



Initial Proposals for Updating Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) maintains government-wide standards for federal race and ethnicity data that ensure our ability to compare information and data across federal agencies, and to understand how well federal programs serve a diverse America.

On June 15, 2022, the Chief Statistician of the United States identified updating the standards as a top priority to ensure that the standards better reflect the diversity of the American people. The Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards (Working Group) was created to lead this effort and was charged with proposing recommendations for improving the quality and usefulness of federal race and ethnicity data.

On January 26, 2023, OMB released an initial set of recommended revisions proposed by the Working Group to revise OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (SPD 15), last revised in 1997.

The public is invited to provide feedback through the Federal Register Notice (FRN) on the proposed revisions by April 12, 2023.

The initial proposals include:

- Collecting race and ethnicity information using one combined question.
- Adding “Middle Eastern or North African” (MENA) as a new response category.
- Requiring the collection of detailed race and ethnicity categories by default.

The Working Group is also asking for public comment on how best to revise SPD 15's:

- Terminology, definitions, and question wording.
- Guidance on implementation and adoption of revised standards.
- Guidance on how to collect and report administrative and proxy data.

These recommendations are preliminary and they do not represent the positions of OMB or the agencies participating on the Working Group.

Your feedback will help guide the Working Group as they develop their final recommendations to OMB and will also help OMB determine how to revise SPD 15 to improve the quality and usefulness of federal race and ethnicity data.

OMB and the Working Group have set the goal of completing these important revisions by the Summer of 2024.

For more information on the FRN, providing feedback, or OMB's process for revising SPD 15, visit: <https://spd15revision.gov/>.

