helpful documentation about the ACS. The best place to find information on the ACS is from the ACS website at [Census.gov/ACS](https://www.census.gov/ACS). The tab at the left of the home page helps guide you through the many different sections of this website, including data, guidance for data users, news and updates, technical documentation, and more.

Speaking of the ACS website, I want to take a moment to highlight a few useful pages for this data release. The data release's section under News and Updates, provides a variety of information specific for this release, all in one place, such as the release schedule table changes we covered a bit earlier. We also point out what's new and notable for each release, in this section as well.

Another notable section of our website is the section containing our handbook. The handbooks are provided in PDF format and are downloadable. Each handbook is directed toward a specific audience and contains how-to instructions for using data in different ways or for different reasons. Each handbook also contains case studies showing actual instances of how ACS data was used by a specified audience of the handbook.

We also have a number of training presentations. Each presentation contains a video of the training along with a copy of the PowerPoint slides and a transcript of the presentation. The training presentations are a great way to train yourself or others, on specific topics as they relate to the American

Community Survey. Our training presentations cover a variety of topics - introduction to the ACS, using the ACS PUMS and more.

Next, this is our technical documentation page. In the left NAV bar there's a list of important documents that will help you better understand the ACS data, including code lists, definitions, and accuracy. This page contains detailed codes and definitions for variables, statistical testing, and an explanation of sample design, methodology and accuracy. Table and geography changes - this page covers changes to tables and geographies, for each data release.

Table cells and table lists - use a layout of the ACS tables without estimates or margins that are filled in, as well as the list containing information about each table, such as its table ID, titles, and universes. Now since ACS questions and content do change over time. If you are interested in making comparisons, please refer to the comparison guidance documentation on the ACS website.

Comparisons over time become tricky because of questionnaire changes and different universe definitions. When trying to make comparisons it's important to reference this page first to make sure the data you're interested in, should be compared. This page will be updated with the latest five year to five year comparison guidance by topic, on March 17th.

On that note, when you're using the ACS data and making comparisons between years or between geographies, we always want you to make certain the estimates are statistically different from each other. With that said, we provide a statistical testing tool to help you out. This tool can be found under the Guidance for the Data User section, then by selecting statistical testing tool on the left navigation. For the media, a link to this tool is also available in your press kit. Now I'll turn it over to Michael for the first round of questions.

Michael Cook: Thanks, Gretchen. We'd like to start taking questions now, from media, then open it up to stakeholders and census partners. As a reminder, you must call the phone number displayed on the slide on your screen. You can only ask a question if you dial into our phone line. Before asking your question please state your name and either your news outlet or organization. We want to fit in as many questions as possible, so please only ask one question with one follow up. Operator, I'll now hand it over to you for additional instructions.

Operator: Thank you. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you'd like to ask a question or make a comment from the phone, please press star 1, make sure your phone is unmuted, and record your name and organization. And to withdraw that request, you may press star 2. Once again, for questions or comments from the phones at this time, please press star 1 and record your information. And we are standing by for questions or comments.

Michael Cook: While we wait for our first question to queue up, a reminder to check out our press kit online. That's where you'll find a number of resources, including embargo access information and the latest blog about ACS. You'll also find slides from today's presentation, and eventually, a recording of today's webinar. I'd like to also welcome Mr. David Waddington, our Division Chief, for the Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division, to the Q&A session. Operator, do we have our first question?

Operator: And I'm currently showing no questions or comments from the phones at this time. Again, as a reminder, please press star 1, make sure your phone is unmuted, and record your name. To withdraw that request you may press star 2. Once again, for questions or comments at this time, please press star 1. One moment, please.

Michael Cook: And while we wait for questions, we invite you to stay in touch by telling us how you use data from the American Community Survey. For example, have you or your organization, used the ACS to make an important decision, help your community, or expand a business? Please visit the link at the bottom of this slide, to share your story and explore how data enthusiasts across the country, are using ACS data in creative ways. Operator, do we have our first question?

Operator: Yes. We do have a question or comment coming from Curt Watke. And please state your organization.

Curt Watke: IICM. My quick question is how does the population data in the five year ACS correlate or not correlate, with the upcoming release of the 2020 census?

Michael Cook: Hi, Curt. This is Michael Cook. Thanks for your question about the correlation between the ACS data and the upcoming 2020 census. Before I turn it over to (Donna Daily), I'll just reiterate our note that the ACS is a survey that's independent of the 2020 Census, which is a census account of every household and resident in the United States. Donna, do you have anything to add to that?

Donna Daily: I do not have anything to add to that, other than to ask Dave Waddington if he has any information to share about that.

David Waddington: Not a whole lot. I think we could go back to the slide that Gretchen had earlier, that talks about the population and population controls and what was used there. And that can explain more fully what exactly was used. So it's - again, as Michael said, these are independent of the census, but we use population controls in the weightings and estimation process.

Michael Cook: Thanks for that line of questioning. Thanks, Donna. And thanks, David, for that response. Caller, if you've got anymore questions I'd like to reiterate that you can always reach out to us at [PIO@Census.gov](mailto:PIO@Census.gov), and we'll walk you through any questions you might, or further questions you might have about the ACS and its relationship to the 2020 Census. But hopefully that answers your question.

Curt Watke: Thank you.

Michael Cook: Operator, do we have...

Operator: Yes?

Michael Cook: ...another caller?

Operator: Yes. Our next question or comment is from Kevin Tampone from Syracuse Standard. Your line is open.

Michael Cook: Hi, Kevin.

Kevin Tampone: Yes, hi. Thanks for taking my question. I'm trying to get a handle on whether you guys are aware of any particular challenges with this data set, when it comes to college students. I'm just asking, given, you know, COVID upheaval and disruptions to school years, whether you guys are aware of any specific issues accounting for college students in this release.

Michael Cook: And just to clarify, Kevin, you're referring to the American Community Survey, not the 2020 Census. Correct?

Kevin Tampone: Yes, right. No, the - yes, the ACS release that's upcoming. Yep.



Michael Cook: Okay. Thanks for that. I'll turn that over to Donna and also note that we have other subject matter experts that are on. Mark Asiala, our System Division Chief for Decennial Studies Division, might be able to address that as well. David? Mark? I mean Mark? Donna?

Mark Asiala: Hello. Mark Asiala. I am the Chief of the American Community Survey Statistical Design area. As you know, there - during a great deal of 2020, college students were not at the university. So what the ACS captures for the 2020 portion of the five year data really is the characteristics of those who we did find particularly in the late winter, early spring, before the pandemic started. And at those college institutions where college students were on campus in the fall.

So it's a little bit different. But since we are not enumerating the college students, you know, what we focused on was being able to capture those characteristics and then wait for the - account for the totals for college students based on our population estimates. It is worth noting that those population estimates were not adjusted for the pandemic effects on the college dorm population. So that will not be reflected within the ACS estimates.

Michael Cook: Thanks for that, Mark. Operator, do we have our next caller?

Operator: Thank you. Our next question comes from Michael Macagnone from CQ Roll Call. Your line is open.

Michael Cook: Hey, Michael.

Michael Macagnone: Hi, Michael. Long time no see, I guess. I was just hoping that somebody here could just walk through really fast how the tabulations for the 116th and

117th Congress are going to be handled in this data, because there was - basically it's a North Carolina question because there was new maps. And whether or not, you know, what data is going to be tabulated based on those new maps.

Michael Cook: Thanks for that line of questioning, Michael, about the 116th and 117th Congress and those tabulations using this data. For this line of questioning it looks like I'm going to turn it over to Donna Daily, I believe. Donna?

Donna Daily: Right. So I think that Mark, do you - I know that either Mark or Nate Walters, I know that we are working on some things for 116th and 117th Congress.

Michael Cook: Nate, could you unmute yourself, please?

Nathan Walters: Yes. There we go. The 2016 to 2020 release that we're discussing today that was used in the 116th District boundaries. We are still discussing how we'll address the use of 116th and cut over to the 118th in the release for data year 2021. So we'll have more information about that, shortly.

Michael Cook: Thanks for that. And Michael Macagnone, that was Nathan Walters, Assistant Division Chief from the American Community Survey office. Operator, do we have the next caller?

Operator: Thank you. We have one more question. This question comes from Jonah Winninghoff from the National Deaf Center. Your line is open.

Michael Cook: Hi, Jonah.

Jonah Winninghoff: Hi, Jonah. Or, sorry, hi, this is Jonah. I work at the National Deaf Center on post-secondary outcomes. And I wanted to know, specifically related to the

population group, is there any kind of non-response bias for - would the response rate for people with disabilities, especially deafness, was that higher or hearing difficulties, I'm sorry. Let me use the terminology we use - hearing difficulties. Was that response rate higher?

Michael Cook: Thanks for that line of questioning, Jonah, on response rates, specifically for people with hearing disabilities or non-response rate for them around the ACS five-year. And for that question it looks like I'll check to see who we have for SMEs on the line. I'll check to see who can address that. Donna?

Jonah Winninghoff: Just to clarify, it - just people with disabilities group as well, not just those with hearing difficulties.

Michael Cook: Okay. Got it.

Donna Daily: Okay. So (Hyon), do you have - do we have a subject matter expert on that topic, available to chat about that pre-release? Because this is all non-release data, so we really can't share a lot of details on - I mean...

((Crosstalk))

(Hyon): So if it's about response rates, I see that Mark Asiala is on the line. But as far as the different subgroups, and the data that we collected, obviously those data will not be released to the public until the embargo on Tuesday and to the public on Thursday.

Mark Asiala: Yes. And I was just going to add...

Jonah Winninghoff: I'm sorry. This is Jonah again. Will you please - I am deaf and I am using an interpreter. Will you please repeat that?

(Hyon): Absolutely. Apologies. I was saying that if the question was about response rates, Mark Asiala is on the panel and he will answer the questions. If it's a question about the population with disabilities, those data will be available with the embargo on Tuesday, March 15th, and with the public release on Thursday, March 17th.

Jonah Winninghoff: Okay. I think just directed for the response rate, my concern is about the non-response bias and how that might alter the population and the numbers and the percentages of the population. So do you know if that would be changing that at all, because I mean there was a great public impact with the pandemic in 2020? And so looking at the 2020 and 2015 data I'm just trying to figure out how to develop my analysis based on that. And that's why I'm asking about the response rate and the non-response bias. So do you guys do the comparison between those?

Mark Asiala: So this is Mark Asiala again. And for the response rates, we only calculate those for categories for which we know that characteristic for everyone who both responded and not responded. So for any characteristics that we collect through the ACS data collection we don't have the information for the non-respondents in order to properly assess what is the response rate for that particular population. So we don't have that information.

But with regard to the non-response bias I think you can potentially...

((Crosstalk))

Jonah Winninghoff: Sorry to interrupt. But just to clarify, you use - did you - are (unintelligible) for a different approach? Do you use...

Mark Asiala: I'm sorry.

Jonah Winninghoff: Do you use an aggregated approach? I'm sorry. Do you use an aggregated approach?

Mark Asiala: So our response rates typically are calculated only for geographic areas as our primary aggregate for response rates.

Donna Daily: But...

Jonah Winninghoff: Perfect. Thank you.

Donna Daily: To have a side conversation, we'd love to connect with you after the webinar and the data are published. And once you've had a chance to look up the specific data that you're looking into, and we can have an offline discussion with the subject matter experts on the disability question, on the ACS. We're happy to do that next week or early the following week.

Jonah Winninghoff: That would be very nice. How do I get in contact with you?

Michael Cook: If you could, please reach out to us in the public information office. [PIO@Census.gov](mailto:PIO@Census.gov) is the email address. If you shoot that over to us we'll definitely follow right back up with you. Thanks again, for your question today. And I'd like to thank everyone for their questions. We'll have another Q&A session at the very end of today's webinar. But now it's time for us to move to the next section - using [Data.Census.gov](https://Data.Census.gov).

Presenting this section and providing a walkthrough of [Data.Census.gov](https://Data.Census.gov), as well as resources for this tool, is Tyson Weister. Tyson is from the Center for Enterprise Dissemination. Tyson?

Tyson Weister: Great. Thank you. And thank you all so much, for joining the demonstration today on Data.Census.gov. This is the primary platform to access data from the US Census Bureau. I just want to note before we get into the demonstration, that we will through the slides, they are step by step. So everything that I'm going to show you on the live site, you do have a reference point that will walk you through those same exact steps you can look back on later.

What we're going to focus on for the demonstration right now, is how to view and download ZCTA data using data.Census.gov. Specifically, we'll be looking at detailed household income for all zip code tabulation areas in Michigan using the ACS five year estimates. So let's go to the live site here. We do recommend using Google Chrome. And you'll just type in Data.Census.gov in the address bar, in order to get to our landing page.

There are a couple of ways to go about searching. We're going to primarily focus today on the advanced search filters. Now I love the advanced search for two reasons. One, it's the most precise way to select your search criteria and you don't have to come up with your own words to describe it. And then two, it allows you to access the full set of search options, including all available geographies, including detailed geographies that you'll want to access specifically for ACS five year data.

So we'll go ahead and click advanced search. On the left hand side you'll be looking for a section that says find a filter, and we're going to be clicking through these primary categories on the left hand side. We're going to be looking for checkboxes as final selections, and any words and phrases with folders means that when we click on them we're going to get more detailed options to choose from.

You'll want to start out with whatever you consider most important. Many times that will be your geography. So here we'll click geography. Right away you'll see there are nine of the most commonly used geographic areas at the top of your screen. And if you scroll down you'll see an alphabetized list of all other geographic areas that the Census Bureau provides data for.

We're going to be working with zip code tabulation areas. These are generalized representations of zip codes based off of USPS mail delivery routes. And we use these generalized statistical areas in order to provide you demographic data from the American Community Survey. So any time you want information on people and housing and specifically, if you want ACS data, you'll want to make sure you're using the options here in the middle of the boxes that say zip code tabulation area.

This is the geography that is compatible for the American Community Survey. You may see some other similar labels in this set of detailed geographic options. But again, zip code tabulation area is what you'd want. And then as a final note, the 2020 American Community Survey five year data, are tabulated against the 2010 vintage of zip code tabulation area boundaries.

So with that, let's go ahead and show how easy it is to select these. You'll click zip code tabulation area box in the middle. And then you'll look for the folder for Michigan. Here I'll click Michigan. And then we start to see checkboxes. So these are final selections and this includes a checkbox at the top that says all five digit zip code tabulation areas only partially contained within Michigan. And then once you make that selection you'll see it in the upper left of your screen as a filter.

So next, we'll go ahead and specify our topic. Again, we wanted income data. So I'll click topic on the left. Then we'll choose the folder for income and poverty. I see a folder for income and earnings, and then I'll go ahead and click my final selection is a checkbox that says income, household, families, individual. Just choose whichever one that represents your search criteria.

The next thing you may want to do is make sure you're getting the most recent American Community Survey data. One way you can specify this is by clicking the year link on the left. For this demonstration, because the 2020 data have not yet been released, we'll of course be showing the 2019 American Community Survey data, so I'll click the box here for 2019. But just so you know, you can go through the same exact steps I'm showing you today and then just look for the 2020 checkbox when the data are released next week.

So I have a few criteria by geography, by topic, and by year. There is one additional search option you may be interested in specifying and that is the type of product that you're interested in. Gretchen told you about these products earlier on, so we - if you'd like to specify one it's very easy. Just click surveys on the left. It narrowed it down to just the one option that's compatible with our three search criteria. And that's the American Community Survey. So I'll click the folder. It's also narrowed down to the folder for five year estimates, because we've requested ZCTA level data.

So I'll click the five year estimates folder and then we get a few different products to choose from. Now I know that I want to access detailed household income, so I'm going to choose the ACS detailed tables. So we can see here on the upper left, we have our geography, our topic, our year, and our product. Once you're happy with your search criteria you'll just click the search button in the lower right.



And then I like to go ahead and drill right into the tables by clicking the tables tab at the top. From here we can see there are 142 table results. So I'm going to give you some tricks on how you can sort through those. And on the right hand side there is a message about the table being large. That's nothing to worry about. We'll talk more about that in just a moment.

First, kind of want to find the table that has the data we're interested in. And a couple of different ways that you can really customize what you see across your screen. There are panels dedicated to filters on the left and to your results. They are available to you as you want and need them throughout the site. But if you're done using them you can click the chevron at the top and here I'm going to click that for the filter panel on the left, in order to collapse it, just gives me more space across my screen for the things that I want and need.

With this list of table results you can see as you scroll down what you're getting at the first 10 of those 142 table results and you can page through the additional options in order to access the full set of tables. If you'd like to work your way through this list a little bit more quickly, one relatively new option is to increase the number of tables in the list.

So here I'm going to click 50 at the top of the table results panel, in order to see 50 tables in my list at a time. If you put your cursor between the table results on the left and the table display on the right, you'll also notice that you can click and drag that in order to make more room for the table titles. So just a nice way to scan through long lists like the ACS detailed tables, since there are a lot of options. Once you scroll down a bit you'll notice there is a table, B19001, and it says household income in the past 12 months.

So once you click it on the left, it will start trying to load the data on the right hand side of the screen. But do note that we're confirming on the left hand side as well, that data are coming from the 2019 ACS five year estimate detailed tables. So I think the table contains what I want. Now I'm going to look at the data. I mentioned earlier about a message for the table being large. The reason we're getting this message is because based on the number of geographies that we've asked for data for, the table has more than a 1000 columns.

Any time you see this message you can download the data, you can map it, and then there is also a link in the lower right that allows you to attempt to open up these large tables anyway. I'm going to go ahead and click the link to open the table. And it loads relatively quickly. If you are requesting tens of thousands of geographies, the site may have trouble. But generally, situations like these are no problem at all.

So let's take a look here at this table data. We can see at the very top the universe that's households that we're getting data for households. At the top of the table there are columns for each of the zip code tabulation areas fully or partially within Michigan. And we can see that as we scroll across. And then on the left hand side is where we see our data tables.

So the way we would read this table is in the first row and the first column, 5339 versus the total number of households in ZCTAS 48001. And row 2 tells us that out of those total households, 296 households have a household income of less than \$10,000. Once you've gone through the steps to find data that you're interested in, you may be wanting to save your results. And there are two primary ways you can do that.

One is through the Excel button that you'll see at the top of the table. You'll want to use this option any time you want output that's going to be similar to what you see on screen in terms of the table layout and it being easy for you to read. Any time you want to work with the data using your own software, we have another file format and a brand new button that was released today, called Zip. So this button that you see today that says Zip gives you the same output that the button previously said download.

And the reason we renamed these buttons was just to give you a clear understanding of the initial file format you receive when you use these options. So I want to go ahead and go through that process really quickly here for Zip, by clicking the Zip button. It will have you confirm 2019 as well as ACS five year estimate detailed tables. And you'll click download CSV button. So this is the Zip file with three CSV files within it.

In the lower right hand side of the screen, you'll notice there is the download progress bar once it's p loaded to 100%. In the lower left you'll be able to click that Zip file and open it up just like you could before. And from here everything else is exactly the same as it was before. You'll see ACS for American Community Survey, DT for detailed table, 5Y for five year, 2019, and our table ID, B19001. And you want to click the file that says data with overlays in the naming convention.

So just to show that to you really quickly -the first row contains all of the data variables in your - or the first column contains all your - yes, sorry. The first row contains all the data variables and you'll notice your variables are in the columns, the geographies are in the rows. So it is in alphanumeric order. That means when you scroll to the far right of the table you may finally see the geography ID starting with G and name.

And then from here we can see very clearly, that this is kind of reverse of what we saw on the screen, right? Each geography has its own row. When you follow the row across you see all the nice estimates we just saw on the table display of Data.Census.gov, without any special formatting or indentation. So this is a great file format. You really want to work with the data using your own software.

Going back to the live site, once you've found the perfect table from the American Community Survey, you may be interested in accessing the same data later and you make it very easy for you to get directly back to this table. You just need to make a note of the table ID. So I want to take a moment here to show that very quickly. And this table ID is B19001.

So I'm going to click the US Census logo in the upper left. It will clear us fresh and start us at the landing page. The best place to type in your table ID is the single search bar, B19001, and we'll press enter. Now the same filters we were able to use through advanced search, are accessible to us in the panel on left. You may have to click it because we minimized it earlier. It says filters. And you'll notice the same categories.

So if we wanted to get these data for all zip code areas in Michigan, we would simply click geography on the left, choose zip code tabulation area just like before, in the middle of the screen, find the folder for Michigan, and then mark the option at the top for all size, such as zip code tabulation areas fully or partially within Michigan. And this is my preferred way to select a geography because it's the most precise way and allows me to access all available geographies.

And when you use it on the left hand side of your screen you're really able to access any geography that's compatible with B19001 across all years and

across those ACS one year and five year estimates. So once you've done that from the all results page we'll go ahead and click tables at the top and going to collapse the filter panel. And notice here the product drop down menu at the top of the table says 2019 ACS five year estimates detailed table.

So the site has automatically placed us into the most recent ACS and it determined that the five year data are what are compatible for ZCTAS level data. If you'd like to manually change to a different product you can click the product drop down menu and switch into a different product. You can also look to the left. There's something that says view all nine products. And once you click it you'll be able to switch between any available vintage based on your search criteria selection.

Now there is a third way that you can add your geography, that I just want to point out very briefly, and it's the GEO button at the top of your table. When you click the GEO button you'll be able to select any geography that's compatible with the product drop down menu at the top. So right now it's set to 2019 ACS five year estimates. You'll want to make sure that you have that set to your product before you click the GEO button, and it will limit your results to data, or to geographies that are compatible with that particular product.

And just as a reminder, if you were clicking to ACS one year, those data are only available for geographies that have 65,000 people or more. All right. So we hope you learned some helpful tips and tricks in the demonstration. We do continue to update Data.Census.gov based on user feedback. I've laid out here on the slide a few of the major updates that we've pushed out since the last ACS five year release in December of 2020.

I showed you the first three of these items listed in the live demonstration. And if you'd like to follow along our progress and stay up to date, I encourage you to visit the link at the bottom of the screen. Everything we do for improving the site is based on user feedback, so please let us know how we can make the site work better, by emailing us at [Census.Data@Census.gov](mailto:Census.Data@Census.gov). And for more educational resources on how to best use the site, please click the Help button from the landing page, in order to access our suite of educational materials.

I'm looking forward to more questions. Thank you so much. I'll turn it back over to you. Thank you.

Michael Cook: Thanks, Tyson. We have a few more minutes for questions. When you ask your question again, please state your name and your affiliation. And because we want to give everyone an opportunity, we will allow just one question and one follow up per caller. Operator, can you please start queuing the calls?

Operator: Thank you. And again, as a reminder, for questions or comments, please press star 1, make sure your phone is unmuted and record your name and organization. To withdraw that request you may press star 2. Once again, for questions or comments at this time, please press star 1. And we are standing by. One moment, please.

Michael Cook: And while we wait for questions, we want to make sure that you know about our information resources around the country. We have a network of data specialists who can arrange free training and provide data assistance. Members of the media may contact our public information office for more information. Non-media may use the phone number or the email address on the slide.

We also have a network of state data centers in every state who can help you understand local census data, as well as our census information centers, a network of non-profit national and community groups that help populations access the data. You can find these on our website at [Census.gov/SDC](https://www.census.gov/sdc).

Operator, do we have any questions?

Operator: And I'm currently showing no questions or comments. Again, as a reminder, if you have a question or comment, you may press star one, make sure your phone is unmuted and record your name and organization. And to remove that request, you may press star 2. And we'll stand by for any questions or comments.

Michael Cook: Thank you, Operator. As we pause here and wait to see if we get - have any more questions, I just want to remind people to - if you haven't subscribed for email alerts, you can by going to [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) and opt in to get those email alerts for releases that we put out. You can subscribe by topic knowing that there are many - over 130 surveys that we put out on an annual basis at the US Census Bureau. So there is a lot of information that you can subscribe to and keep ahead of.

And I'm checking one last time for the operator to see if we have any questions for today's data portion of our ACS webinar.

Coordinator: And I'm currently showing no questions or comments from the phone at this time.

Michael Cook: Thank you for that. If you have any questions following today's webinar, and didn't get a chance to call in, please contact us for using the information on the slide. You can also connect with us by subscribing, as I mentioned, to email alerts, where we share important information about our data releases, by

visiting our website at [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov). Please check to make sure your embargo password has not expired. Again, media, please check to make sure your embargo password has not expired.

The embargoed data will be posted 10:00 am next Tuesday, March 15th. Contact PIO for embargo questions. If you have additional questions or wish to arrange interviews on the topics covered in today's news conference, don't hesitate to call the Census Bureau's public information office at the number, or email listed on the screen.

You can also visit [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) to sign up for email alerts about upcoming releases. Additional information about the American Community Survey also can be found in our online press kit. Thanks again. On behalf of all of our speakers today and our subject matter experts, I thank you for joining us. And I wish you a great rest of your day. Thanks, everyone.

Donna Daily: Thanks, Mike.

Operator: Thank you. That concludes today's conference call. Thank you for your participation. You may disconnect at this time.

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