Part 5

Specific Tasks

Task 1 Management

The contractor shall manage the contract in an efficient manner that fosters communication with contractor staff, the NLS Contract Officer's Representative (COR), the Department of Labor (DOL)'s Contracting Officer (CO), the DOL's Contracting Specialist (CS), the NLS project staff, and data users.

Subtask 1.1 Management and Staffing Plan

The contractor shall submit for approval of the COR a detailed management and staffing plan that will ensure the effective accomplishment of all NLS tasks. The plan shall focus on how the contractor will hire, train, and maintain staff, manage day-to-day survey operations, and coordinate activities to prevent problems and bottlenecks and resolve problems as they occur.

The plan shall include scientific staff who are experienced in conducting and publishing social science research using longitudinal data, preferably NLSY data, especially transitions during adolescence and labor market activity over the life course and have experience designing surveys. The scientific staff shall:

- Advise the NLS program on survey content, methodology, and design issues. They may be asked to provide written feedback on content and regularly attend design meetings conducted in-person or virtually.
- Coordinate with existing and potential survey stakeholders in the government, non-profit and private sectors on the development of survey topics, questions, and methods and use of NLS survey data.

The plan also shall include a detailed timeline for all activities that will take place over the course of this contract. The timeline shall include the dates of each milestone and describe the dependency relationships between various activities. Approval of the plan will depend on whether it provides for qualified staff and the efficient, effective training of all Contractor staff in the project's objectives and the administration of the surveys.

Deliverable 1.1.1 Management and Staffing Plan

The contractor shall submit the management and staffing plan 20 business days after the effective date of this contract. Management and staffing of the field staff shall be addressed in the Questionnaire Design and Planning, Pretest, and Main Data Collection Tasks.

Subtask 1.2 Secure FTP site

The contractor will maintain a secure file transfer protocol (FTP) site for the easy transfer of data and documentation between contractors and BLS.

The contractor will utilize BLS provided MFT (currently Kiteworks MFT) and SFTP (securetransfer.bls.gov) for the secure managed transfer of data and documentation between contractors and BLS.

Subtask 1.3 Records Management

Records management plays a critical role in transparency and open government consistent with law and policy, to disclose information rapidly in forms that the public can readily find and use while also ensuring the BLS is retaining records documenting official agency work activities in accordance with federal records management guidelines and disposition authorities. This includes records created by the NLS program, the secure storage, maintenance, and accountability of these records, and the proper use and final disposition of these records.

The contractor shall comply with all applicable records management laws, regulations, requirements, and policies established by the COR, BLS, and the broader Department of Labor in order to properly maintain and manage records associated with the contract.

Contractor shall comply with National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) records policies, including but not limited to the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C. chs. 21, 29, 31, 33), NARA regulations at 36 CFR Chapter XII Subchapter B, and those policies associated with the safeguarding of records covered by the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a). These policies include the preservation of all records, regardless of form or characteristics, mode of transmission, or state of completion.

In accordance with 36 CFR 1222.32, all data created for government use and delivered to, or falling under the legal control of, the government are Federal records subject to the provisions of 44 U.S.C. chapters 21, 29, 31, and 33, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), as amended, and the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), as amended and must be managed and scheduled for disposition only as permitted by statute or regulation.

In accordance with 36 CFR 1222.32, the contractor shall maintain all records created for government use or created in the course of performing the contract and/or delivered to, or under the legal control of the government and shall be managed in accordance with Federal law. Electronic records and associated metadata must be accompanied by sufficient technical documentation to permit understanding and use of the records and data.

NLS Program Office records management is aligned with the 36 CFR 1220.324 which is to ensure agencies must create and maintain authentic, reliable, and usable records and ensure that they remain so

for the length of their authorized retention period. The NLS follows Statistical Programs Bucket Schedule N1-257-11-1, which was approved by NARA on January 29, 2013. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) provides mandatory instructions on how and when to maintain and dispose of operational records.

1. Survey Methodology Files
    - procedural manuals,
    - technical memorandums,
    - all data collectors' training materials for both Field Managers (FMs) and FIs,
    - FI CATI manuals,
    - FI training starter Kits,
    - communication related to survey issues (such as discussions about sample representativeness, interview sample priorities etc.)
    - all contractor discussions with Principal Investigators (PIs)

2. Program Subject Files
    - planning documents,
    - internal explanatory statements regarding objectives, strategy, and methodology,
    - monthly progress reports,
    - documentation related to any procedural problems and recommendations,
    - study reports or other methodological or analytical statements used in reviewing or revising procedures or operational processes,
    - weighting plans,
    - created variable plans, and
    - restricted use plans

3. Permanent Output Database Files
    - full public use data set without PII, in asci, with associated programs to read said asci data set
    - NLS Users guides in electronic form,
    - data codebooks
    - Questionnaires

Deliverable 1.3.1 NLSY27 Submission of Contractor Records

Contractor survey methodology files, program subject files and public use output database: Records will be submitted in electronic form 1 year after the end of data collection upon delivery of the data files in a FIPS 140-2 compliant manner.

Subtask 1.4 Monthly Progress Report

Although monthly reports shall be used to document problems encountered in addition to proposed solutions, the contractor shall not wait to communicate problems to the COR in the

monthly report. The contractor shall inform the COR of challenges being faced on a flow basis as challenges arise.

Deliverable 1.4.1 Monthly Progress Report

The monthly report shall be submitted by electronic transmission. It shall be due on the 5th day each month (or next business day if the date occurs on a weekend or Federal holiday).

Subtask 1.5 Management Conference Calls

The contractor shall prepare for and participate in conference calls with the NLS Director, COR and other BLS staff on a regular basis to discuss survey operations. These calls may occur every one to two weeks as needed and agreed upon by the COR and contractor. The contractor can expect a typical call to last one hour or less. The contractor shall distribute the minutes of the prior conference call with the agenda for the next call.

Deliverable 1.5.1 Meeting Agenda

The contractor shall distribute the agenda and all supporting materials to call participants at least one workday prior to the meeting.

Deliverable 1.5.2 Meeting Minutes

The contractor shall distribute the minutes of the prior conference call with the agenda for the next call.

Subtask 1.6 Quarterly Survey Management and Design Meetings

The contractor shall prepare for and participate 4 times yearly to discuss the management of the NLS program, as well as the design and content of questionnaires and procedures for future administrations of each survey. The length of these management meetings generally shall be limited to one day each unless otherwise agreed upon by the COR and contractor. Meetings shall take place by telephone, video conference or other electronic means unless otherwise agreed upon by the COR and contractor. The contractor may propose in person meetings subject to approval by the NLS Director and/or COR.

At these meetings, staff from BLS and the contractor and other invitees shall discuss general administration of the NLS program and the NLSY27, as well as design, content, and methodological issues for the NLSY27.. Topics for the management portion of each meeting may include a discussion of costs and current and anticipated budgets, survey operations, the status of contract deliverables, program timelines, initiatives to improve services to data users, and other topics.

Prior to each meeting, the contractor shall determine which of its staff members are expected to attend, and the contractor shall inform the NLS Director of the expected attendees. The NLS

Director and Contractor also shall decide whether other persons besides BLS and contractor staff shall be invited to attend. The contractor shall suggest potential agenda items at least 4 weeks before the meeting. The contractor shall distribute meeting materials requested by the COR 3 days prior to the meeting.

The COR shall distribute the agenda approved by the NLS Director and all supporting materials to meeting participants at least two workdays prior to the meeting. The contractor shall submit the minutes of each meeting to the NLS Director and COR within one week after the meeting. The minutes shall summarize the discussion, focusing on decisions made, problems identified, and activities to be performed, including a designation of the responsible party and the due date.

Deliverable 1.6.1 Quarterly Management Meetings (QMM) Agenda

Contractor provided Quarterly Management Meetings (QMM) meeting topics Agenda topics shall be submitted to the COR 4 weeks prior to the QMM.

Deliverable 1.6.2 Meeting Materials

The contractor shall provide COR requested meeting materials 3 days prior to the meeting.

Deliverable 1.6.3 Meeting Minutes

The contractor shall take the minutes at the NLS QMM and submit them to the COR for review within one week after the meeting.

Subtask 1.7 Stakeholder Input and Outreach

Survey programs with the scope, complexity, and importance of the National Longitudinal Surveys require input from a large number of varied stakeholders in the government, non-profit and private sectors to address the data needs of researchers and policymakers.

The Contractor shall engage a group of 3-5 subject matter experts to provide advice on the NLSY27 with respect to survey content, development, and usage. Members of the group shall be chosen in consultation with the NLS Director to capture a range of academic disciplines (e.g., economics, sociology, and psychology) and subject matter expertise (e.g., job search, education, human development, family dynamics, etc.). The NLSY27 subject matter experts will be responsible for gathering input from the stakeholder community and providing input to NLS on the content and methodology of the survey and promoting the survey to the stakeholder community. The subject matter experts shall be available for direct consultation with NLS staff, as needed.

The subject matter experts shall have considerable experience conducting and publishing social science research using longitudinal and/or survey data and should have experience designing surveys or other data collections as well as presenting scholarly research to the data user community. The duties of the subject matter experts shall include providing input to the NLS Director, NLS staff, and members of the stakeholder communities to identify appropriate topics to include in the NLSY27. The contractor may propose alternative approaches for providing equivalent expert consultation support, subject to BLS approval. All final decisions shall be made by the BLS.

Deliverable 1.7.1 List of Potential Subject Matter Experts

The Contractor shall provide a list of potential subject matter experts for the NLSY27. The list shall be delivered within three months of the NLS Director's request. Selection will be made by the vendor with the approval of the NLS Director.

Deliverable 1.7.2 Subject Matter Experts' Guidance for Surveys

The subject matter experts for the NLSY27 shall advise the program on survey content and design issues, in particular during the design and planning phases of each Round. They will be asked to provide written guidance for content changes and attend the design portion of the QMM meetings conducted virtually. Guidance on what items to cut, add or modify shall be provided 2 weeks before the first design and planning meeting.

Deliverable 1.7.3 Outreach plan

The contractor shall submit a plan for outreach by the Subject Matter Experts to existing and potential NLSY27 stakeholders in the government, non-profit and private sectors to solicit their input on the development of survey topics, questions, and methods and use of NLS survey data.

Deliverable 1.7.4 Liaison with Stakeholders: written summary at QMMS

Each subject matter expert shall coordinate with existing and potential survey stakeholders in the government, non-profit and private sectors on the development of survey topics, questions, and methods. A written summary of these activities shall be presented at each Quarterly Management Meeting (QMM).

Subtask 1.8 Promotion of the use of NLSY27 Data

The contractor shall provide written recommendations to the COR on how best to promote NLSY27 data to the user community, including conference presentations, training opportunities for graduate students and researchers new to NLSY data, and profiles of the data set to appear in journals or newsletters.

Deliverable 1.8.1 Recommendations for Promoting the use of NLSY27 Data

The contractor shall submit recommendations due three months prior to the release of the round-specific public use data.

1.9 Subtask 1.9 Errata

The contractor shall correct all errors and problems that are discovered in any data files. The contractor shall investigate all questions that arise concerning suspected errors in the data or the documentation. As errors are discovered, they shall be corrected and the contractor shall make such corrections available to researchers by posting the corrected data on the bls.gov/nls website. With permission of the COR, revisions may be delayed and included in conjunction with the release of an additional round of data. Where there is a lack of clarity, apparent inconsistencies or omissions, or similar problems relating to the documentation, these problems also shall be corrected, and such corrections shall be provided to NLS

users.

Within 5 business days of finding an error, email notification to COR and NLS Director with description of error, proposed remediation strategy and timing using an Errata form. The Errata form shall include:

- Cohort and either Public Use or Restricted,
- Who Discovered the Issue
- How the issue was Discovered
- Date Issue was reported
- Variables and Rounds Affected
- Description of Issue
- Proposed solution

NLS must approve the solution.

Deliverable 1.9.1 Errata Identification & Remediation

Within 5 business days of finding an error, email notification to COR and NLS Director with description of error, proposed remediation strategy and timing using BLS provided Errata form.

Deliverable 1.9.2 Corrected Data available for Users

After approval by BLS: Notification of error description and corrected variables placed in errata section of the website within 1 week of approval or complete reload of data if deemed necessary by the NLS Director or COR.

Task 2 Technology and Security Requirements for BLS Data and Systems

The confidentiality of individually identifiable information contained in project documents, data, and other information supplied by the National Longitudinal Surveys Program, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor, or information acquired in the course of this contract must be maintained, secured, and protected from disclosure as provided. The contractor shall maintain the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of all BLS data and systems and their associated hardware, software, and processing capabilities. The contractor shall develop and implement a security program, as approved by the COR, and designate an information security point of contact, to fulfill all security requirements under this contract.

The contractor shall enforce strict procedures for assuring data confidentiality and security. These procedures shall apply to all phases of the project and shall include but not be limited to: information used to locate study respondents, data collection in the field, coding and editing phases of data prior to machine processing, safeguarding response documents, and maintenance of any respondent follow- up information. The contractor shall physically separate the identifying data required for any respondent follow-up from data required for research purposes.

Subtask 2.1 Confidentiality Training Requirements

Due to the possible exposure to information protected by law under the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018 (CIPSEA), the BLS shall, in accordance with this contract, designate contractor employees with exposure to BLS confidential information (NLS data) as agents of the BLS. All such agents are subject to the fines and penalties under 44 USC Section 3572 of CIPSEA and any other fines and penalties that apply to the mishandling of confidential information. The obligation to protect information extends to all CIPSEA- and Privacy Act-protected information including, but not limited to, information previously collected by the BLS and provided to the contractor in order to perform work under this contract, information collected on behalf of the BLS under this contract, and any work that may involve comingling or otherwise using CIPSEA-protected information alongside other data, such as supplemental survey information.

The contractor shall provide the contract employees with instructions on maintaining the security of all confidential information in accordance with task order and applicable requirements outlined in the attachment "BLS Confidentiality and Security Requirements". Such instructions are subject to the review and approval of the BLS upon request.

Deliverable 2.1.1 BLS Agent List and Designation

Within 30 days of contract award, the contractor will furnish to the BLS a list of contractor employees who the contractor believes require access to BLS confidential information in order to perform work on the contract. Under this contract, all contract employees with exposure to BLS confidential information (NLS data) shall become BLS Agents upon approval of the COR. Contractor staff designated as agents must sign a BLS agent agreement and take BLS confidentiality training before accessing BLS confidential data. This list must be updated as new employees begin work on the contract.

Deliverable 2.1.2 Annual Training Recertification Reports

For the life of the contract, all BLS agents currently working task order during the recertification period will take confidentiality training at least once a year. This annual recertification will begin in the summer and end by September.

Deliverable 2.1.3 BLS Agent Status Worksheets

The contractor will keep records on current Agent designations and will report such information promptly to the COR upon request, but at least Quarterly (Oct 1, Jan.1, April 1, July 1). BLS will provide an excel worksheet for this process.

Deliverable 2.1.4 Worksite Location list

Within 30 days of the contract award, the contractor shall provide the COR a list of all worksites, including telework sites, for approval at the start of work provided for in task order and subsequent task orders. During the duration of the contract, the contractor shall notify the

COR inwriting of any proposed changes (additions or deletions) to the list of worksites. Any changes to the list of worksites must be approved in writing by the COR.

Subtask 2.2 Compliance with Federal, Department and Agency Policies

The Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA) tasked the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) with providing minimum security requirements for the protection of sensitive information while residing in nonfederal information systems. The contractor agrees to ensure that all contractor-owned systems used to store or process data under this agreement comply with all applicable information security directives, acts, laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines. The contractor shall implement any revisions to the requirements described below, within one year of release or other timeframe as indicated by the COR, and at no additional cost to the government. In instances where the contractor finds that security control does not apply, the contractor may request an exception. Any exceptions must be approved in writing by the BLS.

To ensure that security controls for this BLS information system are properly selected, authorized, implemented, and maintained in compliance with Federal requirements, the contractor and all sub- contractors shall comply with DOL and BLS IT security policy and confidentiality and security requirements, per the following documents, OMB memos and federal directives. Aside from NIST 800-53, some documents contain restricted access information that outline the DOL cybersecurity policy, standards, procedures, guidance, and organizationally defined parameters relating to each NIST control family and will made available to the contractor. Implementation of security controls shall be validated by the COR and NLS ISSO.

A. NIST Special Publication 800-53, “Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations.”

The contractor shall ensure implementation of the respective security controls catalogued in the current version of NIST 800-53 for a “Moderate” baseline system. These controls shall be subject to assessment and testing guidance provided in NIST Special Publication 800-53A, “Assessing Security and Privacy Controls in Federal Information Systems and Organizations.” Per NIST 800-53A, BLS reserves the right to request the system security plan at any time and any associated plans of action for any planned implementation or mitigations. In instances where the contractor finds that security control does not apply, the contractor may request an exception. Any exceptions must be approved in writing by the BLS.

B. OMB Memo M-22-09 - Moving the U.S. Government Toward Zero Trust Cybersecurity Principles

This memorandum sets forth a Federal zero trust architecture (ZTA) strategy, requiring agencies and their contractors to meet specific cybersecurity standards and objectives by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 to reinforce the Government’s defenses against

increasingly sophisticated and persistent threat campaigns.
Those campaigns target Federal technology infrastructure, threatening public safety and privacy, damaging the American economy, and weakening trust in Government.

The contractor shall ensure implementation of the respective requirements catalogued in OMB M-22-09 including:

- Designating a Zero Trust Strategy implementation lead for the contractor.

  BLS will rely on the designated contractor zero trust lead for coordination and for engagement with BLS and DOL on planning and implementation efforts for zero trust requirements.

- Maintain and Implement a Zero Trust implementation plan

  The contractor must develop a zero-trust architecture plan that describes how the contractor plans to implement Zero Trust architecture requirements in accordance with OMB Memo M-22-09 for the NLSY27 System.

A zero-trust architecture plan must include the following detailed information:

- Plans to employ centralized identity management systems for agency users that can be integrated into applications and common platforms.
- Plans to require NLS users to use a phishing resistant method to access NLS accounts.
- Plans to incorporate at least one device-level signal alongside identity information about the authenticated user.
- Plans to create ongoing, reliable, and complete asset inventories.
- Plans to use encrypted DNS for the NLSY27 System wherever it is technically supported.
- Plans to enforce authenticated HTTPS for all NLS HTTP traffic, including traffic that does not cross the public internet.
- Plans that describe how the contractor plans to isolate NLS applications and environments through micro segmentation.
- Plans to include application security practices in the System authorization process by employing both automated analysis tools and manual expert analysis to perform security analysis on applications prior to authorization.

C. OMB Memo M-20-32 - Improving Vulnerability Identification, Management, and Remediation

This memorandum provides Federal agencies and their contractors with guidance for obtaining and managing their vulnerability research programs. Implementation will allow for the security research community ("reporters") to report vulnerability information to appropriate contractor contacts, who can then use the reports to mitigate associated

risks of which they may not have been aware.

The contractor shall ensure implementation of the respective requirements catalogued in OMB M-20-32 including:

- The contractor shall take affirmative steps to develop a Vulnerability Disclosure Program (VDP), pursuant to CISA's implementation guidance as a baseline for vulnerability identification, management, and remediation. Beyond these initial actions, the contractor shall work with BLS to improve the maturity, scope, and interconnectivity of their VDPs, and integrate applicable policies and guidance into their overall cybersecurity risk management programs.
- The contractor shall publish and operationalize a VDP within 6 months of the award. Thereafter, the contractor must work with BLS and CISA to continue maturing the processes developed for their VDPs and incorporate their VDP findings and remediation activities into their overall information security program.
- The contractor shall develop implementation plans providing timelines and milestones for VDP to cover all NLSY27 systems.

D. OMB Memo M-21-31 - Improving the Federal Government's Investigative and Remediation Capabilities Related to Cybersecurity Incidents

This memorandum was developed in accordance with and addresses the requirements in section 8 of the Executive Order for logging, log retention, and log management, with a focus on ensuring centralized access and visibility for the highest-level enterprise security operations center (SOC) of each agency and their contractors. In addition, this memorandum establishes requirements for agencies including contractors to increase the sharing of such information, as needed and appropriate, to accelerate incident response efforts and to enable more effective defense of Federal information and executive branch departments and agencies.

The contractor shall ensure implementation of the respective requirements catalogued in OMB M-21-31 including:

- The contractor, upon award, shall immediately begin efforts to increase performance in accordance with the requirements of OMB 21-31 for Enterprise Logging Maturity. Specifically, the contractor shall assess their maturity against the Enterprise Logging maturity model in memorandum 21-31 and identify resourcing and implementation gaps associated with completing each of the requirements listed below and repot them to BLS.
- The Contractor shall:
    - Within 6 months of the award, reach EL1 maturity.

- Within one year of contract award, achieve EL2 maturity.
- Within two years of contract award, achieve EL3 maturity.
- Provide, upon BLS request and to the extent consistent with applicable law, relevant logs to share with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). This sharing of information is critical to defend Federal information systems.
- Share log information, as needed and appropriate, with BLS, DOL, CISA, or FBI to address. cybersecurity risks or incidents.

E. OMB Memo M-22-01 Improving Detection of Cybersecurity Vulnerabilities and Incidents on Federal Government Systems through Endpoint Detection and Response

This memorandum provides implementation guidance to agencies and their contractors as they accelerate the adoption of Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) solutions and work to improve visibility into and detection of cybersecurity vulnerabilities and threats to the Government, as defined in EO 14028.

The contractor shall ensure implementation of the respective requirements catalogued in OMB M-22-01 including:

- The contractor shall Within 120 days of contract award conduct an analysis, in coordination with BLS, to assess the current status of their EDR capabilities by identifying any gaps in existing EDR deployments and provide a report to BLS including details and status.
- The contractor shall coordinate with BLS for current and future EDR solution deployments to confirm that the solution is approved and aligns with CISA's technical reference architecture and appropriate data is gathered from the widest number of endpoints.
- The contractor shall provide BLS with visibility upon request into to their current and future EDR solutions to enable proactive threat hunting activities and a coordinated response to advanced threats, and to facilitate, as appropriate, network access for BLS, CISA, or FBI personnel to gain access to contractor EDR platforms if a critical need arises.
- The contractors shall ensure that EDR solutions are implemented with sufficient dedicated resources to support the EDR requirements defined in this section and is operated by staff with training in operating EDR. The contractor shall ensure that endpoint data is consolidated, retained, and archived in a manner that supports analysis and insight, to be defined in the technical reference architecture developed by CISA.

All periodic reports and updates regarding the NLSY27 system are coordinated by BLS staff, but the NLS contractor and its subcontractors are expected to contribute all pertinent information about the security of the NLSY27 system components under the management and control of the contractor or subcontractors. This list is subject to change during the life of the NLS contract depending on any changes to Federal legislation, policies, guidelines, and standards.

The contractor shall update security documents in the event of any major system changes, incident reports, newly discovered vulnerabilities, or weakness mitigations. The contractor shall produce additional security documentation consistent with NIST 800-53 standards upon request by the COR at no additional cost to the government.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

To ensure consistent and statutorily compliant use of AI technologies (including but not limited to AI models, tools, platforms, systems, or services) throughout the agency, contractors must comply with the following requirements prior to and during use of AI in support of BLS work.

Contractors must:

- Submit proposed AI use cases for approval.

Provide the COR with a written description of all proposed AI technologies and associated use cases prior to implementation. This submission must describe the intended function, data inputs, outputs, IT environment, and impact to operations. The proposal must also demonstrate how bias, quality, accuracy, and trustworthiness of the outputs are addressed or managed.

- Use only approved AI technologies.

Contractors may only use AI technologies that have been approved by the COR. Unauthorized use of AI technologies may not be used for any BLS-related activity.

- Use AI technologies only for approved purposes.

Approved AI technologies must only be used for the specific purposes and use cases authorized by the COR. Any modification, expansion, or new application of the technology requires prior approval.

- Report unauthorized or improper use.

Any unauthorized use of AI technologies, use by unauthorized individuals, or use involving BLS Sensitive Information not previously approved by the COR must be immediately reported to the COR.

Deliverables 2.2 Compliance with Federal, Department and Agency Policies

The contractor shall provide periodic updates of all security documentation as requested by the COR or ISSO.

Subtask 2.3 NLSY27 System Assessment and Authorization

DOL policies require Assessment and Authorization (A&A) of all information systems that process sensitive information. The A&A process ensures that the system owner documents all of the known security risks inherent in operating a system and obtains approval from the BLS leadership to operate that system with those known risks and any mitigation plans to reduce the risks. DOL developed the A&A policies and procedures to ensure controls are properly implemented and maintained. A federal information system is an information system used or operated by an executive agency, by a contractor of an executive agency, or by another organization on behalf of an executive agency.

The Security Controls Assessment (SCA) is conducted every 3 years, at a minimum, as part of the A&A process described above. Staff from BLS or a third-party contractor will assess the managerial, operational, and technical elements, completing a full FISMA audit of all applicable NIST 800-53 controls for a Moderate system. This assessment will involve analysis of the NLSY27 system's software, hardware, and communication controls. The NLS contractor and subcontractors are expected to cooperate with the SCA team to coordinate interview schedules; provide applicable documentation or copies; and set up time for observation of applications to demonstrate application functions and controls.

Ongoing Authorization (OA) is the process developed to promote a better understanding of agency- related mission risks resulting from the operation of information systems on a continuous basis. To ensure that proper measures have been taken to secure federal information systems, BLS senior management is required to authorize the processing of each information system prior to placing the system into operational phase. OA is not tied to a termination date but rather remains valid until a significant change occurs altering the risk profile of the system or an event trigger indicates an information security risk above an acceptable level. During the Authorization period, however, additional tasks must be performed to ensure that the conditions underlying the Authorization do not change. These tasks include the continuous monitoring of security controls, regular security assessment, and completion of security documents as required by NLS and its contractor(s) performing these tasks, BLS senior management can maintain reasonable confidence that the information resources are properly protected and are able to meet the mission of the agency.

The NLS contractor is expected to assist BLS staff in preparing documentation for the A&A process. The contractor also is expected to monitor security controls continuously and to assess

system security periodically to identify and mitigate risks. The most recent A&A for the NLSY27 system was completed in January 2026. The next reassessment of the NLSY27 system supporting OA will occur in 2028. The contractor shall assist in the assessment process conducted for the NLSY27 system in 2028.

As part of ongoing A&A activities, a Security Self-Assessment (SSA) is conducted annually. The NLS contractor and subcontractors are expected to assess mandatory managerial, operational, and technical elements. The NLS contractor and subcontractors are expected to cooperate with BLS staff to coordinate interview schedules; provide applicable documentation or copies; and set up time for observation of applications to demonstrate application functions and controls. The contractor shall support security inspections conducted by government auditors or other government representatives, as designated by the BLS, at no additional cost. The contractor shall permit security inspections of its approved worksites, system configuration, and operating environment to ensure a secure operation and protection of Federal information processed by any system or operation supporting BLS data collection or processing.

Deliverables 2.3.1 NLSY27 System Assessment supporting Ongoing Authorization

The NLSY27 is currently operating under OA. If the NLSY27 does not already have a signed Authority to Operate (ATO), within 12 months of contract award, the contractor based NLSY27 system will undergo the full Assessment by the contractor and Authorization by the BLS Agency Head, who must approve its operation. This must be completed before any data can be placed in the system.

Consistent with OA, if needed because of a major change to the system, the system will be reassessed by the contractor and reauthorized by BLS. After initial authorization assessment, a full NLSY27 System Assessment, supporting Ongoing Authorization, shall be submitted at least every 3 years, or as requested by BLS the contractor will fully assist an outside auditor to complete a full FISMA audit of all applicable NIST 800-53 controls for a Moderate system. A major change to the system may trigger a re-authorization at any time. The contractor shall assist in the assessment's completion, as well as participate in audits. Note that the scope of a re-assessment and authorization may differ from a full authorization, depending on the nature of the system change.

Deliverable 2.3.2 NLS Partial System NIST Security Self-Assessment (Annual)

In a Controls Audit, the contractor will show compliance on a subset of NIST controls selected by the DOL Office of the Chief Information Officer.

for observation of applications to demonstrate application functions and controls.

Deliverable 2.3.3 NLS Independent Full System Audit (every 3 years)

Contractor will fully assist an outside auditor to complete a full FISMA audit of all applicable NIST 800-53 controls for a Moderate system.

Subtask 2.4 Plan of Action and Milestones (Ongoing)

The contractor shall document the contractor's efforts in identifying, assessing, prioritizing, and monitoring the progress of security efforts, vulnerabilities, and corrective actions for fixing or mitigating security weaknesses found in operations, or operating environments of any systems involved in storing, processing, or collecting BLS data. This information should be recorded in the form of a Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M) and should be updated when a security weakness is found on the NLSY27 system. The POA&M describes a weakness and the steps planned for resolving or mitigating the weakness. Each step also includes a planned completion date. The contractor shall promptly report defects or deficiencies to appropriate supervisory and/or security personnel for follow-up action. For a weakness to be resolved and removed from the POA&M, the NLS program must provide evidence demonstrating the resolution of the weakness.

The POA&M should be accompanied by a security progress report that demonstrates that the contractor has reviewed the audit trail, listed major security issues highlighted in the review of the audit log, and described the contractor's action(s) on those security issues.

Deliverable 2.4 Plan of Action and Milestones (Ongoing)

Templates and instructions for documenting POA&Ms will be provided to the contractor by the NLS ISSO. POA&Ms will be continually monitored, with progress updates required quarterly or as requested by BLS. If there are no POAMS, no reports will be required.

Subtask 2.5 System Security Plan

The contractor shall develop and document a formal plan detailing the security policies, procedures, and controls required for any systems involved in storing, processing, or collecting BLS data, as required. The System Security Plan (SSP) shall be completed and submitted to the NLS ISSO within the first quarter following the contract award. The SSP shall be updated annually or upon major changes to the system or system environment. The SSP shall address all management, operational, and technical controls specified in NIST Special Publication 800-53, Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems: Minimum Security Controls, Moderate Baseline. The contractor shall implement all security controls as prescribed by NIST and shall report to and seek approval from the BLS for any deviations from NIST 800-53. To provide assurance that the implemented controls are operating as intended, the contractor shall follow NIST SP 800-53A, Guide for Assessing the Security Controls in Federal Information Systems.

The purpose of System Security Plan (SSP) is to ensure controls are properly selected, authorized, implemented, and maintained in accordance with NIST standards. The SSP lists all controls for the NLSY27 system and specifies their implementation status.

Deliverable 2.5.1 The System Security Plan

The SSP shall be completed and submitted to the NLS ISSO within the first quarter following the contract award. The SSP shall be updated at least annually or upon major changes to the system or system environment and as requested by BLS.

Subtask 2.6 Configuration Management Plan

A Configuration Management (CM) plan must be established, documented, maintained, and applied to the NLSY27 system. The appropriate hardware, software, and procedural configuration mechanisms must be defined and developed during the Planning & Requirements Definition Phase of the system development life cycle. The CM plan must be updated and maintained throughout the remaining life cycle phases for the system. The information system personnel and information system must develop a baseline configuration and inventory, control and monitor configuration changes, enforce access restrictions and least functionality, and configure security settings.

The contractor may use a combination of commercially available software and custom developed software established under the secure software development framework defined in NIST SP 800-218. The commercially available software shall have been developed by major software vendors, be widely used, and be actively supported by the developer or other third parties. When selecting among competing commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software products, the contractor shall choose software and versions that are free from known security vulnerabilities. The chosen COTS software shall reflect the standard commercial practice of industry. The contractor shall consult available security checklists or recommendation guides in selecting secure product configurations and parameter settings. Any custom-developed software shall be developed in compliance with relevant NIST security requirements. After assembling the COTS and custom software elements of the system, the contractor shall undertake a thorough and methodical search for ways by which the security of the integrated system might be undermined. The government has the right to perform a similar analysis. The contractor shall remedy any vulnerability found from the contractor's review or the government's review in a timely manner. The contractor will consult with the COR, the NLSY27 System Owner and the NLSY27 ISSO on the usage of software applications.

The standard installation, operation, maintenance, update, and/or patching of software shall not alter the configuration settings from the NIST national checklist program repository (https://nvd.nist.gov/ncp/repository). Any non-standard configuration settings must be approved by the BLS ISSO.

Applications designed for end users shall run with full functionality in the standard user context without elevated system administration privileges.

Deliverable 2.6 Configuration Management Plan

The CM plan must be updated at least annually and updated as needed between annual submissions.

Subtask 2.6Contingency Plan and Testing

Contingency planning ensures that an information system can recover from processing disruptions, regardless of the source of the disruption. The contractor shall develop a contingency planning program in accordance with NIST SP 800-34, Contingency Planning Guide for Information Technology Systems.

Contingency planning documentation consists of three deliverables: Contingency Plan (CP), CP Test Report and the Business Impact Analysis.

i. The CP shall include step-by-step procedures to be followed in the case of a major or minor disruption to normal operations. The contractor shall develop a CP that can be used to ensure that any systems involved in storing, processing, or collecting BLS data can continue to operate and perform its function, as needed, during and after any processing disruption, localized emergency, or large-scale disaster. The CP shall provide detailed procedures in the cases for loss of single files, loss of machines, and loss of the entire system.

ii. The CP shall be completed and submitted to the NLS ISSO within the first quarter following the contract award. The CP shall be updated annually or upon major changes to the system or system environment. The CP shall be maintained in a state of current operational readiness to ensure continuity of support if events occur that prohibit normal operations. Current operational readiness means that the contractor shall perform necessary reviews and updates to keep the CP current. The contractor may develop separate documents that, combined, provide the information required in the CP. A hardcopy of the combined and complete CP shall be maintained at both the primary contract site and at an off-site location.

iii. The Contingency Plan contains the NLS program's detailed plans for responding to an incident that renders an information technology system partially or completely inoperable. The contingency plan is the repository for the NLSY27 system's business continuity and disaster recovery information, tasks, and procedures to be used when responding to interruptions of normal business operations and services.

iv. Additionally, the contingency plan must be tested and updated annually. Annual reviews must be conducted, and records of these reviews must be included with the Contingency Plan. The contractor shall conduct annual notification tests, and biannual technical and tabletop CP tests as required. The contractor shall analyze test results, report to the NLS ISSO annually on the results of these tests in a CP Test Report, and subsequently modify the CP, as appropriate. The contractor shall present sufficient documentation and evidence of action in the CP Test Report to validate the findings

presented. The test report shall include details on what elements of the CP and CP Test Plan did and did not work properly. The CP Testing and Training templates will be provided by the BLS COR.

v. The Business Impact Analysis (BIA) is required at the initiation of the system or if there are significant modifications to the system. It is designed to characterize the system components, supported mission/business processes and functions, and note interdependencies. Based on this information, the agency must characterize the consequences of a disruption or system unavailability. As part of the contingency planning process, a BIA is developed to identify and prioritize system components as they correlate to the mission/business process(s) and essential function(s). The Business Analysis Plan will list system hardware and software, location, quantity, other resources needed to function, and links to other critical system resources.

Deliverable 2.7.1 Business Impact Analysis

Updated at least annually, usually in conjunction with the Contingency Plan and updated as needed between annual submissions.

Deliverable 2.7.2 Contingency plan

The contractor shall update the contingency plan at least annually and update as needed between annual submissions.

Deliverable 2.7.3 Contingency plan testing

The contractor shall complete testing at least annually at BLS direction.

Subtask 2.8 Incident Response Plan

The Incident Response (IR) Plan contains detailed information on how security incidents are handled, tracked, monitored, and reported. Annual reviews must be conducted. The contractor shall conduct annual tests as required. The contractor shall analyze test results, report to the NLS ISSO annually on the results of these tests in an IR Test Report, and subsequently modify the IR Plan, as appropriate. The contractor shall present sufficient documentation and evidence of action in the IR Test Report to validate the findings presented. The test report shall include details on what elements of the IR Plan and IR Test Plan did and did not work properly.

Deliverable 2.8.1 Incident Response Plan

The contractor shall update the Incident Response Plan at least annually and update as needed between annual submissions.

Deliverable 2.8.1 Incident Response Test Report

The contractor shall provide the IR Test Report annually or as requested by the NLS director.

Subtask 2.9 Information Technology Security Requirements for BLS Data and Systems

The confidentiality of individually identifiable information contained in project documents, data, and other information supplied by the NLS Program, BLS, DOL, or information acquired in the course of task order must be maintained, secured, and protected from disclosure as provided. The contractor shall maintain the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of all BLS data and systems and their associated hardware, software, and processing capabilities. The contractor shall develop and implement a security program, as approved by the COR, and designate an information security point of contact, to fulfill all security requirements under this contract.

The contractor agrees not to access the NLSY27 system remotely without written approval of the COR. Requests for remote or telework work are dependent upon the submission and BLS approval of a detailed plan that incorporates all security requirements and showing access utilizes BLS and NIST approved encryption standards on contractor- owned and -maintained computer equipment. No personally owned computer equipment can be used by the contractor. Approval of the contractor's remote or telework access is at the sole discretion of BLS and must be received in writing by the COR before any such access can take place.

BLS reserves the right to review and approve or disapprove any security safeguards instituted to comply with the requirements of this contract. BLS also reserves the right on behalf of itself and the government to conduct confidentiality and security compliance reviews as deemed appropriate to ensure compliance with all security policies and directives, including unannounced security inspections of the contractor's facilities and approved telework sites. Reviews may involve inspection of the facilities, technical capabilities, documentation, records, databases, operations, and procedures provided for the performance of any work under this contract. The contractor shall support security inspections conducted by government auditors or other government representatives, as designated by the COR. BLS data physically and/or electronically maintained at the contractor's worksites will be sufficiently segregated from any other confidential data the contractor maintains in order to facilitate BLS security inspections. No other obligations on the part of the contractor may restrict BLS access to contractor facilities where BLS confidential information is maintained. The contractor may not put forth legal qualifications for, or in any way restrict, BLS access to these systems or facilities for the purpose of determining compliance with contract requirement. On the basis of such security inspections, the COR may require specific measures in cases where the contractor is found to be non-compliant with contract requirements. The contractor shall implement such measures as soon as possible without additional cost to the government and support additional reviews as necessary to confirm actions taken to correct defects and deficiencies.

The contractor may use a combination of commercially available software and custom developed software established under the secure software development framework defined in NIST SP 800-

218. The commercially available software shall have been developed by major software vendors, be widely used, and be actively supported by the developer or other third parties. When selecting among competing commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software products, the contractor shall choose software and versions that are free from known security vulnerabilities. The chosen COTS software shall reflect the standard commercial practice of industry. The contractor shall consult available security checklists or recommendation guides in selecting secure product configurations and parameter settings. Any custom developed software shall be developed in compliance with relevant NIST security requirements. After assembling the COTS and custom software elements of the system, the contractor shall undertake a thorough and methodical search for ways by which the security of the integrated system might be undermined. The government has the right to perform a similar analysis. The contractor shall remedy any vulnerability found from the contractor's review or the government's review in a timely manner. The contractor will consult with the COR, System Owner, and the ISSO on the usage of software applications.

The standard installation, operation, maintenance, update, and/or patching of software shall not alter the configuration settings from the NIST national checklist program repository (https://nvd.nist.gov/ncp/repository). Any non-standard configuration settings must be approved by the BLS ISSO.

Applications designed for end users shall run with full functionality in the standard user context without elevated system administration privileges.

It is critical that security measures be taken to protect any telecommunication links. The contractor shall configure its routers to restrict traffic through the routers to only that which is needed to perform the work in the contract.

Deliverables 2.9.1 Confidentiality and Security Compliance Reviews

The contractor shall assist as necessary with all Confidentiality and Security Compliance Reviews, including but not limited to audits, scans, as well as provide documentation and requested information in the time period allotted.

Documents must pass review by BLS and/or an independent auditor.

Task 3. NLSY27 Interim Contact Between Round 1 and Round 2

To maintain respondent cooperation and maximize response rates, the contractor shall develop and implement methods to locate and contact NLSY27 respondents between Rounds of the survey. Respondent contacts during non-field periods should maintain and improve respondent interest in the survey, enhance respondent recall, and update locator information without overburdening or alienating respondents.

Subtask 3.1 Interim Contact Plan

The contractor shall develop an interim contact plan for Round eligible respondents. The interim contact plan shall be delivered no later than 3 months after contract award.

The plan shall include (but is not limited to) elements such as the type of interim contact (newsletter, interim survey, respondent satisfaction card etc.), the mode (or mode mix), the period during which the distribution shall occur, whether respondents will receive generic or targeted materials and a discussion of the intended outcomes of the contact.

Deliverable 3.1.1 Interim Contact Plan.

The interim contact plan shall be delivered no later than 3 months after contract award.

Subtask 3.2 Interim Contact Respondent Materials

The contractor shall provide a draft of the interim contact materials, as agreed upon in the Interim Contact Plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR. The contractor shall respond to NLS staff edits and suggestions within 2 weeks. The contractor shall work with BLS to develop a non-substantive change to the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection OMB package to include interim contact respondent materials.

Deliverable 3.2.1 Interim Contact Respondent Materials.

Interim contact materials will be submitted as agreed upon in the Interim Contact Plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Task 4. NLSY27 Round 2 Pretest

The general content, mode, and structure of Round 2 of the NLSY27 will be established in the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection OMB Clearance Package submitted by BLS. The contractor shall implement the Round 2 Data Collection consistent within this framework. BLS will provide all OMB materials related to the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection OMB to the contractor. The goal of the pretest is to test all data-collection instruments in all modes which will be used in the Round 2 main data collection, systems for case management and other activities, survey procedures, web sites targeted to survey respondents, and respondent documents (such as advance letters and conversion materials). NLS anticipates the Round 2 pretest occurring January to March 2028.

The contractor shall plan and conduct pretest activities to support the development and refinement of the NLSY27 Round 2 questionnaire and associated data collection. The instruments shall be administered in languages other than English as needed, with a Spanish version at minimum. Results from the Round 2 pretest shall inform final questionnaire content, mode, timing, and respondent burden for Round 2 main collection. If subsequent testing is needed

on one or more of these activities, the follow-up testing may be conducted separately from a full test of all fielding activities. BLS has retained a pretest sample and respondents that may be used for the Round 2 pretest. BLS will provide the retained pretest sample and any associated materials to the contractor.

The contractor shall produce all instruments and systems for data collection, train staff in the methods of data collection, test all data collection systems, and report on the quality of the data collection systems for the pretest. It is anticipated that the pretest will be completed at least 6 months prior to the data collection for the main Round 2 collection. The contractor may propose alternative timing, subject to BLS approval, as long as the results will be available in time to inform the production of the final instruments and materials to be included in the Round 2 main collection. Pretest activities under this task shall be limited to the general scope, procedures, and materials described in the developed Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection package, which will be provided by BLS. Any changes that constitute non-substantive revisions to the Round 2 Pretest and Main Data Collection OMB Clearance package shall be documented and incorporated, as directed by BLS. Pretest findings that will require substantive changes to the Round 2 Pretest and Main Data Collection OMB clearance package shall be identified and discussed with BLS as soon as practicable, and no later than 5 business days after the Contractor becomes aware of the issue.

Subtask 4.1 NLSY27 Round 2 Pretest Plan

For the Round 2 pretest, the contractor shall develop plans describing how the contractor will thoroughly test questionnaires, systems, procedures, and respondent documents for all modes that will be employed in the main Round 2 fielding. The plans shall be submitted to BLS for review and approval. The plans shall include a statement of purpose, data needed to meet the purpose, a description of the pretest data collection approaches needed to meet the purpose, a schedule for data collection, procedures for assuring data quality and for maximizing response rates, and a schedule outlining how the results of the pretests will be incorporated into the final versions of the data collection procedures and instruments within the timeframe of the study.

The pretest plan must provide a detailed description of how all problems and difficulties can be identified and how corrective measures will be devised to prevent a recurrence of the problems in the main Round 2 fielding of the survey.

In preparation for the pretest, the Contractor shall prepare and submit for review and approval of BLS all questionnaires, forms, manuals, and procedural specifications.

Deliverable 4.1.1 Draft Pretest Plan

The draft pretest test plan shall be submitted by the contractor 60 days after contract award.

Deliverable 4.1.2 Final Pretest Plan

The contractor shall submit a response to BLS comments and a final pretest plan and respondent document 15 days after receipt of BLS comments on the draft.

Subtask 4.2 NLSY27 Round 2 Pretest Respondent Materials

The Contractor shall provide hard copy and electronic versions of the materials to designated NLS staff for review. Some respondent materials have been previously developed as part of the Round 2 Pretest and OMB clearance package. The contractor shall review all respondent materials and may propose revisions to such materials as needed to support respondent engagement for the Round 2 pretest implementation. The Contractor may also propose additional respondent materials to support the pretest, subject to BLS approval and consistency with the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection clearance package. To the extent possible, respondent materials shall be tested as part of the pretest.

Deliverable 4.2.1 Draft Pretest Respondent Materials

Draft respondent tools and materials are due 5 months prior to fielding the Round 2 pretest. If there are outreach tools or delivery methods that require the use of email, text, or web platforms, the Contractor shall clearly note these in the Pretest Plan so that NLS staff may determine whether an Security Panel Review (SPR) is needed.

Deliverable 4.2.2 Final Pretest Respondent Materials

Final respondent materials are due ten 10 days after comments are received from BLS.

Subtask 4.3 Hire and Train Pre-Test Field Staff

For the Round 2 pretest, the contractor shall hire and train all staff needed to complete the data collection activities associated with the pretest. Staff assigned to the study by the contractor shall have the necessary skills to obtain respondent cooperation to participate in the interview, effectively administer the questionnaire, and complete the interviews accurately, efficiently, and using good interviewing techniques. At a minimum, the contractor shall maintain a sufficient number of staff to conduct the data collection within the pretest data collection period as defined in the pretest plan. Training shall also include components on data confidentiality and data loss reporting procedures. The contractor shall ensure that all staff assigned to the project have successfully completed the specified training requirements and have the appropriate non-disclosure agreements in place prior to being given project access.

Recruitment and training of field staff shall involve hiring staff, obtaining signed documents/agent agreements, and ensuring that staff have the appropriate security clearances in a timely manner. Training shall occur such that it concludes shortly before staff begin to interact with respondents. As needed, the contractor shall conduct additional training for new methods or procedures instituted in response to experiences in the field after collection has started. Agent agreements (Attachment B) shall be obtained when staff are assigned to the project.

The contractor shall submit materials used for training the field staff who will conduct the pretest

and shall submit quality control monitors for these staff, including any manuals, workbooks, exercises, slides, role plays, glossaries of terms, procedures for refusal conversion, and procedures for system operations.

The contractor shall expect to develop additional training materials, as needed, after the pretest begins to address issues experienced in the field. The contractor shall submit any additional materials produced as needed to adjust to experiences during the pretest at the same time such materials are sent to field staff. These materials would be in the form of memoranda, notices, and other short format materials to help staff in the field learn from experiences of other staff in the field during the pretest.

Deliverable 4.3.1 Pretest Field Staff Training Materials

Draft materials shall be delivered to the COR for review 45 days before training shall occur. Final pretest field staff training materials. Due ten 10 after comments are received from BLS.

Deliverable 4.3.2 Pretest Field Interviewer Training

The contractor shall report instrument-timing data for each item collected along with recommendations for an efficient instrument for main Round 2 fielding. All instruments and procedures associated with the interview and assessments shall undergo a comprehensive analysis with all results being documented. For assessments, this effort shall include at a minimum an examination of test and item reliability, bias, and validity.

Subtask 4.4 NLSY27 Round 2 Pretest Data Collection

The contractor shall report instrument-timing data for each item collected along with recommendations for an efficient instrument for main Round 2 fielding. All instruments and procedures associated with the interview and assessments shall undergo a comprehensive analysis with all results being documented.

The status of all cases in the data collection system, by day of operations, shall be presented in daily production counts and weekly production reports for the pretest. The COR shall be informed of any production or field issues as they arise.

Pretest data collections shall be completed in time to inform any modifications to the OMB clearance request for the main Round 2 data collection. Production reports shall be delivered weekly during collection. An ASCII data file with the data collected during the pretest and any documentation needed to read file shall be delivered through the MIS at the same time that the pretest report is delivered and follow the same review and revision schedule. The pretest data may be used in subsequent rounds as preloads. The contractor shall store the data in a way most efficient and secure for the programming of the subsequent rounds to access and data needed for preloads.

The contractor shall create and maintain an NLSY27 Pretest Sample Member Records file

containing information for each respondent that will make it easier to contact them and convince them to participate in the next round of pretest for the NLSY27. This includes records of how the respondent set up their interview, all attempted contacts and contacts in the current round with the time and date of contact, the mode of contact and the results of the contact, a record of all incentives offered and given to the respondent, preferred mode of contact in future rounds and locating information that will make contacting the pretest sample member in following rounds easier.

Deliverable 4.4.1 Pretest Production Reports

The status of all cases in the data collection system, by day of operations, shall be presented in daily production counts and weekly production reports for the pretest. The COR shall be informed of any production or field issues as they arise.

Deliverable 4.4.2 Sample Member Records File

The contractor shall produce a Sample Members Records file with pretest respondents' contact information, record of calls, and all Paradata for BLS review. Due 12 months after the end of fielding.

Subtask 4.5.1 NLSY27 Round 2 Pretest Final Report

The contractor shall prepare a memo of initial findings and recommendations and a final report documenting all activities, methods, and outcomes of the pretest.

The final report will expand upon the initial findings and recommendations. The reports shall provide details about outcomes of response rate maximization procedures and quality control procedures, and include a summary of necessary changes to the Round 2 Pretest and OMB Collection package. The outline shall identify each recommended change and describe the rational for the change.

Information shall be included about any problems encountered in the field and their solutions, rate and reasons for refusals, instrument timings, and recommendations for modifying instrument content or collection procedures. As appropriate, the report shall include summary reports of expert reactions and suggestions based on the pretest results. The final pretest reports, once approved, shall be included as an appendix to the relevant methodology report.

If significant changes to questionnaires or collection procedures are suggested by the pretest results, information about the possible changes should be shared with BLS and the experts as soon as possible. Within 2 weeks after the Pretest, the contractor shall submit a memorandum summarizing the major pretest findings and recommendations based on the pretest results, including a timeline for revising and producing final instruments for fielding the main Round 2 data collection.

Deliverable 4.5.1 Pretest Interim Memo

The memorandum pointing out needed changes for Round 2 and recommendations based on the pretest results shall be submitted to BLS midway through the pretest data collection.

Deliverable 4.5.2 Final Pretest Report

The first draft of the pretest reports shall be submitted 30 days after the conclusion of the Round 2 pretest. 21 days after receipt of BLS comments, the final report shall be delivered. Note that a final pretest report is not necessary before incorporating results of the pretest into the OMB clearance request.

Task 5 NLSY27 Round 2 Data Collection

The contractor shall collect high quality data from the NLSY27 respondent sample. The general content, mode, and structure of Round 2 of the NLSY27 have been established in the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection OMB Clearance Package. The contractor shall implement the Round 2 Data Collection consistent within this framework. However, the contractor may recommend modifications based on Round 2 pretest findings and/or operational considerations and shall notify the COR as soon as practicable of any recommended changes. The contractor shall coordinate with the COR to determine whether BLS will pursue revisions to the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection OMB Clearance package within 90 days prior to Round 2 Data collection.

The contractor shall adhere to the following parameters for Round 2 Data Collection:

- The field period shall begin in early fall. BLS anticipates that collection for Round 2 will begin in Fall 2028. The duration of the field period shall be left to the judgment of the contractor, subject to the approval of the COR. Interviewing should take no more than 12 months to allow data from this round to be used in the following round.
- The contractor shall send an advance letter with the signature of the NLS director or other designated BLS employee to each sample member.
- The contractor shall conduct interviews lasting approximately an hour.
- At the end of each interview, the contractor shall obtain information helpful for locating each respondent in subsequent rounds of the survey.
- The contractor shall implement the plan for data transmission, data storage, data security, and confidentiality of the transmitted data that was devised in the Fielding Plan and agreed upon by the COR.
- The contractor shall design and implement a system to monitor field work that is capable of producing regular reports on the current status of all sample cases, the number and productivity of the fielding staff, and the other relevant fielding metrics. The contractor will make these reports available to the COR on at least a weekly basis.
- All interviewers assigned to the study shall complete a brief questionnaire on personal characteristics to be used in post-survey evaluation studies. This information on interviewer characteristics should be linkable to individual survey cases to facilitate methodological analyses if the COR and Contractor agree that such analyses would aid in the management of the survey.

- Upon receipt of completed questionnaires, the contractor shall send incentives and thank-you materials to respondents.

The contractor shall implement quality control procedures relating to data collection. Specifically, the contractor shall:

- Implement procedures to ensure that all data collection systems are operating properly for each mode, by reviewing the consistency of items and the completeness of questionnaires
- Design a review process to include quality control checks to ensure that the interview is complete and the data were transmitted accurately.
- Ensure that interviews are completed fully and accurately and take steps to identify and correct cases of fabricated interviews.
- Implement a system to check on the quality of each interviewer's work to ensure proper coding of responses, appropriate use of "other-specify" categories, and so forth. According to the magnitude of the errors and the rate of improvement, the contractor shall take corrective actions, from retraining and additional observation of the interviewer to the removal of the interviewer from the survey.
- Report to the COR weekly on the quality review, data retrieval, and validation operations.

Subtask 5.1 Fielding Plan

The Contractor shall produce a Fielding Plan that outlines all aspects of the fielding effort. Elements of the fielding plan shall include, but are not limited to:

- *Mode*

  BLS will determine the mode mix to be implemented in the Round 2 Pretest and main data collection. An alternative mode(s) may be proposed to maximize response rates and reduce respondent burden and for (1) hard to reach or cost prohibitive cases and, (2) specific modules or segments of the interview, subject to BLS approval.

- *Fielding schedule*

  The Contractor shall propose a fielding schedule that identifies events such as the length of the fielding period, phases of the data collection period (e.g. locating, startup, closedown), dates of field staff training, the release of replicates (if used), distribution of respondent materials, and the timing of respondent incentives. NLS is targeting Fall 2028 for the start of the youth in-person data collection effort with a tentative end date of Fall 2029. The Contractor may propose an alternative fielding schedule, subject to BLS approval.

- *Respondent Incentive Plan*
- The Contractor may propose revisions to the respondent incentive plan that has been developed as part of the Round 2 Pretest and Main Data Collection OMB clearance package. Incentives may be monetary or non-monetary in nature. All incentive plans must be approved

by BLS and as part of the OMB clearance process. The Contractor should be mindful of the types and structure of incentives that OMB has approved for other NLS surveys and other federally funded longitudinal studies. Any revisions to the incentive plan should detail what incentives are to be offered, to which respondents, under what circumstances, and during which phase of the data collection period. The Contractor shall also provide a justification for each incentive and any past research on the usage of similar incentives. *System for disbursing and tracking incentive payments*

If the Contractor proposes monetary incentives for respondents, the Contractor shall describe their plan for disbursing these incentives. The plan shall include, at a minimum, the mode(s) of payment, if an outside vendor will be used, if interviewers will need to be trained on how to administer payment, how disbursements will be tracked, and what metrics will be used to ensure accurate and timely receipt of payment. Incentives involving electronic transmissions or online platforms require a BLS internal review process known as a Security Panel Review (SPR) that can take from 4-12 months depending on the complexity of the request.

- *Staffing Model and Levels*

The Contractor shall describe how the data collection effort will be staffed. The Contractor shall describe their field interviewer and management structure, the approximate number of field managers and interviewers through all phases of the field period, field interviewer experience levels, the approximate number of hours interviewers will be required to work per week, and potential triggers for changes in staffing levels.

- *Procedures for Monitoring Field Staff*

The Contractor shall propose a plan for monitoring interviewer performance. At a minimum, the plan shall discuss how interviewer performance will be reviewed, the timing and frequency of reviews, what metrics will be used to track performance, how performance issues will be addressed, and performance remediation strategies. The Contractor shall also detail how this information will be shared with the program.

- *Systems and hardware*

The Contractor shall be responsible for the purchase of all systems and hardware associated with the data collection effort. Examples include field interviewer laptops, smartphones, and tablets, case management system, file transfer system, servers, cloud space, application programming interfaces (APIs), etc.

Deliverable 5.1.1 Draft Fielding Plan

Due at a date to be determined by with the COR.

Deliverable 5.1.2 Final Fielding Plan

Due at a date to be determined by the COR.

Subtask 5.2 Questionnaire aides and testing

Included with the questionnaire will be a series of questions and answers that interviewers can use to aid respondents. The contractor may propose additional questionnaire aides subject to BLS approval.

The questionnaire shall be loaded into a system that meets the requirements and accommodates the mode/mix for this round. The contractor is responsible for testing that the questionnaire works as designed. The instrument must be working as designed 30 days prior to the beginning of the field period. The contractor shall report to the COR that this is the case 60 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Deliverables 5.2.1. Instrument Testing

The contractor shall develop and test the Instrument and all systems for Round 2 data collection and report completion to the COR 60 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Subtask 5.3 Hire and Train Field Staff

The contractor shall hire and train all staff needed to carry out the data collection activities associated with the NLSY27 Round 2 collection. Staff assigned to the study by the contractor shall have the necessary skills to obtain respondent cooperation to participate in the interview, effectively administer the questionnaire, and complete the interviews accurately, efficiently, and using good interviewing techniques. The contractor shall ensure that all staff assigned to the project have successfully completed the specified training requirements and have the appropriate non-disclosure agreements in place prior to being given project access.

Deliverable 5.3.1 Training Materials

Draft copies of all training materials for field staff, including manuals, workbooks, exercises, slides and other materials needed for training shall be submitted by the contractor at least 30 days prior to training. The contractor shall expect to develop additional training materials, as needed, after data collection begins to address issues experienced in the field.

Deliverable 5.3.2 Recruit & Train Field Staff

Recruitment and training of field staff shall involve hiring staff, obtaining signed documents/agent agreements, and ensuring that staff have the appropriate security clearances in a timely manner. As needed, the contractor shall conduct additional training for new methods or procedures instituted in response to experiences in the field after collection has started. Agent agreements shall be obtained when staff are assigned to the project.

Subtask 5.4 Production Reporting

During the data collection period, the contractor shall provide a weekly productivity report that includes the following information:

- the number of interviews conducted during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average total time spent on each case to locate, contact, and interview respondents during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average length of each interview during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average length of each interview by section during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average cost per case costs for interviewer labor and other direct interview expenses (to be defined),
- weekly costs and production compared to projections and to past rounds,
- the completion rates by subgroup based on past interview behavior (perfect completers, etc.),
- the number of scheduled appointments

During the data collection period, the contractor shall provide a daily report showing the number of interviews completed each day.

Deliverable 5.4.1 Periodic Productivity Report

The Productivity Report shall be delivered electronically to the NLS COR and NLS program staff. Day of the week and frequency of productivity reports to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Subtask 5.5 Final Fielding Report and Data Files

At the conclusion of each round, the Contractor shall submit a report detailing the final production numbers and an analysis of the fielding effort. Topics that shall be covered in the report include, but are not limited to:

- Locating
- Training
- Staffing and caseload management
- Incentives
- Proposed experiments
- Special populations (such as prison, military, etc)

- Hardware and software
- Data Transfers

By the end of the fielding task, the contractor will produce a Raw Data file that contains all data collected in the survey, indicating respondents' responses to each question with missing codes for questions that were not asked or that respondents refused to answer or indicated that they did not know the answer. This file will include timing information that will aid in the creation of the next round's questionnaire.

The contractor shall create and maintain an NLSY27 Sample Member Records file containing information for each respondent that will make it easier to contact them and convince them to participate in the next round of the survey. This includes records of how the respondent set up their interview, all attempted contacts and contacts in the current round with the time and date of contact, the number of FIs that touched the case, the mode of contact and theresults of the contact, a record of all incentives offered and given to the respondent, preferred mode of contact in future rounds and locating information that will make contacting the sample member in following rounds easier..

Deliverable 5.5.1 Draft Final Fielding Report

Due no later than 2 months after the end of fielding.

Deliverable 5.5.2 Final Fielding Report

Due two weeks after receiving comments from the NLS COR.

Deliverable 5.5.3 Sample Member Records File

The contractor shall produce a Sample Members Records file with respondent contact information, record of calls, and all Paradata for BLS review. Due 12 months after the end of fielding.

Deliverable 5.5.4 Raw Data Files

The contractor shall produce a file with all the data collected during the survey, respondent answers, non-response codes,missing codes, and timing information. A memo confirming completion is due 12 months after the end of fielding and will be delivered to BLS only on demand if needed.

Subtask 5.6 Debrief Meeting

At the conclusion of the round, the contractor shall hold a debrief meeting to review the round. In addition to BLS, the contractor will invite Field Managers and Project Staff to share their experiences, suggestions, and lessons learned. Of particular interest is what worked well, what needs improvement, successful respondent conversion techniques, respondent concerns and feedback about the questionnaire.

Deliverable 5.6.1 Round 2 Debrief meeting

The Debrief meeting shall be held virtually no earlier than 1 month before the end of the field period, nor

later than 1 month after the end of the field period.

Deliverable 5.6.2 Round 2 Debrief Meeting Notes

Contractor shall provide debrief meeting notes no later than 2 weeks after the debriefing meeting.

Task 6 NLSY27 Round 2 Data Processing and Documentation

The contractor shall prepare a dataset in which the data collected in round 2 have been cleaned, edited, transformed, and/or otherwise treated as necessary support their use for longitudinal analyses. The dataset shall have a well-organized and thoroughly documented logical structure, along with metadata for each data element that consistently applies a defined standard. Data files shall not be allowed to expire, be released without direct written consent by the COR, be overwritten, or otherwise destroyed.

Documentation shall be clear, comprehensive, and user-friendly providing all the information necessary to understand the NLSY27 data collection methods, sampling, weighting, and how to use the data. The questionnaire shall be made provided in a form that permits users to follow skip patterns and paths through the questionnaire. The dataset shall be partitioned into 3 segments:

- A Public Use File (PUF) consisting of the data and documentation that will be disseminated through a public-facing dissemination tool.
- A Restricted Use File (RUF) consisting of the data and documentation that will be disseminated through BLS's restricted-use data program.
- A Highly Restricted Use File (HRUF) consisting of the data and documentation that will be disseminated through BLS's restricted-use data program.

The construction of each data segment and the corresponding documentation shall be modeled after that of the NLSY97 PUF. The segmentation of the data, along with the application of associated disclosure limitation treatments, shall proceed from a disclosure risk analysis to be applied to all data following methods established in Round 1, as described in Subtask 6.5.

The data collected during Round 2 shall be entered by the contractor into data tables as part of a relational database using a standard relational database management system such as Oracle or MySQL. The relational database shall have a logical structure that facilitates efficient data maintenance and effective use, and the contractor shall maintain and provide clear documentation of the logical model and its application in the database. The logical structure shall be able to connect related data elements within a given round (e.g., multiple jobs and their characteristics reported in a round) and across survey rounds as they are accumulated (e.g., spells in a given job spanning multiple rounds). It shall include an easily updated classification structure for key identifiers and be flexible enough to handle new types of economic data with minimal effort to accommodate future additions

and changes to the NLSY27.

Data collected through computer-assisted interview (CAI) shall be exported to the relational database through automated procedures; the same shall be true of any other electronically-collected data (e.g., web surveys). Data collected through paper-and-pencil data collection modes shall be entered by the contractor using automated scanning procedures to the extent possible. The contractor shall take any additional steps necessary to convert the raw data entered by the CAI interviewers and respondents using hard-copy forms to the standard format (e.g., LIS or MDF) used to construct the other data tables in the dataset.

The contractor will create procedures to correctly merge data collected from the survey questionnaire during NLSY27 Round 2 with any other data collected during the round, such as the results of youth assessments, as well as any auxiliary data needed to create additional variables as described in Subtask 6.2. In addition, the contractor will conduct logic and consistency checks to determine if the data are internally consistent; review coding of any verbatims (e.g., for occupation and industry); and manually review anomalies detected during testing of the converted data.

All data files and related documentation associated with the design and execution of the contract (e.g., pretest data, locating data, weighting and imputation data, assessment score files, public-use data, and restricted-use data) shall be stored by the contractor in secure locations as detailed by the contractor in the data security plan. These files shall be maintained in such a form as they can be easily provided to the COR on request.

Subtask 6.1 Data Coding, Cleaning and Editing

The contractor shall code and clean all data for each respondent. Coding of completed questionnaires shall include responses to all open-ended questions. These may include, when deemed necessary, recoding of verbatim answers to “other-specify” responses.

Missing values shall follow past NLS survey practice and be coded -4 if the person was not in the universe (valid skip), -3 if the item was skipped contrary to skip patterns (invalid skip), -2 if the respondent did not know the answer, and -1 if the respondent refused to answer. Deviations from this practice must be approved in advance by the COR.

Editing and coding activities should rely on computer-assisted methods rather than manual to the extent possible but may use manual activities as needed. Respondent data records shall be reviewed for percent of questions answered and for any other problems (e.g., inappropriate skips, out-of-range values, input errors) that may have occurred during the conduct of the survey. Problem records shall be identified, and appropriate corrective actions taken.

Included in these activities are measures that are created within the CAI instrument that are used to determine skip patterns. These measures will need to be associated with the variable in question, so that the researcher can use them in tandem.

A plan for post-data collection edit checks shall be submitted to BLS for review and

concurrence before data processing begins. Specifically, coding and editing specifications shall be prepared for questionnaire items that are to be coded and edited.

A status report on data editing shall be submitted to the COR, including a description of how any errors identified (e.g., unexpectedly high edit failure) during this phase of the processing were resolved. This status report shall include cumulative summary statistics by instrument on the number of problems detected for the various items; and the status and method of corrective actions taken. The contractor shall maintain for COR inspection the records and results of the data editing and corrective actions. These records shall be delivered to the COR.

Coding shall be based on specifications determined by the contractor and approved by the COR The following coding systems shall be used:

A. Occupational
   Occupation codes from the 2020 coding system developed by the U.S. Census Bureau shall be used for classifying civilian occupations. Department of Defense occupation codes shall be used for classifying military occupations. In the event that new coding systems are released by the U.S. Census Bureau or the Department of Defense, the contractor and COR shall determine which system to use.

B. Industry
   Industry codes from the 2022 coding system developed by the U.S. Census Bureau shall be used for classifying industries. In the event that new coding systems are released by the U.S. Census Bureau, the contractor and COR shall determine which system to use.

C. Geographic
   Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) codes shall be used for coding states, counties, and metropolitan statistical areas.

D. Health Codes
   The health section of the NLS survey elicits health problems that limit the amount or kind of work the respondent can do. Those health problems are coded using a modified version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) codes taken from the World Health Organization, International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision, https://icd.who.int/en/.

E. Open Ended Questions

The coding of open-ended questions shall be determined in conjunction with the COR.

F. College and University Names (Post-secondary schools)

   Colleges and university names shall be coded using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) UNITIDs as well as the Title IV school code used for student financial aid (FAFSA).

G. Secondary School Names (high school, middle school, elementary school)

   Secondary school names shall be coded using NCES school IDs.

H. College Major

   College major shall be coded using NCES Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.

Deliverable 6.1.1 Data Processing Plan

Schedules for developing data files including explanation of how the contractor will organize the data processing work. The contractor shall submit a data file preparation schedule for all three data sets 90 days prior to the start of the data collection.

Deliverable 6.1.2 Coding and Editing Specification Plan

For all variables to be included in the PUF, RUF or HRUF, the contractor shall submit to BLS a technical quote and schedule for coding and editing instrument data 90 days prior to the start of data collection. Within 10 days of receipt of BLS comments, the contractor shall submit the final specifications. Changes that would affect the instrument shall be implemented before data collection begins. Within 10 days of receipt of a BLS request, the contractor shall submit records and results of data coding and editing to date. The contractor shall submit a cumulative status report of data coding and editing activities to BLS after the end of the coding.

Deliverable 6.1.3 Coding and Editing Report

Due with delivery of the PUF, RUF and HRUF.

Subtask 6.2 Created Variables and Created Variables Programs

Created variables may be included in each delivery of NLSY27 data. Created variables enhance the usability of NLS data. Without them, generating longitudinal or cross-sectional variables might present difficulties for some users.

The Contractor shall develop a plan for created variables to be included on the data files and described in the documentation (including providing the code and any other documentation necessary to explain the creation of the created variables). The plan should propose created variables that are commonly incorporated into data analysis of the previous NLSYs, including Round 1 of the NLSY27, such as weekly work status arrays and hours arrays, monthly schooling arrays, monthly cohabitation and marriage arrays, weeks and hours worked in the past year, highest grade completed, the number of jobs held as of the interview date, event history variables such as the beginning and ending dates for jobs, school enrollment, cohabitation and marriages, dates of birth, and other important events such as criminal justice histories, and survey methodological variables such as case disposition code, timings for each question, and interview

date.

Types of created variables that are relevant for the data files of NLSY27 Round 2 data collection include:

- Status Variables: Items that are independent of the previous round's information and depict or approximate information at a certain point in time (the date of interview or some other specific point, for example, age at interview, marital status, family size, reason for non-interview, mode of interview, sampling weights, etc.)
- Summary Employment Variables: Items that summarize a respondent's activity or characteristics across a specified period of time (since the last interview or in past calendar year)
- Cumulative Program Recipiency Variables: Recipiency items that are replaced at each round with any updated information from the current interview
- Cumulative Relationship History and Fertility Variables: Items that are replaced at each round with any updated information from the current interview
- Other Cumulative Variables: Items such as highest degree ever, highest grade completed ever, etc.
- Combined Variables: Items that are combined from more than one data point in the questionnaire data into a single data point, such as hourly wages for each job, weeks tenure for each job (subtracting out the unpaid within-job gaps), and family income.
- Methodology Variables: Items such as incentive amount, respondent outreach, timings, and interviewer demographics.
- Event History Arrays: Weekly arrays for employment status, hours, dual jobs; monthly arrays related to schooling status and type

The created variables approved by BLS shall be included in the delivery of the PUF, RUF, and HRUF. The Contractor shall also deliver to BLS the creation program used for each created variable.

All programs associated with each created variable shall be given in a text file to the COR via the sFTP site. After review by the contractor for confidentiality issues, programs will be placed on the NLS public use website.

Programs on the public use website should be edited such that there are no "hand edits" that could inadvertently disclose respondent identity. Every approved created variable will be included in the delivered data files.

Deliverable 6.2.1 Created Variable Plan

The Contractor shall propose created variables that enhance the usability of the NLSY27 data. The list should be consistent with created variables in Round 1 of the NLSY27 and with the NLSY97, especially for

the event histories.

In addition, the contractor may also propose new created variables that further enhance the usability of the data. The list of created variables to be constructed shall be submitted to the COR for approval. The plan is due 1 month prior to fielding. Ten (10) days after receipt of BLS comments, the contractor shall submit revised plans to BLS. BLS anticipates that 3 iterations of review will be needed. The plan shall not be implemented without the approval of BLS.

Deliverable 6.2.2 Created Variable Programs

The programs used to generate created variables shall be given in a text file to the COR via the sFTP site. Due to the COR within five (15) days after the delivery of the data files. After review by the contractor for confidentiality issues, the created variable programs for public-use variables will be placed on the NLS user website. Due to the COR within five (15) days after the delivery of the data files.

Subtask 6.3 Sample Weights

Weights are needed for the survey data in order to produce unbiased population estimates for summary statistics such as population means and variances. They compensate for differences in the selection probabilities of individual cases, subgroup differences in participation rates and for fluctuations from known population totals. The contractor shall submit a weighting plan and develop multiple sampling weights to assign each individual in the survey. All weights are to be included as part of the public-use file.

At a minimum, the contractor shall develop two set of sample weights to accomplish the following:

- Each individual in the data file shall have an assigned weight so the sample, when weighted, will accurately represent the national population of persons born in the cohort's respective birth years and living in the United States when the survey was first conducted.
- The cross-sectional sample, exclusive of any supplemental samples, will accurately represent the national population of persons born in the cohort's respective birth years and living in the United States when the survey first was conducted. For respondents who have participated in all years of the survey, such that this group will accurately represent the national population of persons born in the cohort's respective birth years and living in the United States when the survey was first conducted.
- Customizable Sample Weights: The contractor shall examine the impact of alternative weighting methodologies and develop a program that will enable users to calculate weights customized to their own specifications. The custom weighting program shall create the proper set of correction factors when the item of interest spans multiple surveys. The program will include an OR function to enable users to generate weights for respondents who participated in one or more surveys. We will also ensure users can use the AND function, which provides a weight for every respondent who was in all survey years that the user selects. The weighting program shall be made available to users on the NLS website.
- Mortality Adjusted Weights: The contractor will construct mortality adjusted weights applying

the methodology used in the previous round and attach them to the data sets once at least 2 percent of the sample members are determined to be deceased.

Deliverable 10.3.1 Sample Weighting Plan

The Contractor shall submit a weighting plan for approval by the COR within 60 days of the start of main data collection. At a minimum, the plan should discuss what weights will be developed, why they are needed, and how they will be constructed. Within 10 days of receiving BLS comments, the contractor shall deliver a revised plan. An additional BLS review will be conducted. The contractor shall deliver a revised plan, if necessary, based on BLS review, within 10 days of receiving BLS comments. It is anticipated that the plan might change to some extent based on data collection experiences. Thirty (30) days after the end of primary data collection activities, the contractor shall submit a revised weighting plan or indicate that changes are not necessary. If changes are proposed, the contractor shall have 10 days to respond to BLS comments on the revised quote. After BLS approves the specific weights to be developed, the contractor shall create the weights and integrate them into the main data set.

Once the weights are finalized, the code and data necessary to develop the weights shall be delivered to BLS.

Deliverable 6.3.2 Respondent Sample Weights

All weights that are developed shall be available on the public use data file. These weighting schemes are not required to account for immigration to the U.S. that occurs subsequent to Round 1 of the survey.

Deliverable 6.3.3 Customizable Sample Weights

The Contractor shall examine the impact of alternative weighting methodologies and develop a program that will enable users to calculate weights customized to their own specifications. The custom weighting program shall create the proper set of correction factors when the item of interest spans multiple domains. This program shall be given to BLS and be made available to data users.

Thirty (30) days after the end of primary data collection activities, the contractor shall submit a custom weighting program sufficiently commented for BLS to understand the logic and decisions made in the code to generate the custom weights. If changes are proposed, the contractor shall have 10 days to respond to BLS comments on the revised draft custom weights. After BLS approves the custom weighting program, the contractor shall deliver the code and any necessary data to run the custom weighting program to BLS.

Subtask 6.4 Round 2 Data Files and Documentation

Preliminary Data File:
The contractor shall make available to NLS staff preliminary data from Round 2. These data are for internal

use only and shall not be distributed to the public. In summary, the preliminarydata shall include:

- Interview data from Round 2
- Occupation and industry coding
- Coding of open-ended responses
- Codebook

Excluded from the preliminary data are created variables, weights, and any data that would create an unacceptably high risk that one could identify a respondent directly or through inference.

Public Use Data File and Documentation

The Contractor shall produce the public-use data file to be disseminated through a dissemination tool. The final dataset shall be transmitted to the dissemination tool provider through secure means consistent with relevant NIST standards.

In summary, the public use file shall include:

- Interview data (exclusions noted below)
- Coded variables
- Created variables
- Sample Weights
- Relevant documentation (eg. Codebooks, HTML questionnaire with skip patterns)

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Excluded from the public use file are any data that would create an unacceptably high risk that users could identify a respondent directly or through inference. Final decision on a variable's suitability to be included on the public use data shall remain with the COR. Specifically, the public user file shall exclude:

- any information about the geographic area of residence that is more detailed than the broad census regions of the U.S,
- respondent's U.S. State of birth or, if the respondent was born outside the U.S., the country of birth,
- the U.S. State in which a child-support agreement was established following a divorce,
- the colleges and universities each respondent had attended,
- information on the fields of study for respondents who have earned Ph.D. degrees,
- the day variables for major events such as day of birth of respondents and their children, marriages, respondent death dates, beginning and ending of jobs, school enrollment in the public-use file shall only include the month and year of each event and exclude the specific day of the month.
- Variables shall be carefully evaluated to be sure that they cannot be combined to narrow a date of birth to a less than a 14-day period.

If variables originally included in the final public-use file are subsequently determined to present

an unacceptably high risk that users could identify a respondent directly or through inference, the contractor shall remove these variables from the public-use file after consulting with the COR. The contractor shall receive approval from the COR for all decisions and actions that affect the confidentiality of respondents.

The public-use data shall be accompanied by documentation that provides sufficient detail to allow analysts to properly use the data file. The documentation shall be modeled after data file documentation from Round 1 of the NLSY27.

At a minimum, documentation includes an electronic codebook, an HTML questionnaire with working skip patterns, a user's guide, and reference copies of each questionnaire or other instrument used to collect survey responses to help analysts better navigate the data set.

To support the construction of an electronic codebook, the Contractor will provide text to appear on each electronic codebook page to help analysts to understand the data. Codebook pages shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

- variable name
- question name and number
- additional variable identifiers, if available
- variable type
- year / round in which variable is defined
- variable description
- additional background on derivation of the variable, if available
- section(s) of the user's guide in which variable is
- universe for which variable is defined
- range of values the variable takes on
- definitions of coded values that the variable takes on
- distribution of values observed in the dataset
- references to the questionnaire or other instrument used to collect the variable
- lead-in question(s) and default-next question (both linked), and such (some questions have skips based on responses-would show that as well) so users can follow skip pattern.

Further, the documentation shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

- a description of the sample design, including initial screening process
- a description of the data collection procedures
- a description of the response rates for each kind of respondent in the study and any nonresponse bias analyses that were conducted
- a description of the weights available on the file and how to use them (i.e., for which type of analysis each weight would be appropriate)
- a description of any imputations that were conducted

- a discussion and evaluation of the design effects
- summaries of the questionnaires, interviews, and assessments used to collect the data
- data considerations and errata (if necessary)
- information about created variables available on the file
- information about data file layout

Deliverable 6.4.1 Preliminary Data

12 months after the end of data collection the contractor shall make available to a limited number of NLS staff the preliminary data file for review and approval.

Deliverable 6.4.2 NLSY27 Round 2 Public Use Data

In consultation with the COR, the contractor will propose a number of months from the end of data collection for public-use data file and its documentation to be available for ingestion by a dissemination system, with a maximum for the timeframe being 12 months.

Deliverable 6.4.3 Data File Maintenance

The contractor shall add all data files, including raw data files, and, if any, raw assessment score files, assessment score files with standard errors and all other maintained unmodified data files to the secure data library as the files are completed. Documentation shall be stored with the data at the time of the archiving. The contractor shall provide BLS, through secure means, with data from these archives within 30 days of a request.

Deliverable 6.4.4 NLSY27 Round 2 Public Use Codebook Pages

A draft codebook page for each variable shall be delivered by the contractor with the second draft of the data. The contractor shall revise the electronic codebook pages within 15 days of receiving BLS comments and submit it to BLS for further review. The contractor shall anticipate BLS review periods of 15 days for the codebook pages. The contractor shall assume two more rounds of review of the codebook pages after the initial review round. The codebook pages and any code used to generate them shall be the property of the Government.

Deliverable 6.4.5 NLSY27 Round 2 Public Use Topical Guide

The delivery dates for the user's manual topical guide shall follow the delivery dates of the data file deliverables except for the chapter on using the electronic codebook; that shall follow the electronic codebook development schedule. The public-use topical guide manual shall describe the data collected by topic, including created variables, and identify variables that are available on the restricted-use files but not on the public-use file and variables that are different due to truncation or changes in categorization between the restricted- and public-use files.

Deliverable 6.4.6 NLSY27 Round 2 Public Use Questionnaire

In consultation with the COR, the contractor shall develop an HTML questionnaire with usable skip patterns and other relevant collection instrument. The form of the questionnaire shall permit a researcher to follow a hypothetical path through the questionnaire using skip patterns.

Restricted Use Data File and Documentation

The contractor shall produce data files for which access is restricted. BLS shall make the restricted use file available via data enclave. The Restricted Use file will be made available only to researchers who have completed a data-sharing agreement with BLS. This file shall not be placed on public-use dissemination tool. The Restricted use file shall contain the following information:

- Respondent identification number
- U.S. State, county, and metropolitan statistical area of residence for each respondent in each round of the survey
- Environmental variables about the U.S. States, counties, and metropolitan statistical areas where respondents reside, such as unemployment rates
- U.S. State of birth or country of birth
- U.S. State of residence at age 11
- U.S. State in which a child-support agreement was established after a divorce, if asked
- Names and locations of colleges and universities attended
- Field of study for Ph.D. graduates
- Month, year, and specific day of the month of major events, except for specific date of birth, which cannot be on any file.
- Codebook

Users, including the Contractor or any subcontractors, who wish to have access to these restricted data files for statistical research purposes must receive permission from BLS.

Deliverable 6.4.7 NLSY27 Round 2 Restricted Use Data File & Codebook

The Restricted Use data file (RUF) in Ascii format and SPSS, SAS, Stata, and R code to read the file shall be delivered to BLS within 30 days of receipt of the public use file.

The codebook pages associated with these variables shall also be created. The Restricted Use data and codebook pages shall and sent to BLS via FIPPS 140-2 Encrypted CD or via the sFTP site.

Highly Restricted Use File (HRUF) & Codebook

The contractor shall produce a HRUF to be used only by approved researchers at BLS or Census

RDC facilities. The HRUF will be made available only to researchers who have completed a data-sharing agreement with BLS. This file shall not be placed on public-use dissemination tool.

The HRUF shall contain the following information:

- All information on the Restricted Use file
- Respondent's zip code of residence for each survey round
- Respondent's census tract of residence for each survey round
- Any other variables that, after consultation with the COR, it is decided have research value and can be placed on the HRUF without violating respondent confidentiality but should not be placed on the restricted use file.

Codebook

Users, including the Contractor or any subcontractors, who wish to have access to the HRUF for statistical research purposes must receive permission from BLS.

Deliverable 6.4.8 NLSY27 Round 2 HRUF and Codebook

The HRUF and SPSS, SASS, Stata, and R code to read the file shall be delivered to BLS within 14 days of BLS agreeing to final modifications to the relevant data, based on the disclosure limitation process. The codebook pages associated with these variables shall also be created. The HRUF data and codebook pages shall and sent to BLS via FIPPS 140-2 Encrypted CD or via the sFTP site.

Subtask 6.5 NLSY27 Round 2 Public Use Variable Metadata files

The contractor shall produce a full export of all the metadata associated with every public use variable. Export may be in multiple files.

- Public-Use Variable Data and metadata (The data associated with each question, like rnum, qname, area of interest, codebook page, etc.)
- Public-Use Variable Response Data and metadata (answer key, answer value, etc. associated with each variable)
- Complete listing of Index of Selected Variables 'tree' with associated variables

Deliverable 6.5.1 Metadata File

The contractor shall produce a full export of all the metadata associated with every public use variable. Export may be in multiple files. Due 12 months after the end of Round 2 data collection.

Task 7. Round 3 Respondent Outreach and OMB Clearance Materials

To maintain respondent cooperation and maximize response rates, the contractor shall develop and implement methods to locate and contact NLSY27 respondents during the fielding period and between

Rounds of the survey. Respondent contacts during non-field periods should maintain and improve respondent interest in the survey, enhance respondent recall, and update locator information without overburdening or alienating respondents.

Given the fundamental shift in how youth communicate and engage with others, NLS recognizes that a new paradigm may be needed for thinking about how we interact with respondents. New strategies proposed by the Contractor must balance the preferences of this age group with data quality, cost, security requirements, respondent confidentiality, and appropriate interaction with youth. Outreach involving electronic transmissions or online platforms requires an BLS internal review process known as a Security Panel Review (SPR) that can take from 4-12 months depending on the complexity of the request.

Subtask 7.1 Respondent Outreach Plan

The contractor shall develop a respondent outreach plan for Round eligible respondents. The respondent outreach plan, at a minimum, shall address the following topics:

- Define the communication styles and preferences relevant to this age group, including specific technologies and platforms that they are most likely to utilize.
- Examine whether there are motivational factors consistent across this age range that are likely to influence completion and continued participation.
- Propose an overall marketing approach that balances respondent needs, survey costs, security requirements, respondent burden, and respondent confidentiality.
- Propose a list of materials to be developed, their format(s), and distribution timing and mechanism/platforms.
- Propose a timeline for the development, review, publication, and distribution of materials. Identify materials and strategies that should Ibe tested in the Round 3 pretest, some materials may need to be adjusted or will be added for the main collection.
- Anticipate potential constraints imposed by technology or BLS policy

The respondent outreach plan shall be delivered no later than 3 months after the end of the field period for the previous round.

Deliverable 7.1.1 Respondent Outreach Plan

The respondent outreach plan shall be delivered no later than 3 months after the end of the field period for the previous round.

Subtask 7.2 Respondent Materials

The contractor shall provide a draft of the respondent outreach materials including interim contact

materials in between survey rounds, as agreed upon in the Respondent Outreach Plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR. The contractor shall respond to NLS staff edits and suggestions within 2 weeks.

Deliverable 7.2.1 Respondent Materials

Respondent materials will be submitted as agreed upon in the Respondent Outreach Plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Subtask 7.3 OMB Clearance Materials

The Contractor shall develop the materials needed for OMB Clearance of the NLSY27 Round 3 pre-test and main collection. NLS anticipates that a single OMB clearance package will cover both the Round 3 pretest and main data collection, with a non-substantive change being submitted to gain OMB approval for any differences in the questionnaire or survey methods between the pretest and the main round.

The current OMB requirements must be followed; for example, as of the time of the writing of this PWS, OMB requires that all respondent-facing materials including website text and foreign language translations be included in the package.

The Contractor shall be responsible for drafting and revising the following components of the Information Collection Package (ICR):

- Supporting Statement Part A
- Supporting Statement Part B
- Information collection instrument(s) (forms, web collection instruments, Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) and Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) scripts)
- Supporting documentation (statutes, regulations, studies, advance letters and emails, informed consent letters, planning information)
- Incentive and payment plans
- Addressing comments received during the clearance process (as needed)

To assist with the development of these materials, templates and background information on the clearance process are provided in Appendix A. The OMB Clearance Package for NLSY27 Round 1 Pre-test can be found at: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-04-24/pdf/2025-07064.pdf.

The following links provide information about the Paperwork Reduction Act and the OMB clearance process.

- https://pra.digital.gov/
- https://www.opm.gov/about-us/open-government/digital-government-

strategy/fitara/paperwork-reduction-act-guide.pdf

The NLS program shall be responsible for drafting and reviewing the following components of the ICR:

- First Federal Register Notice (60-day notice)
- Consent statements and guidance for seeking consent for the participation of minors
- PRA Burden Statement Information

As needed, the Contractor shall provide the necessary background information to complete these documents.

Subtask 7.3.1 Round 3 Pretest and Main Youth Clearance Package

The Contractor shall develop the first full clearance request for pretesting the questionnaire and operations for Round 3 data collection of the youth.

Deliverable 7.3.2 Round 3 Pretest and Main Youth Clearance Package

Schedule TBD. Allocate 10 months for the clearance process, after draft version has been approved by NLS staff. Revisions to the package may be necessary based on feedback from BLS, DOL, and OMB reviewers, or public comments received during the 60-day Federal Register notice period.

Task 8. NLSY27 Round 3 Questionnaire Design and Planning

The Contractor shall work with BLS in the design and development of the Round 3 questionnaire. The questionnaires for Round 3 will include collection of event history data from the date of the last interview for event histories begun in Round 1, including schooling, training, employment, marriage and cohabitation, fertility, program participation, and criminal justice. The questionnaire may also introduce new topics, approved by BLS, that were not included in previous rounds.

The questionnaires may be comprised of interviewer administered and self-administered questions (SAQs). Assessments of the youth's skills or knowledge may be included in either the interviewer-administered or self- administered portions of the questionnaire. The Contractor may recommend a mode or a combination of modes for Round 3, subject to BLS approval. For example, the Contractor may include a self-administered section that could be administered through a web-based interview tool, assuming all technical and security requirements are met.

Results from early rounds of the NLSY97, previous rounds of the NLSY27, and new findings in the economics, sociology, demography, and survey methodology literature shall be

incorporated in the design of the subsequent questionnaires.

The questionnaire will include all questions respondents will be asked to answer, plus any computer instructions that indicate the sequencing of questions based on prior information about the respondent or answers they gave earlier in the interview. The questionnaire is anticipated to include a set of core questions that will be repeated in each interview, topical modules that may be repeated in nonconsecutive rounds, and items that may appear in only one round. The NLS questionnaires are flexible to accommodate the progression in the respondents' age, changes in the labor market, and shifts in current policy or research interest. The questionnaires shall maintain this ability to accommodate changes in content and design from round to round. These types of changes may include, but are not limited to:

- Subject matter
- The frequency with which questions are asked (i.e. every round, in non-consecutive rounds, and in one round only).
- The mode of interview (i.e. in-person, phone, internet, etc.)

BLS shall have final authority over all aspects of the questionnaire, including content and mode. The Contractor shall develop a design plan covering the topics and questions to be asked, and an instrumentation plan for Round 3. The plans shall include timelines for the design and instrumentation processes. The shall designate contractor staff, including SMEs, to serve on the design team and describe their roles. The topics and questions for the survey shall be developed by BLS and may include contractor staff, as proposed by the contractor.

The Contractor shall become familiar with questionnaires of existing and former NLS cohorts, especially Round 1 and Round 2 of the NLSY27, and the early rounds of NLSY97, to facilitate comparability.

The Contractor shall be responsible for ensuring that development of the Round 3 questionnaire occurs in a timely fashion. The Contractor shall be responsible for implementing the design decisions and executing the development of all aspects of the questionnaire and related field materials in time to meet the schedule. The design plan and timeline shall lay out the process including designating the structure of the design team and defining the roles and responsibilities of the design team members, contractor staff, and BLS in the design process, and proposing meeting dates

At the end of the design process the contractor will create a report listing new variables and explaining how those variables will be categorized in the data query tool. This will include the variable type, area of interest and Index tree categorization. BLS has final approval for variable categorization.

Subtask 8.1 Questionnaire Design Plans

Prior to the beginning of the design process, BLS shall deliver a draft outline of the proposed content

for the Round 3 questionnaire to the Contractor. The outline shall highlight differences from NLSY27 Rounds 1-2 and include a brief rationale and possible sources of items for any new content included, possible research uses for each new item or group of items from longitudinal data, possible sources of the new items (NLSY surveys, other surveys, newly written items), and a brief explanation on how the new item(s) relate to labor market outcomes.

The Contractor shall review the Round 3 outline provided by BLS and construct a design plan. The design plan shall include a timeline for all design activities. The plan shall designate contractor staff to serve on the design team, propose meeting dates to solicit input from subject matter experts, and propose data collection procedures (mode, interviewer-administered vs. self-administered) for each topic or assessment. The plan should include any concerns or considerations that the contractor has regarding the topics included in the BLS outlines.

Ultimately, the Round 3 outline along with the data collection procedures laid out in the plan will be the foundation for the design process, IRB package and OMB clearance package for Round 3. Based on review and comments, revisions to the outline may be needed.

Deliverable 8.1.1 NLSY27 Round 3 Draft Design Plan

To be provided to the COR, within 21 days of the award of the contract.

Deliverable 8.1.2 NLSY27 Round 3 Final Design Plan

BLS will provide comments on the Contractor's plan and timeline for design. Revisions to the questionnaire design plan and timeline may be required within 10 days of receipt of BLS comments.

Deliverable 8.1.1 NLSY27 Round 3 Draft Instrumentation Plan

To be provided to the COR, within 21 days of the award of the contract.

Deliverable 8.1.2 NLSY27 Round 3 Final Instrumentation Plan

BLS will provide comments on the Contractor's plan and timeline for design. Revisions to the questionnaire design plan and timeline may be required within 10 days of receipt of BLS comments.

Deliverable 8.1.4 Questionnaire Topics Report

Questionnaire Topics Report to be jointly written by BLS and contractor listing reasons to include any topics and/or questions not taken from an existing, tested source, and results from testing the new questions. Materials will be submitted as agreed upon, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Subtask 8.2 Round 3 Questionnaire

The contractor shall compile a preliminary draft of the questionnaire from the final outlines for Round 3 produced by the BLS design team. The contractor will coordinate review of this draft by members of the design team. The review shall include refinements to the questionnaire items, expected timings, and methodological considerations. The Contractor shall update the draft of the questionnaire based on the decisions of the BLS design team, including annotations for all changes from the preliminary draft for BLS review.

The Contractor must consider the cognitive aspects of survey design along with methodological considerations of questionnaire preparation, particularly as they apply to the respective interview modes for each Round. The Contractor shall apply professional expertise to the wording, sequence, layout, and presentation of the questionnaire.

Deliverable 8.2.1 Draft 1 of Round 3 Questionnaire

Within five months of the final outline of the Round 3 questionnaire, the contractor shall submit the first draft of the round 3 questionnaire for testing.

Deliverable 8.2.2 Final Version of Round 3 Questionnaire

Within 30 days of receiving BLS comments on the initial draft of the Round 3 questionnaire. A second draft of the questionnaire with annotations regarding changes made to the initial draft of the questionnaire and a clean version of the questionnaire shall be delivered.

Deliverable 8.2.3 Spanish Language Versions of Round 3 Questionnaire, if needed

A Spanish language version of the Round 3 questionnaire is due 30 days after delivery of the second draft of the questionnaire.

Subtask 8.3 Questionnaire aides and testing

Included with the questionnaire will be a series of questions and answers that interviewers can use to aid respondents.

The questionnaire shall be loaded into a CAPI/CATI system that meets the requirements. The contractor is responsible for testing that the questionnaire works as designed. The instrument must be working as designed 60 days prior to the beginning of the field period. The contractor shall report to the COR that this is the case 30 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Deliverables 8.3.1. Instrument Testing

The contractor shall develop and test the Instrument and all systems for data collection and report completion to the COR 30 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Task 9. NLSY27 Round 3 Pretest

The goal of the pretest is to test all data-collection instruments in all modes which will be used in the Round 3 main data collection, systems for case management and other activities, survey procedures, web sites targeted to survey respondents, and respondent documents (such as advance letters and conversion materials).

The contractor shall plan and conduct pretest activities to support the development and refinement of the NLSY27 Round 3 questionnaire and associated data collection. The instruments and any assessments shall be administered in languages other than English as needed, with a Spanish version, if needed. Results from the Round 3pretest shall inform final questionnaire content, mode, timing, and respondent burden for Round 3main collection. If subsequent testing is needed on one or more of these activities, the follow-up testing may be conducted separately from a full test of all fielding activities. BLS has retained a pretest sample and respondents that may be used for the Round3 pretest. BLS will provide the retained pretest sample and any associated materials to the contractor.

The contractor shall produce all instruments and systems for data collection, train staff in the methods of data collection, test all data collection systems, and report on the quality of the data collection systems for the pretest. It is anticipated that the pretest will be completed at least 6 months prior to the data collection for the main Round 3 collection. The contractor may propose alternative timing, subject to BLS approval, as long as the results will be available in time to inform the production of the final instruments and materials to be included in the Round 3 main collection. Pretest activities under this task shall be limited to the general scope, procedures, and materials described in the developed Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection package, which will be provided by BLS. Any changes that constitute non-substantive revisions to the Round 3 Pretest and Main Data Collection OMB Clearance package shall be documented and incorporated, as directed by BLS. Pretest findings that will require substantive changes to the Round 3 Pretest and Main Data Collection OMB clearance package shall be identified and discussed with BLS as soon as practicable, and no later than 5 business days after the Contractor becomes aware of the issue.

Subtask 9.1 NLSY27 Round 3 Pretest Plan

For the Round 3 pretest, the contractor shall develop plans describing how the contractor will thoroughly test questionnaires, systems, procedures, and respondent documents for all modes that will be employed in the main Round 3 fielding. The plans shall be submitted to BLS for review and approval. The plans shall include a statement of purpose, data needed to meet the purpose, a description of the pretest data collection approaches needed to meet the purpose, a schedule for data collection, procedures for assuring data quality and for maximizing response rates, and a schedule outlining how the results of the pretests will be incorporated into the final versions of the data collection procedures and instruments within the timeframe of the study.

The pretest plan must provide a detailed description of how all problems and difficulties can be

identified and how corrective measures will be devised to prevent a recurrence of the problems in the main Round 3 fielding of the survey.

In preparation for the pretest, the Contractor shall prepare and submit for review and approval of BLS all questionnaires and assessments, forms, manuals, and procedural specifications.

Deliverable 9.1.1 Draft Pretest Plan

The draft pretest test plan shall be submitted by the contractor.

Deliverable 9.1.2 Final Pretest Plan

The contractor shall submit a response to BLS comments and a final pretest plan and respondent document 15 days after receipt of BLS comments on the draft.

Subtask 9.2 NLSY27 Round 3 Pretest Respondent Materials

The Contractor shall provide hard copy and electronic versions of the materials to designated NLS staff for review. To the extent possible, respondent materials shall be tested as part of the pretest.

Deliverable 9.2.1 Draft Pretest Respondent Materials

Draft respondent tools and materials are due X months prior to fielding the Round 3 pretest. If there are outreach tools or delivery methods that require the use of email, text, or web platforms, the Contractor shall clearly note these in the Pretest Plan so that NLS staff may determine whether an Security Panel Review (SPR) is needed.

Deliverable 9.2.2 Final Pretest Respondent Materials

Final respondent materials are due ten 10 after comments are received from BLS.

Subtask 9.3 Hire and Train Pre-Test Field Staff

For the Round 3 pretest, the contractor shall hire and train all staff needed to complete the data collection activities associated with the pretest. Staff assigned to the study by the contractor shall have the necessary skills to obtain respondent cooperation to participate in the interview, effectively administer the questionnaire, and complete the interviews accurately, efficiently, and using good interviewing techniques. At a minimum, the contractor shall have a sufficient number of staff to conduct the data collection within the pretest data collection period as defined in the pretest plan. Training shall also include components on data confidentiality and data loss reporting procedures. The contractor shall ensure that all staff assigned to the project have successfully completed the specified training requirements and have the appropriate non-disclosure agreements in place prior to being given project access.

Recruitment and training of field staff shall involve hiring staff, obtaining signed documents/agent

agreements, and ensuring that staff have the appropriate security clearances in a timely manner. Training shall occur such that it concludes shortly before staff begin to interact with respondents. As needed, the contractor shall conduct additional training for new methods or procedures instituted in response to experiences in the field after collection has started. Agent agreements (Attachment B) shall be obtained when staff are assigned to the project.

The contractor shall submit materials used for training the field staff who will conduct the pretest and shall submit quality control monitors for these staff, including any manuals, workbooks, exercises, slides, role plays, glossaries of terms, procedures for refusal conversion, and procedures for system operations.

The contractor shall expect to develop additional training materials, as needed, after the pretest begins to address issues experienced in the field. The contractor shall submit any additional materials produced as needed to adjust to experiences during the pretest at the same time such materials are sent to field staff. These materials would be in the form of memoranda, notices, and other short format materials to help staff in the field learn from experiences of other staff in the field during the pretest.

Deliverable 9.3.1 Pretest Field Staff Training Materials

Draft materials shall be delivered to the COR for review 45 days before training shall occur. Final pretest field staff training materials. Due ten 10 after comments are received from BLS.

Deliverable 9.3.2 Pretest Field Interviewer Training

The contractor shall report instrument-timing data for each item collected along with recommendations for an efficient instrument for main Round 2 fielding. All instruments and procedures associated with the interview and assessments shall undergo a comprehensive analysis with all results being documented. For assessments, this effort shall include at a minimum an examination of test and item reliability, bias, and validity.

Subtask 9.4 NLSY27 Round 3 Pretest Data Collection

The contractor shall report instrument-timing data for each item collected along with recommendations for an efficient instrument for main Round 3 fielding. All instruments and procedures associated with the interview and assessments shall undergo a comprehensive analysis with all results being documented. For assessments, this effort shall include at a minimum an examination of test and item reliability, bias, and validity.

The status of all cases in the data collection system, by day of operations, shall be presented in daily production counts and weekly production reports for the pretest. The COR shall be informed of any production or field issues as they arise.

Pretest data collections shall be completed in time to inform any possible revisions to the OMB clearance request prior to main Round 3 data collection. Production reports shall be delivered

weekly during collection. An ASCII data file with the data collected during the pretest and any documentation needed to read file shall be delivered through the MIS at the same time that the pretest report is delivered and follow the same review and revision schedule. The pretest data may be used in subsequent rounds as preloads. The contractor shall store the data in a way most efficient and secure for the programming of the subsequent rounds to access and data needed for preloads.

The contractor shall create and maintain an NLSY27 Pretest Sample Member Records file containing information for each respondent that will make it easier to contact them and convince them to participate in the next round of pretest for the NLSY27. This includes records of how the respondent set up their interview, all attempted contacts and contacts in the current round with the time and date of contact, the mode of contact and the results of the contact, a record of all incentives offered and given to the respondent, preferred mode of contact in future rounds and locating information that will make contacting the pretest sample member in following rounds easier.

Deliverable 9.4.1 Pretest Production Reports

The status of all cases in the data collection system, by day of operations, shall be presented in daily production counts and weekly production reports for the pretest. The COR shall be informed of any production or field issues as they arise.

Deliverable 9.4.2 Sample Member Records File

The contractor shall produce a Sample Members Records file with pretest respondents' contact information, record of calls, and all Paradata for BLS review. Due 14 months after the end of fielding.

Subtask 9.5.1 NLSY27 Round 3 Pretest Final Report

The contractor shall prepare a memo of initial findings and recommendations and a final report documenting all activities, methods, and outcomes of the pretest.

The final report will expand upon the initial findings and recommendations. The reports shall provide details about outcomes of response rate maximization procedures and quality control procedures, and include a summary of necessary changes to the Round 3 Pretest and OMB Collection package. The outline shall identify each recommended change and describe the rational for the change.

Information shall be included about any problems encountered in the field and their solutions, rate and reasons for refusals, instrument timings, and recommendations for modifying instrument content or collection procedures. As appropriate, the report shall include summary reports of expert reactions and suggestions based on the pretest results. The final pretest

reports, once approved, shall be included as an appendix to the relevant methodology report.

If significant changes to questionnaires or collection procedures are suggested by the pretest results, information about the possible changes should be shared with BLS and the experts as soon as possible. Within 2 weeks after the Pretest, the contractor shall submit a memorandum summarizing the major pretest findings and recommendations based on the pretest results, including a timeline for producing final instruments for fielding the main Round 2 data collection.

Deliverable 9.5.1 Pretest Memo

The memorandum pointing out needed changes for Round 3 and recommendations based on the pretest results shall be submitted to BLS within 10 days of the end of the pretest data collection.

Deliverable 9.5.2 Final Pretest Report

The first draft of the pretest reports shall be submitted 30 days after the conclusion of the Round 3 pretest. 21 days after receipt of BLS comments, the final report shall be delivered. Note that a final pretest report is not necessary before incorporating results of the pretest into the OMB clearance request.

Task 10. NLSY27, Round 3 Main Youth Data Collection

The contractor shall collect high quality data from the NLSY27 respondent sample. The contractor shall adhere to the following parameters for Round 3 Data Collection:

- The field period shall begin in early fall. BLS anticipates that collection for Round 3 will begin in Fall 2029. The duration of the field period shall be left to the judgment of the contractor, subject to the approval of the COR. Interviewing should take no more than 12 months to allow data from this round to be used in the following round.
- The contractor shall send an advance letter with the signature of the NLS director or other designated BLS employee to each sample member.
- The contractor shall conduct interviews lasting approximately an hour.
- At the end of each interview, the contractor shall obtain information helpful for locating each respondent in subsequent rounds of the survey.
- The contractor shall implement the plan for data transmission, data storage, data security, and confidentiality of the transmitted data that was devised in the Fielding Plan and agreed upon by the COR.
- The contractor shall design and implement a system to monitor field work that is capable of producing regular reports on the current status of all sample cases, the number and productivity of the fielding staff, and the other relevant fielding metrics. The contractor will make these reports available to the COR on at least a weekly basis.
- All interviewers assigned to the study shall complete a brief questionnaire on personal characteristics to be used in post-survey evaluation studies. This information on interviewer

characteristics should be linkable to individual survey cases to facilitate methodological analyses if the COR and Contractor agree that such analyses would aid in the management of the survey.
- Upon receipt of completed questionnaires, the contractor shall send incentives and thank-you materials to respondents.

The contractor shall implement quality control procedures relating to data collection. Specifically, the contractor shall:

- Implement procedures to ensure that all data collection systems are operating properly for each mode, by reviewing the consistency of items and the completeness of questionnaires
- Design a review process to include quality control checks to ensure that the interview is complete and the data were transmitted accurately.
- Ensure that interviews are completed fully and accurately and take steps to identify and correct cases of fabricated interviews.
- Implement a system to check on the quality of each interviewer's work to ensure proper coding of responses, appropriate use of "other-specify" categories, and so forth. According to the magnitude of the errors and the rate of improvement, the contractor shall take corrective actions, from retraining and additional observation of the interviewer to the removal of the interviewer from the survey.
- Report to the COR weekly on the quality review, data retrieval, and validation operations.

Subtask 10.1 Fielding Plan

The Contractor shall produce a Fielding Plan that outlines all aspects of the fielding effort. Elements of the fielding plan shall include, but are not limited to:

- *Mode*

  The Contractor shall propose a mode mix that maximizes response rates and reduces respondent burden. An alternative mode(s) may be proposed to maximize response rates and reduce respondent burden and for (1) hard to reach or cost prohibitive cases and, (2) specific modules or segments of the interview, subject to BLS approval.

- *Fielding schedule*

  The Contractor shall propose a fielding schedule that identifies events such as the length of the fielding period, phases of the data collection period (e.g. locating, startup, closedown), dates of field staff training, the release of replicates (if used), distribution of respondent materials, and the timing of respondent incentives. NLS is targeting Fall 2029 for the start of the youth in-person data collection effort with a tentative end date of Fall 2030. The Contractor may propose an alternative fielding schedule, subject to BLS approval.

- *Respondent Incentive Plan*
- The Contractor may propose revisions to the respondent incentive plan that has been

developed as part of the Round 3 Pretest and Main Data Collection OMB clearance package. Incentives may be monetary or non-monetary in nature. All incentive plans must be approved by BLS and as part of the OMB clearance process. The Contractor should be mindful of the types and structure of incentives that OMB has approved for other NLS surveys and other federally funded longitudinal studies. Any revisions to the incentive plan should detail what incentives are to be offered, to which respondents, under what circumstances, and during which phase of the data collection period. The Contractor shall also provide a justification for each incentive and any past research on the usage of similar incentives. *System for disbursing and tracking incentive payments*

If the Contractor proposes monetary incentives for respondents, the Contractor shall describe their plan for disbursing these incentives. The plan shall include, at a minimum, the mode(s) of payment, if an outside vendor will be used, if interviewers will need to be trained on how to administer payment, how disbursements will be tracked, and what metrics will be used to ensure accurate and timely receipt of payment. Incentives involving electronic transmissions or online platforms require a BLS internal review process known as a Security Panel Review (SPR) that can take from 4-12 months depending on the complexity of the request.

- *Staffing Model and Levels*

The Contractor shall describe how the data collection effort will be staffed. The Contractor shall describe their field interviewer and management structure, the approximate number of field managers and interviewers through all phases of the field period, field interviewer experience levels, the approximate number of hours interviewers will be required to work per week, and potential triggers for changes in staffing levels.

- *Procedures for Monitoring Field Staff*

The Contractor shall propose a plan for monitoring interviewer performance. At a minimum, the plan shall discuss how interviewer performance will be reviewed, the timing and frequency of reviews, what metrics will be used to track performance, how performance issues will be addressed, and performance remediation strategies. The Contractor shall also detail how this information will be shared with the program.

- *Systems and hardware*

The Contractor shall be responsible for the purchase of all systems and hardware associated with the data collection effort. Examples include field interviewer laptops, smartphones, and tablets, case management system, file transfer system, servers, cloud space, application programming interfaces (APIs), etc.

Deliverable 10.1.1 Draft Fielding Plan

Due at a date to be determined by with the COR.

Deliverable 10.1.2 Final Fielding Plan

Due at a date to be determined by the COR.

Subtask 10.2 Questionnaire aides and testing

Included with the questionnaire will be a series of questions and answers that interviewers can use to aid respondents. The contractor may propose additional questionnaire aides subject to BLS approval.

The questionnaire shall be loaded into a CAPI/CATI system that meets the requirements and accommodates the mode/mix for this round. The contractor is responsible for testing that the questionnaire works as designed. The instrument must be working as designed 30 days prior to the beginning of the field period. The contractor shall report to the COR that this is the case 60 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Deliverables 10.2.1. Instrument Testing

The contractor shall develop and test the Instrument and all systems for Round 3 data collection and report completion to the COR 60 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Subtask 10.3 Hire and Train Field Staff

The contractor shall hire and train all staff needed to carry out the data collection activities associated with the NLSY27 Round 3 collection. Staff assigned to the study by the contractor shall have the necessary skills to obtain respondent cooperation to participate in the interview, effectively administer the questionnaire, and complete the interviews accurately, efficiently, and using good interviewing techniques. The contractor shall ensure that all staff assigned to the project have successfully completed the specified training requirements and have the appropriate non-disclosure agreements in place prior to being given project access.

Deliverable 10.3.1 Training Materials

Draft copies of all training materials for field staff, including manuals, workbooks, exercises, slides and other materials needed for training shall be submitted by the contractor at least 30 days prior to training. The contractor shall expect to develop additional training materials, as needed, after data collection begins to address issues experienced in the field.

Deliverable 10.3.2 Recruit & Train Field Staff

Recruitment and training of field staff shall involve hiring staff, obtaining signed documents/agent agreements, and ensuring that staff have the appropriate security clearances in a timely manner. As needed, the contractor shall conduct additional training for new methods or procedures instituted in response to experiences in the field after collection has started. Agent agreements

shall be obtained when staff are assigned to the project.

Subtask 10.4 Production Reporting

During the data collection period, the contractor shall provide, at a minimum, a weekly productivity report that includes the following information:

- the number of interviews conducted during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average total time spent on each case to locate, contact, and interview respondents during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average length of each interview during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average length of each interview by section during the previous week and cumulatively,
- the average cost per case costs for interviewer labor and other direct interview expenses (to be defined),
- weekly costs and production compared to projections and to past rounds,
- the completion rates by subgroup based on past interview behavior (perfect completers, etc.),
- the number of scheduled appointments

During the data collection period, the contractor shall provide a daily report showing the number of interviews completed each day.

Deliverable 10.4.1 Periodic Productivity Report

The Productivity Report shall be delivered electronically to the NLS COR and NLS program staff. Day of the week and frequency of productivity reports to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Subtask 10.5 Final Fielding Report and Data Files

At the conclusion of each round, the Contractor shall submit a report detailing the final production numbers and an analysis of the fielding effort. Topics that shall be covered in the report include, but are not limited to:

- Locating
- Training
- Staffing and caseload management
- Incentives
- Proposed experiments

- Special populations (such as prison, military, etc)
- Hardware and software
- Data Transfers

By the end of the fielding task, the contractor will produce a Raw Data file that contains all data collected in the survey, indicating respondents' responses to each question with missing codes for questions that were not asked or that respondents refused to answer or indicated that they did not know the answer. This file will include timing information that will aid in the creation of the next round's questionnaire.

The contractor shall create and maintain an NLSY27 Sample Member Records file containing information for each respondent that will make it easier to contact them and convince them to participate in the next round of the survey. This includes records of how the respondent set up their interview, all attempted contacts and contacts in the current round with the time and date of contact, the number of FIs that touched the case, the mode of contact and theresults of the contact, a record of all incentives offered and given to the respondent, preferred mode of contact in future rounds and locating information that will make contacting the sample member in following rounds easier..

Deliverable 10.5.1 Draft Final Fielding Report

Due no later than 2 months after the end of fielding.

Deliverable 10.5.2 Final Fielding Report

Due two weeks after receiving comments from the NLS COR.

Deliverable 10.5.3 Sample Member Records File

The contractor shall produce a Sample Members Records file with respondent contact information, record of calls, and all Paradata for BLS review. Due 12 months after the end of fielding.

Deliverable 10.5.4 Raw Data Files

The contractor shall produce a file with all the data collected during the survey, respondent answers, non-response codes,missing codes, and timing information. A memo confirming completion is due 12 months after the end of fielding and will be delivered to BLS only on demand if needed.

Subtask 10.6 Debrief Meeting

At the conclusion of the round, the contractor shall hold a debrief meeting to review the round. In addition to BLS, the contractor will invite Field Managers and Project Staff to share their experiences, suggestions, and lessons learned. Of particular interest is what worked well, what needs improvement, successful respondent conversion techniques, respondent concerns and feedback about the questionnaire.

Deliverable 10.6.1 Round 3 Debrief meeting

The Debrief meeting shall be held virtually no earlier than 1 month before the end of the field period, nor later than 1 month after the end of the field period.

Deliverable 10.6.2 Round 3 Debrief Meeting Notes

Contractor shall provide debrief meeting notes no later than 2 weeks after the debriefing meeting.

Task 11. NLSY27, Round 3 Data Processing and Documentation

The contractor shall prepare a dataset in which the data collected in round 3 have been cleaned, edited, transformed, and/or otherwise treated as necessary to support their use for longitudinal analyses. The dataset shall have a well-organized and thoroughly documented logical structure, along with metadata for each data element that consistently applies a defined standard. Data files shall not be allowed to expire, be released without direct written consent by the COR, be overwritten, or otherwise destroyed.

Documentation shall be clear, comprehensive, and user-friendly providing all the information necessary to understand the NLSY27 data collection methods, sampling, weighting, and how to use the data. The questionnaire shall be made provided in a form that permits users to follow skip patterns and paths through the questionnaire. The dataset shall be partitioned into 3 segments:

- A Public Use File (PUF) consisting of the data and documentation that will be disseminated through a public-facing dissemination tool.
- A Restricted Use File (RUF) consisting of the data and documentation that will be disseminated through BLS's restricted-use data program.
- A Highly Restricted Use File (HRUF) consisting of the data and documentation that will be disseminated through BLS's restricted-use data program.

The construction of each data segment and the corresponding documentation shall be modeled after that of the NLSY27 Round 2 PUF. The segmentation of the data, along with the application of associated disclosure limitation treatments, shall proceed from a disclosure risk analysis to be applied to all data following methods established in previous rounds of the NLSY27.

The data collected during Round 3 shall be entered by the contractor into data tables as part of a relational database using a standard relational database management system such as Oracle or MySQL. The relational database shall have a logical structure that facilitates efficient data maintenance and effective use, and the contractor shall maintain and provide clear documentation of the logical model and its application in the database. The logical structure shall be able to connect related data elements within a given round (e.g., multiple jobs and their characteristics reported in a round) and across survey rounds as they are accumulated (e.g., spells in a given job spanning multiple rounds). It shall include an easily updated classification structure for key identifiers and be flexible enough to handle new types of economic data with minimal effort to accommodate future additions and changes to the NLSY27.

Data collected through computer-assisted interview (CAI) shall be exported to the relational database through automated procedures; the same shall be true of any other electronically-collected data (e.g., web surveys). Data collected through paper-and-pencil data collection modes shall be entered by the contractor using automated scanning procedures to the extent possible. The contractor shall take any additional steps necessary to convert the raw data entered by the CAI interviewers and respondents using hard-copy forms to the standard format (e.g., LIS or MDF) used to construct the other data tables in the dataset.

The contractor will create procedures to correctly merge data collected from the survey questionnaire during NLSY27 Round 3 with any other data collected during the round, such as the results of youth assessments, as well as any auxiliary data needed to create additional variables. In addition, the contractor will conduct logic and consistency checks to determine if the data are internally consistent; review coding of any verbatims (e.g., for occupation and industry); and manually review anomalies detected during testing of the converted data.

All data files and related documentation associated with the design and execution of the contract (e.g., pretest data, locating data, weighting and imputation data, assessment score files, public-use data, and restricted-use data) shall be stored by the contractor in secure locations as detailed by the contractor in the data security plan. These files shall be maintained in such a form as they can be easily provided to the COR on request.

Subtask 11.1 Data Coding, Cleaning and Editing

The contractor shall code and clean all data for each respondent. Coding of completed questionnaires shall include responses to all open-ended questions. These may include, when deemed necessary, recoding of verbatim answers to "other-specify" responses.

Missing values shall follow past NLS survey practice and be coded -4 if the person was not in the universe (valid skip), -3 if the item was skipped contrary to skip patterns (invalid skip), -2 if the respondent did not know the answer, and -1 if the respondent refused to answer. Deviations from this practice must be approved in advance by the COR.

Editing and coding activities should rely on computer-assisted methods rather than manual to the extent possible but may use manual activities as needed. Respondent data records shall be reviewed for percent of questions answered and for any other problems (e.g., inappropriate skips, out-of-range values, input errors) that may have occurred during the conduct of the survey. Problem records shall be identified, and appropriate corrective actions taken.

Included in these activities are measures that are created within the CAI instrument that are used to determine skip patterns. These measures will need to be associated with the variable in question, so that the researcher can use them in tandem.

A plan for post-data collection edit checks shall be submitted to BLS for review and concurrence before data processing begins. Specifically, coding and editing specifications shall be prepared for questionnaire

items that are to be coded and edited.

A status report on data editing shall be submitted to the COR, including a description of how any errors identified (e.g., unexpectedly high edit failure) during this phase of the processing were resolved. This status report shall include cumulative summary statistics by instrument on the number of problems detected for the various items; and the status and method of corrective actions taken. The contractor shall maintain for COR inspection the records and results of the data editing and corrective actions. These records shall be delivered to the COR.

Coding shall be based on specifications determined by the contractor and approved by the COR
The following coding systems shall be used:

A. Occupational
   Occupation codes from the 2022 coding system developed by the U.S. Census Bureau shall be used for classifying civilian occupations. Department of Defense occupation codes shall be used for classifying military occupations. In the event that new coding systems are released by the U.S. Census Bureau or the Department of Defense, the contractor and COR shall determine which system to use.

B. Industry
   Industry codes from the 2022 coding system developed by the U.S. Census Bureau shall be used for classifying industries. In the event that new coding systems are released by the U.S. Census Bureau, the contractor and COR shall determine which system to use.

C. Geographic
   Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) codes shall be used for coding states, counties, and metropolitan statistical areas.

D. Health Codes
   The health section of the NLS survey elicits health problems that limit the amount or kind of work the respondent can do. Those health problems are coded using a modified version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) codes taken from the World Health Organization, International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision, https://icd.who.int/en/.

E. Open Ended Questions

The coding of open-ended questions shall be determined in conjunction with the COR.

F. College and University Names (Post-secondary schools)

   Colleges and university names shall be coded using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) UNITIDs as well as the Title IV school code used for student financial aid (FAFSA).

G. Secondary School Names (high school, middle school, elementary school)

   Secondary school names shall be coded using NCES school IDs.

H. College Major

   College major shall be coded using NCES Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.

Deliverable 11.1.1 Data Processing Plan

Schedules for developing data files including explanation of how the contractor will organize the data processing work. The contractor shall submit a data file preparation schedule for all three data sets 90 days prior to the start of the data collection.

Deliverable 11.1.2 Coding and Editing Specification Plan

For all variables to be included in the PUF, RUF or HRUF, the contractor shall submit to BLS a technical quote and schedule for coding and editing instrument data 90 days prior to the start of data collection. Within 10 days of receipt of BLS comments, the contractor shall submit the final specifications. Changes that would affect the instrument shall be implemented before data collection begins. Within 10 days of receipt of a BLS request, the contractor shall submit records and results of data coding and editing to date. The contractor shall submit a cumulative status report of data coding and editing activities to BLS after the end of the coding.

Deliverable 11.1.3 Coding and Editing Report

Due with delivery of the PUF, RUF and HRUF.

Subtask 11.2 Created Variables and Created Variables Programs

Created variables may be included in each delivery of NLSY27 data. Created variables enhance the usability of NLS data. Without them, generating longitudinal or cross-sectional variables might present difficulties for some users.

The Contractor shall develop a plan for created variables to be included on the data files and described in the documentation (including providing the code and any other documentation necessary to explain the creation of the created variables). The plan should propose created variables that are commonly incorporated into data analysis of the previous NLSYs, including Round 1 of the NLSY27, such as weekly work status arrays and hours arrays, monthly schooling arrays, monthly cohabitation and marriage arrays, weeks and hours worked in the past year, highest grade completed, the number of jobs held as of the interview date, event history variables such as the beginning and ending dates for jobs, school enrollment, cohabitation and marriages, dates of birth, and other important events such as criminal justice histories, and survey methodological variables such as case disposition code, timings for each question, and interview date.

Types of created variables that are relevant for the data files of NLSY27 Round 3 data collection include:

- Status Variables: Items that are independent of the previous round's information and depict or approximate information at a certain point in time (the date of interview or some other specific point, for example, age at interview, marital status, family size, reason for non-interview, mode of interview, sampling weights, etc.)
- Summary Employment Variables: Items that summarize a respondent's activity or characteristics across a specified period of time (since the last interview or in past calendar year)
- Cumulative Program Recipiency Variables: Recipiency items that are replaced at each round with any updated information from the current interview
- Cumulative Relationship History and Fertility Variables: Items that are replaced at each round with any updated information from the current interview
- Other Cumulative Variables: Items such as highest degree ever, highest grade completed ever, etc.
- Combined Variables: Items that are combined from more than one data point in the questionnaire data into a single data point, such as hourly wages for each job, weeks tenure for each job (subtracting out the unpaid within-job gaps), and family income.
- Methodology Variables: Items such as incentive amount, respondent outreach, timings, and interviewer demographics.
- Event History Arrays: Weekly arrays for employment status, hours, dual jobs; monthly arrays related to schooling status and type

The created variables approved by BLS shall be included in the delivery of the PUF, RUF, and HRUF. The Contractor shall also deliver to BLS the creation program used for each created variable.

All programs associated with each created variable shall be given in a text file to the COR via the sFTP site. After review by the contractor for confidentiality issues, programs will be placed on the NLS public use website.
Programs on the public use website should be edited such that there are no "hand edits" that could inadvertently disclose respondent identity. Every approved created variable will be included in the delivered data files.

Deliverable 11.2.1 Created Variable Plan

The Contractor shall propose created variables that enhance the usability of the NLSY27 data. The list should be consistent with created variables in Round 1 of the NLSY27 and with the NLSY97, especially for the event histories.

In addition, the contractor may also propose new created variables that further enhance the usability of the data. The list of created variables to be constructed shall be submitted to the COR for approval. The plan is due 1 month prior to fielding. Ten (10) days after receipt of BLS comments, the contractor shall submit revised plans to BLS. BLS anticipates that 3 iterations of review will be needed. The plan shall not be implemented without the approval of BLS.

Deliverable 11.2.2 Created Variable Programs

The programs used to generate created variables shall be given in a text file to the COR via the sFTP site. Due to the COR within five (15) days after the delivery of the data files. After review by the contractor for confidentiality issues, the created variable programs for public-use variables will be placed on the NLS user website. Due to the COR within five (15) days after the delivery of the data files.

Subtask 11.3 Sample Weights

Weights are needed for the survey data in order to produce unbiased population estimates for summary statistics such as population means and variances. They compensate for differences in the selection probabilities of individual cases, subgroup differences in participation rates and for fluctuations from known population totals. The contractor shall submit a weighting plan and develop multiple sampling weights to assign each individual in the survey. All weights are to be included as part of the public-use file.

At a minimum, the contractor shall develop two set of sample weights to accomplish the following:

- Each individual in the data file shall have an assigned weight so the sample, when weighted, will accurately represent the national population of persons born in the cohort's respective birth years and living in the United States when the survey was first conducted.
- The cross-sectional sample, exclusive of any supplemental samples, will accurately represent the national population of persons born in the cohort's respective birth years and living in the United States when the survey first was conducted. For respondents who have participated in all years of the survey, such that this group will accurately represent the national population of persons born in the cohort's respective birth years and living in the United States when the survey was first conducted.
- Customizable Sample Weights: The contractor shall examine the impact of alternative weighting methodologies and develop a program that will enable users to calculate weights customized to their own specifications. The custom weighting program shall create the proper set of correction factors when the item of interest spans multiple surveys. The program will include an OR function to enable users to generate weights for respondents who participated in one or more surveys. We will also ensure users can use the AND function, which provides a weight for every respondent who was in all survey years that the user selects. The weighting program shall be made available to users on the NLS website.
- Mortality Adjusted Weights: The contractor will construct mortality adjusted weights applying the methodology used in the previous round and attach them to the data sets once at least 2 percent of the sample members are determined to be deceased.

Deliverable 11.3.1 Sample Weighting Plan

The Contractor shall submit a weighting plan for approval by the COR within 60 days of the start of main

data collection. At a minimum, the plan should discuss what weights will be developed, why they are needed, and how they will be constructed. Within 10 days of receiving BLS comments, the contractor shall deliver a revised plan. An additional BLS review will be conducted. The contractor shall deliver a revised plan, if necessary, based on BLS review, within 10 days of receiving BLS comments. It is anticipated that the plan might change to some extent based on data collection experiences. Thirty (30) days after the end of primary data collection activities, the contractor shall submit a revised weighting plan or indicate that changes are not necessary. If changes are proposed, the contractor shall have 10 days to respond to BLS comments on the revised quote. After BLS approves the specific weights to be developed, the contractor shall create the weights and integrate them into the main data set.

Once the weights are finalized, the code and data necessary to develop the weights shall be delivered to BLS.

Deliverable 11.3.2 Respondent Sample Weights

All weights that are developed shall be available on the public use data file. These weighting schemes are not required to account for immigration to the U.S. that occurs subsequent to Round 1 of the survey.

Deliverable 11.3.3 Customizable Sample Weights

The Contractor shall examine the impact of alternative weighting methodologies and develop a program that will enable users to calculate weights customized to their own specifications. The custom weighting program shall create the proper set of correction factors when the item of interest spans multiple domains. This program shall be given to BLS and be made available to data users.

Thirty (30) days after the end of primary data collection activities, the contractor shall submit a custom weighting program sufficiently commented for BLS to understand the logic and decisions made in the code to generate the custom weights. If changes are proposed, the contractor shall have 10 days to respond to BLS comments on the revised draft custom weights. After BLS approves the custom weighting program, the contractor shall deliver the code and any necessary data to run the custom weighting program to BLS.

Subtask 11.4 Round 3 Data Files and Documentation

Preliminary Data File:
The contractor shall make available to NLS staff preliminary data from Round 2. These data are for internal use only and shall not be distributed to the public. In summary, the preliminarydata shall include:

- Interview data from Round 2
- Occupation and industry coding
- Coding of open-ended responses
- Codebook

Excluded from the preliminary data are created variables, weights, and any data that would create an unacceptably high risk that one could identify a respondent directly or through inference.

Public Use Data File and Documentation

The Contractor shall produce the public-use data file to be disseminated through a dissemination tool. The final dataset shall be transmitted to the dissemination tool provider through secure means consistent with relevant NIST standards.

In summary, the public use file shall include:

- Interview data (exclusions noted below)
- Coded variables
- Created variables
- Sample Weights
- Relevant documentation (eg. Codebooks, HTML questionnaire with skip patterns)

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Excluded from the public use file are any data that would create an unacceptably high risk that users could identify a respondent directly or through inference. Final decision on a variable's suitability to be included on the public use data shall remain with the COR. Specifically, the public user file shall exclude:

- any information about the geographic area of residence that is more detailed than the broad census regions of the U.S,
- respondent's U.S. State of birth or, if the respondent was born outside the U.S., the country of birth,
- the U.S. State in which a child-support agreement was established following a divorce,
- the colleges and universities each respondent had attended,
- information on the fields of study for respondents who have earned Ph.D. degrees,
- the day variables for major events such as day of birth of respondents and their children, marriages, respondent death dates, beginning and ending of jobs, school enrollment in the public-use file shall only include the month and year of each event and exclude the specific day of the month.
- Variables shall be carefully evaluated to be sure that they cannot be combined to narrow a date of birth to a less than a 14-day period.

If variables originally included in the final public-use file are subsequently determined to present an unacceptably high risk that users could identify a respondent directly or through inference, the contractor shall remove these variables from the public-use file after consulting with the COR. The contractor shall receive approval from the COR for all decisions and actions that affect the confidentiality of respondents.

The public-use data shall be accompanied by documentation that provides sufficient

detail to allow analysts to properly use the data file. The documentation shall be modeled after data file documentation from Round 1 of the NLSY27.

At a minimum, documentation includes an electronic codebook, an HTML questionnaire with working skip patterns, a user's guide, and reference copies of each questionnaire or other instrument used to collect survey responses to help analysts better navigate the data set.

To support the construction of an electronic codebook, the Contractor will provide text to appear on each electronic codebook page to help analysts to understand the data. Codebook pages shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

- variable name
- question name and number
- additional variable identifiers, if available
- variable type
- year / round in which variable is defined
- variable description
- additional background on derivation of the variable, if available
- section(s) of the user's guide in which variable is
- universe for which variable is defined
- range of values the variable takes on
- definitions of coded values that the variable takes on
- distribution of values observed in the dataset
- references to the questionnaire or other instrument used to collect the variable
- lead-in question(s) and default-next question (both linked), and such (some questions have skips based on responses-would show that as well) so users can follow skip pattern.

Further, the documentation shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

- a description of the sample design, including initial screening process
- a description of the data collection procedures
- a description of the response rates for each kind of respondent in the study and any nonresponse bias analyses that were conducted
- a description of the weights available on the file and how to use them (i.e., for which type of analysis each weight would be appropriate)
- a description of any imputations that were conducted
- a discussion and evaluation of the design effects
- summaries of the questionnaires, interviews, and assessments used to collect the data

- data considerations and errata (if necessary)
- information about created variables available on the file
- information about data file layout

Deliverable 11.4.1 Preliminary Data

12 months after the end of data collection the contractor shall make available to a limited number of NLS staff the preliminary data file for review and approval.

Deliverable 11.4.2 NLSY27 Round 2 Public Use Data

In consultation with the COR, the contractor will propose a number of months from the end of data collection for public-use data file and its documentation to be available for ingestion by a dissemination system, with a maximum for the timeframe being 12 months.

Deliverable 11.4.3 Data File Maintenance

The contractor shall add all data files, including raw data files, and, if any, raw assessment score files, assessment score files with standard errors and all other maintained unmodified data files to the secure data library as the files are completed. Documentation shall be stored with the data at the time of the archiving. The contractor shall provide BLS, through secure means, with data from these archives within 30 days of a request.

Deliverable 11.4.4 NLSY27 Round 3 Public Use Codebook Pages

A draft codebook page for each variable shall be delivered by the contractor with the second draft of the data. The contractor shall revise the electronic codebook pages within 15 days of receiving BLS comments and submit it to BLS for further review. The contractor shall anticipate BLS review periods of 15 days for the codebook pages. The contractor shall assume two more rounds of review of the codebook pages after the initial review round. The codebook pages and any code used to generate them shall be the property of the Government.

Deliverable 11.4.5 NLSY27 Round 3 Public Use Topical Guide

The delivery dates for the user's manual topical guide shall follow the delivery dates of the data file deliverables except for the chapter on using the electronic codebook; that shall follow the electronic codebook development schedule. The public-use topical guide manual shall describe the data collected by topic, including created variables, and identify variables that are available on the restricted-use files but not on the public-use file and variables that are different due to truncation or changes in categorization between the restricted- and public-use files.

Deliverable 11.4.6 NLSY27 Round 3 Public Use Questionnaire

In consultation with the COR, the contractor shall develop an HTML questionnaire with usable skip patterns and other relevant collection instruments. The form of the questionnaire shall permit

a researcher to follow a hypothetical path through the questionnaire using skip patterns.

Restricted Use Data File and Documentation

The contractor shall produce data files for which access is restricted. BLS shall make the restricted use file available via data enclave. The Restricted Use file will be made available only to researchers who have completed a data-sharing agreement with BLS. This file shall not be placed on public-use dissemination tool. The Restricted use file shall contain the following information:

- Respondent identification number
- U.S. State, county, and metropolitan statistical area of residence for each respondent in each round of the survey
- Environmental variables about the U.S. States, counties, and metropolitan statistical areas where respondents reside, such as unemployment rates
- U.S. State of birth or country of birth
- U.S. State of residence at age 11
- U.S. State in which a child-support agreement was established after a divorce, if asked
- Names and locations of colleges and universities attended
- Field of study for Ph.D. graduates
- Month, year, and specific day of the month of major events, except for specific date of birth, which cannot be on any file.
- Codebook

Users, including the Contractor or any subcontractors, who wish to have access to these restricted data files for statistical research purposes must receive permission from BLS.

Deliverable 11.4.7 NLSY27 Round 3 Restricted Use Data File & Codebook

The Restricted Use data file (RUF) in Ascii format and SPSS, SAS, Stata, and R code to read the file shall be delivered to BLS within 30 days of receipt of the public use file.

The codebook pages associated with these variables shall also be created. The Restricted use data and codebook pages shall and sent to BLS via FIPPS 140-2 Encrypted CD or via the sFTP site.

Highly Restricted Use File (HRUF) & Codebook

The contractor shall produce a HRUF to be used only by approved researchers at BLS or Census RDC facilities. The HRUF will be made available only to researchers who have completed a data-sharing agreement with BLS. This file shall not be placed on public-use dissemination tool.

The HRUF should contain the following information:

- All information on the Restricted use file

- Respondent's zip code of residence for each survey round
- Respondent's census tract of residence for each survey round
- Any other variables that, after consultation with the COR, it is decided have research value and can be placed on the HRUF without violating respondent confidentiality but should not be placed on the restricted use file.

Codebook

Users, including the Contractor or any subcontractors, who wish to have access to HRUF for statistical research purposes must receive permission from BLS.

Deliverable 11.4.8 NLSY27 Round 3 Highly Restricted Use Data Files (HRUF) and Codebook

The HRUF and SPSS, SASS, Stata, and R code to read the file shall be delivered to BLS within 14 days of BLS agreeing to final modifications to the relevant data, based on the disclosure limitation process. The codebook pages associated with these variables shall also be created. The HRUF data and codebook pages shall and sent to BLS via FIPPS 140-2 Encrypted CD or via the sFTP site.

Subtask 11.5 NLSY27 Round 3 Public Use Variable Metadata files

The contractor shall produce a full export of all the metadata associated with every public use variable. Export may be in multiple files.

- Public-Use Variable Data and metadata (The data associated with each question, like rnum, qname, area of interest, codebook page, etc.)
- Public-Use Variable Response Data and metadata (answer key, answer value, etc. associated with each variable)
- Complete listing of Index of Selected Variables 'tree' with associated variables

Deliverable 11.5.1 Metadata File

The contractor shall produce a full export of all the metadata associated with every public use variable. Export may be in multiple files. Due 12 months after the end of Round 3 data collection.

Optional Tasks

Optional Task 12. NLSY27, Interim Contact and OMB Materials (Between Round 3 and Round 4)

To maintain respondent cooperation and maximize response rates, the contractor shall develop and implement methods to locate and contact NLSY27 respondents between Rounds of the survey. Respondent contacts during non-field periods should maintain and improve respondent interest in the survey, enhance respondent recall, and update locator information without overburdening or alienating respondents.

Subtask 12.1 Interim Contact Plan

The contractor shall develop an interim contact plan for Round eligible respondents. The interim contact plan shall be delivered no later than 3 months after contract award.

The plan shall include (but is not limited to) elements such as the type of interim contact (newsletter, interim survey, respondent satisfaction card etc.), the mode (or mode mix), the period during which the distribution shall occur, whether respondents will receive generic or targeted materials and a discussion of the intended outcomes of the contact.

Deliverable 12.1.1 Interim Contact Plan.

The interim contact plan shall be delivered at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR

Subtask 12.2 Interim Contact Respondent Materials

The contractor shall provide a draft of the interim contact materials, as agreed upon in the Interim Contact Plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR. The contractor shall respond to NLS staff edits and suggestions within 2 weeks. The contractor shall work with BLS to develop a non-substantive change to the Round 2 Pretest and Main Collection OMB package to include interim contact respondent materials.

Deliverable 12.2.1 Interim Contact Respondent Materials.

Interim contact materials will be submitted as agreed upon in the Interim Contact Plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Optional Task 13. NLSY27, Round 4 Questionnaire Design and Planning

The Contractor shall work with BLS in the design and development of the Round 4 questionnaire. The questionnaires for Round 3 will include collection of event history data from the date of the last interview for event histories begun in Round 1, including schooling, training, employment, marriage and cohabitation, fertility, program participation, and criminal justice. The questionnaire may also introduce new topics, approved by BLS, that were not included in previous rounds.

The questionnaires may be comprised of interviewer administered and self-administered questions (SAQs). Assessments of the youth's skills or knowledge may be included in either the interviewer-administered or self- administered portions of the questionnaire. The Contractor may recommend a mode or a combination of modes for Round 4, subject to BLS approval. For example, the Contractor may include a self-administered section that could be administered through a web-based interview tool, assuming all technical and security requirements are met.

Results from early rounds of the NLSY97, previous rounds of the NLSY27, and new findings in the economics, sociology, demography, and survey methodology literature shall be incorporated in the design of the subsequent questionnaires.

The questionnaire will include all questions respondents will be asked to answer, plus any computer instructions that indicate the sequencing of questions based on prior information about the respondent or answers they gave earlier in the interview. The questionnaire is anticipated to include a set of core questions that will be repeated in each interview, topical modules that may be repeated in nonconsecutive rounds, and items that may appear in only one round. The NLS questionnaires are flexible to accommodate the progression in the respondents' age, changes in the labor market, and shifts in current policy or research interest. The questionnaires shall maintain this ability to accommodate changes in content and design from round to round. These types of changes may include, but are not limited to:

- Subject matter
- The frequency with which questions are asked (i.e. every round, in non-consecutive rounds, and in one round only).
- The mode of interview (i.e. in-person, phone, internet, etc.)

BLS shall have final authority over all aspects of the questionnaire, including content and mode. The Contractor shall develop a design plan covering the topics and questions to be asked, and an instrumentation plan for Round 4. The plans shall include timelines for the design and instrumentation processes. The Contractor shall designate contractor staff, including SMEs, to serve on the design team and describe their roles. The topics and questions for the survey shall be developed by a BLS and may include contractor staff, as proposed by the contractor. The Contractor shall become familiar with questionnaires of existing and former NLS cohorts, especially in previous rounds of the NLSY27, and the early rounds of NLSY97, to facilitate comparability.

The Contractor shall be responsible for ensuring that development of the Round 4 questionnaire occurs in a timely fashion. The Contractor shall be responsible for implementing the design decisions and executing the development of all aspects of the questionnaire and related field materials in time to meet the schedule. The design plan and timeline shall lay out the process including designating the structure of the design team and defining the roles and responsibilities of the design team members, contractor staff, and BLS in the design process, and proposing meeting dates.

At the end of the design process the contractor will create a report listing new variables and explaining how those variables will be categorized in the data query tool. This will include the variable type, area of interest and Index tree categorization. BLS has final approval for variable categorization.

Subtask 13.1 Questionnaire Design Plan

Prior to the beginning of the design process, BLS shall deliver a draft outline of the proposed content for the Round 4 questionnaire to the Contractor. The outline shall highlight differences from NLSY27 Rounds 1-3 and include a brief rationale and possible sources of items for any new content included, possible research uses for each new item or group of items from longitudinal data, possible sources of the new items (NLSY surveys, other surveys, newly written items), and a brief explanation on how the new item(s) relate to labor market outcomes.

The Contractor shall review the Round 4 outline provided by BLS and construct a design plan. The design plan shall include a timeline for all design activities. The plan shall designate contractor staff to serve on the design team, propose meeting dates to solicit input from subject matter experts, and propose data collection procedures (mode, interviewer-administered vs. self-administered) for each topic or assessment. The plan should include any concerns or considerations that the contractor has regarding the topics included in the BLS outlines.

Ultimately, the Round 3 outline along with the data collection procedures laid out in the plan will be the foundation for the design process, IRB package and OMB clearance package for Round 4. Based on review and comments, revisions to the outline may be needed.

Deliverable 13.1.1 Round 4 Draft Design Plan

To be provided to the COR, within 21 days of the award of the contract.

Deliverable 13.1.2 Round 4 Final Design Plan

BLS will provide comments on the Contractor's plan and timeline for design. Revisions to the questionnaire design plan and timeline may be required within 10 days of receipt of BLS comments.

Deliverable 13.1.3 Round 4 Draft Instrumentation Plan

To be provided to the COR, within 21 days of the award of the contract.

Deliverable 13.1.4 Round 4 Final Instrumentation Plan

BLS will provide comments on the Contractor's plan and timeline for design. Revisions to the questionnaire design plan and timeline may be required within 10 days of receipt of BLS comments.

Deliverable 13.1.5 New Variable Categorization Report

A report listing new variables and explaining how those variables will be categorized in the data query tool. This will include the variable type, area of interest and Index tree categorization. Due at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Deliverable 13.1.6 Questionnaire Topics Report

Questionnaire Topics Report to be jointly written by BLS and contractor listing reasons to include any topics and/or questions not taken from an existing, tested source, and results from testing the new questions. Materials will be submitted as agreed upon, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Subtask 13.2 Round 4 Questionnaire

The contractor shall compile a preliminary draft of the questionnaire from the final outlines for Round 3 produced by the BLS design team. The contractor will coordinate review of this draft by members of the design team. The review shall include refinements to the questionnaire items, expected timings, and methodological considerations. The Contractor shall update the draft of the questionnaire based on the decisions of the BLS design team, including annotations for all changes from the preliminary draft for BLS review.

The Contractor must consider the cognitive aspects of survey design along with methodological considerations of questionnaire preparation, particularly as they apply to the respective interview modes for each Round. The Contractor shall apply professional expertise to the wording, sequence, layout, and presentation of the questionnaire.

Deliverable 13.2.1 Draft 1 of Round 4 Questionnaire

Within five months of the final outline of the Round 4 questionnaire, the contractor shall submit the first draft of the round 4 questionnaire for testing.

Deliverable 13.2.2 Final Version of Round 4 Questionnaire

Within 30 days of receiving BLS comments on the initial draft of the Round 4 questionnaire. A second draft of the questionnaire with annotations regarding changes made to the initial draft of the questionnaire and a clean version of the questionnaire shall be delivered.

Deliverable 13.2.3 Spanish Language Versions of Round 4 Questionnaire, if needed

A Spanish language version of the Round 4 questionnaire is due 30 days after delivery of the second draft of the questionnaire.

Subtask 13.3 Questionnaire aides and testing

Included with the questionnaire will be a series of questions and answers that interviewers can use to aid respondents. The questionnaire shall be loaded into a CAPI/CATI system that meets the requirements. The contractor is responsible for testing that the questionnaire works as designed. The instrument must be working as designed 60 days prior to the beginning of the field period. The contractor shall report to the COR that this is the case 30 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Deliverable 13.3.1. Instrument Testing

The contractor shall develop and test the Instrument and all systems for data collection and report

completion to the COR 60 days prior to the beginning of fielding.

Optional Task 14. Pilot Linkages to Alternative Data Sources

This task covers requirements field a pilot linkage project as part of Round 3 data collection. The pilot project will attempt to consent a small number of NLSY27 sample members from among those born in 2010. The pilot project includes providing consultation to BLS on consent requirements for selected administrative data sources, outlining process for consenting respondents to permit linkages in Round 3, and storing the consents.

Subtask 14.1 Report on Linkage Requirements

The Contractor shall produce a report that details the requirements for linkage to alternative data sources including National Student Clearinghouse, credit reports, high school transcripts, National Student Loan Data System, and College Board/ACT. Upon award, BLS will provide the Contractor with a high-level appendix that catalogs BLS' research on linking to various sources including those listed above. BLS will select up to 3 linkages to pursue for the Pilot Project. The Contractor may propose additional list of possible linkage for BLS to consider.

Deliverable 14.1.1: List of possible linkages

Deliverable 14.1.2: Draft report detailing the consent requirements for linkage

Deliverable 14.1.3: Final report

Subtask 14.2 Pilot Consent and Administration of Alternative Data Source Linkages

The contractor shall recommend a number of youth, method of selecting youth to include in the pilot project, and methods of consenting the youth for the linkages selected in subtask 14.1. The youth included shall be sample members born in 2010. The contractor shall provide consultation to BLS on draft consent statements for the linkages listed in Subtask 14.1. In some instances, the consent statement will be proscribed by the agency or organization that holds the data. Note that this work may require consultation and meetings with BLS and DOL Privacy offices and outside agencies and organizations who hold the data BLS wishes to link to. The language will be final when all parties agree the language is sufficient to permit linkages between the alternative data and NLSY27. BLS will develop the final consent statements to be administered. A report on the pilot, including lessons learned and remedies, shall be included in the Contractor's report on Round 3.

Deliverable 14.2.1: Memo on sample and survey methods for linkage pilot

Deliverable 14.2.2 Linkage Plan

Deliverable 14.2.3 Administration of linkages to sample members in the pilot project as part of Round 3 data collection

Deliverable 14.2.4 Assessment of Pilot Project as part of Round 3 data collection report

Optional Task 15. Round 2 Parent/Guardian Household Update

The Contractor shall prepare and administer a short survey to parents at the time that the parent or guardian consents for the youth's participation in the Round 2 survey. These items shall be asked once per household if multiple NLSY27 youth live in the household.
If the parent or guardian consents to participate in the household update, the parent will self-report the answers for up to 9 questions.

1. In calendar year 2027, did you work for pay?
2. (If 1=yes) In calendar year 2027, how many weeks did you work for pay?
3. (If 1=yes) In calendar year 2027, on average, about how many hours per week did you work during the weeks that you were working?
4. In calendar year 2027, did you live with a spouse or partner for some or all of the year?
5. (If 4=yes) In calendar year 2027, did your spouse or partner work for pay?
6. (If 5=yes) In calendar year 2027, how many weeks did your spouse or partner work for pay?
7. (If 5=yes) In calendar year 2027, on average, about how many hours per week did you work during the weeks that you were working?
8. For calendar year 2027, what was your family income from all sources. By family, I am including you, your spouse or partner if you had one, and anyone either of you were related to who living in your household that year.
    A. $0 to $10,000
    B. $10,001 to $25,000
    C. $25,001 to $50,000
    D. $50,0001 to $100,000
    E. $100,001 to $200,000
    F. $200,000 to $350,000
    G. $350,001 or more

9. Now, thinking of the present time. Overall, which one of the following best describes how well your family is managing financially these days?
   A. Finding it difficult to get by
   B. Just getting by
   C. Doing okay
   D. Living comfortably

Subtask 15.1 Instrumentation for these items and corresponding consent

The Contractor shall develop the questionnaire and survey procedures for administering these items. These items shall be implemented and administered as part of the Round 2 Pretest (described in Task 4). Findings from the pretest shall be used to refine the instrument and procedures prior to Round 2 data collection. Data processing and documentation for these items shall be conducted under the Round 2 Data Processing and Documentation task.

Deliverable 15.1.1 Survey Plan

Survey plan for Parent/Guardian Household Update due 90 days after contract award.

Deliverable 15.1.2 Draft Questionnaire

1st draft of questionnaire specifications due at a time determined in conjunction with the COR

Deliverable 15.1.3 Final Questionnaire

Final draft of questionnaire specifications due 15 days after final BLS comments.

Optional Task 16. NLSY27 Cognitive Assessments Planning and Design

The NLS program is considering the inclusion of measures of cognitive and socio-emotional skills in Round 4 of the NLSY27. The collection of cognitive skill measures enables researchers to examine how early skills are associated with later labor market outcomes. A unique feature of the earlier NLSY79 and NLSY97 surveys is the availability of scores from cognitive assessments administered to most of the youth in the sample. In particular, the NLSY79 and NLSY97 incorporated scores from the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), derived from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). A search of the NLS bibliography finds that over 500 journal articles, book chapters, and dissertations have used these assessments in the research. Research topics include studies of employer learning about workers' skills in the workplace, the returns to education, and the effects of cognitive test scores on wages, unemployment, occupational choice, and job shifts.

Round 1 of the NLSY27 included cognitive assessments for both the youth and the responding parent. The

youth and their responding parent or caregiver self-administered the Behavioral Rating Index of Executive Function (BRIEF2)[1] (youth) or BRIEF2A[2] (parent). BLS is exploring options for additional cognitive assessments to be administered in Round 4 of the NLSY27. This optional task focuses exclusively on the planning and design of such assessments and does not include field administration.

If this optional task is exercised, the Contractor shall support BLS in the planning and design of cognitive and socio-emotional assessments , particularly the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT), derived from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and Woodcock-Johnson, for potential inclusion in Round 4 of the NLSY27. The contractor may propose additional assessments for BLS to consider. At the start of the planning phase, the Project Director, NLS Director, and NLS COR shall establish a design team composed of survey and subject matter experts from the NLS program office and contractor staff, and potentially, from outside academic or research institutions.

The design team will be responsible for determining survey elements such as (but not limited to):

- Selection of cognitive and socio-emotional assessment measures
- Mode(s) of administration (e.g., in-person, web-based, telephone, or hybrid approaches)
- Timing and placement within the survey
- Incentives
- Respondent burden and data quality considerations
- Comparability with prior NLS cohorts

BLS staff will lead the design team, and the NLS Director will have final authority over questionnaire content and survey administration. The design team shall consult with relevant federal agencies, outside researchers, and the NLSY27 subject matter experts, as necessary.

Assessment Evaluation and Design

The Contractor shall evaluate potential cognitive and socio-emotional assessments and provide recommendations to inform BLS decision-making.
For each potential assessment, the Contractor shall assess:

- Conceptual relevance and constructs measured
- Comparability with prior NLS cohorts and external data sources
- Mode mix and feasibility (e.g., web, in-person, telephone, hybrid)
- Respondent burden and administration time
- Cost and operational complexity
- Data quality and integration with existing survey instruments
- Suitability for longitudinal analysis
- Tradeoffs between potential assessments

Topics and questions not taken from an existing, tested source must be researched, developed, tested, and analyzed meticulously. The design team shall consider the cognitive aspects of survey design along with methodological considerations of questionnaire preparation, particularly as they apply to different modes of data collection, such as personal-visit interviews, telephone interviews, Internet, and other

[1] BRIEF2: https://www.parinc.com/products/BRIEF-2
[2] https://www.parinc.com/products/BRIEF2A

modes.

During the development process, the design team shall highlight the quality of the skills assessment, ability to be administered by different modes, and a brief rationale and a discussion of priorities. This will be produced before final questions or assessments are fixed. A revised draft of the questionnaire and assessments will be produced to reflect the decisions made during the review. It will include annotations regarding changes from the previous draft. This is the version that will be submitted for OMB approval and a programmed instrument.

Survey Administration Plan
The survey administration plan shall include recommendations for mode mix (e.g., web, in-person, telephone), timing within the NLSY27 data collection schedule (e.g., alignment with main fielding, subset of, or an interim data collection effort, integration with the main survey instrument, operational considerations (e.g., training, technology requirements, etc.), and field administration. The Contractor is encouraged to be creative and propose solutions that align with existing rules and regulations, maintain respondent confidentiality, limit costs and ensure high quality data.

OMB Materials
While the NLS program will maintain primary responsibility for generating the OMB package, the Contractor will be required to contribute documentation for the package beyond the questionnaire and fielding plan. Examples of such documentation include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment justification and supporting literature
- Description of proposed instruments and methodology
- Incentive Plan
- Respondent Materials (e.g., consent language, instructions, showcards or aids to assist with completing assessment)
- Supporting statements or technical documentation

Deliverable 16.2.1 NLSY27 Cognitive Assessments Report

This report shall summarize all cognitive and socio-emotional assessments considered, evaluate each assessment based on feasibility, respondent burden, mode compatibility, cost, data quality considerations, tradeoffs across candidate approaches, and provide clear recommendations for assessment strategies for potential inclusion in Round 4 of the NLSY27.

Deliverable 16.2.2 Survey Administration Plan

This plan shall outline recommended approaches for administering cognitive assessments, including mode, timing, integration with the main survey, and operational considerations.

Deliverable 16.2.3 OMB Materials

All requested OMB package documents, including but not limited to, respondent materials

and the incentive plan/tables showing the expected cost of incentives. The BLS shall have final authority over all aspects of the questionnaire, fielding plan, incentive plan, and respondent materials. The Contractor shall have ultimate responsibility for implementing decisions and preparing materials in time to meet the schedule.

Optional Task 17. NLSY27 Interim Contact and Supplemental Survey

To maintain respondent cooperation and maximize response rates, the Contractor shall develop and implement a supplemental interview around the topics of schooling and labor market activity and aspects of life that may affect schooling and work during one's teens, such as health, peers, risky activities, and family life. The supplemental interview could be administered between survey rounds of the NLSY27 survey and will take 20 minutes on average. It will be administered by internet, video, and phone. Respondents would have the option of completing the questionnaire online or through a video or phone interview. While we anticipate that a majority of sample members will participate by internet, the option of video or phone interviews will help strengthen response rates, especially among those who may not have reliable internet access or do not feel comfortable with self-administration.

The questionnaire will provide a snapshot of how this cohort's schooling and work. Questionnaire items will include measures of schooling such as enrollment, highest grade completed, highest grade attended, courses taken, and grades and measures of labor supply such as weeks worked, hours worked, and earnings. In addition, questions on physical health, health insurance, mental health, financial and material well-being, as well as, family structure may be included as survey length allows.

Subtask 17.1 Interim Contact Plan

The contractor shall develop an interim contact plan for round eligible respondents. This plan would explain staffing, timing and form of outreach methods. The Contact Plan shall describe the modes of contact and data collection that the Contractor plans to use. The NLS expects the inclusion of a high-production-quality hard-copy mailing sent to the entire sample that emphasizes the value of the NLSY27 and the importance of this moment in history and in their lives

The Contact Plan should provide BLS with several options on the mix of data-collection modes that can be used, along with a comparison of the overall financial cost of each option. In addition, it should describe incentives and payment options. The Contractor shall describe the plan for data transmission, data security, and confidentiality of the transmitted data that was devised in the Fielding Plan and agreed upon by the COR.

The Contractor shall provide all the necessary inputs, including a final draft of the materials, required for OMB submission, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Deliverable 17.1.1 Interim Contact Plan

The Contractor shall develop an interim contact plan for Round eligible respondents. The Interim contact plan shall be delivered no later two months after this task is exercised.

Deliverable 17.1.2 Interim Contact Materials

The contractor shall provide a draft of the interim contact materials, as agreed upon in the interim contact plan, at a date to be determined in conjunction with the COR.

Deliverable 17.1.3 OMB Materials

The contractor will provide all requested OMB Materials, including an incentive plan and a draft questionnaire.

Subtask 17.2 Instrument and System Development

The contractor shall develop and test all systems for internet data collection. This includes all information required to fulfill BLS Security Review Panel requests.

Deliverable 17.2.1 Security Documents

Contractor shall deliver system boundary and other security documents required to fulfil BLS Security Panel Review documentation.

Deliverable 17.2.2 Survey Instrument

Contractor shall create the survey instrument, as described in the interim contact plan.

Deliverable 17.2.3 Instrument Testing

Contractor shall test instrument and data flow before fielding, at a date determined in conjunction with the COR.

Subtask 17.3 Interim Contact Data Fielding

After preparations and security clearance for the interim contact data collection are completed, the Contractor shall conduct the internet interim data collection as specified in the Interim contact plan. This includes the following the plan for staffing/training, data collection and maintaining of records of contacts and locating information for sample members.

The contractor shall hire and train staff needed to carry out internet data collection activities as agreed upon in the Interim Contact plan. Staff assigned will have necessary skills to obtain respondent cooperation. The Contractor shall ensure that all staff assigned to the project has successfully completed

the specified training requirements and have the appropriate non-disclosure agreements in place prior to being given project access.

Data collection shall follow the steps outlined in the interim contact plan. The duration of the field period shall be left to the judgment of the Contractor, subject to the approval of the COR.

Deliverable 17.3.1 Training Materials

The contractor will provide all Training materials for interim internet respondent contact including email and texting scripts at least 30 days prior to training.

Deliverable 17.3.2 Recruit and Train Field Staff

The contractor will recruit and train staff including document all required training as described in the interim contact plan.

Deliverable 17.3.3 Production Reports

The contractor shall produce production reports as described in the interim contact plan.

Subtask 17.4 Interim Contact Internet Survey Data Creation

At the end of the fielding task, the contractor will produce a data file that contains all data collected in the survey, indicating respondents' responses to each question with missing codes for questions that were not asked or that respondents refused to answer or indicated that they did not know the answer.

Deliverable 17.4.1 Raw and Clean and Coded Data File

The contractor shall create both a raw and clean and coded data file.

Deliverable 17.4.2 Public Use Data File

The contractor shall produce a public-use data file available on the NLS website 5 months after data collection.