Submission Process FAQs:

1. Where can I find a copy of the Federal Register Notice (FRN)?

   The FRN is available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Web site at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/inforeg/directive15/race-ethnicity_directive_2016FRN1.pdf.

2. How do I submit a comment?

   Written comments on these issues may be addressed to **Katherine K. Wallman, Chief Statistician, Office of Management and Budget, 1800 G St., 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20503.** You may also send comments or questions via Email to Race-ethnicity@omb.eop.gov or to http://www.regulations.gov - a Federal E-Government Web site that allows the public to find, review, and submit comments on documents that agencies have published in the Federal Register and that are open for comment. Simply type, ''Race-ethnicity" (in quotes) in the Comment or Submission search box, click Go, and follow the instructions for submitting comments.

   You may also send comments to jpark@omb.eop.gov.

3. Is there a recommended format for comments?

   We recommend that comments be concise. Where issues are identified, we particularly value proposed solutions. You may attach items to a comment by uploading the item on the comments page.

   It may be helpful to review the purpose and use of the Federal standards when preparing your response. These appear at the end of the FRN. Remember, the standards apply to all Federal information collections that ask about race and ethnicity.

   Please *see* https://www.regulations.gov/docs/Tips_For_Submitting_Effective_Comments.pdf for a tip sheet on submitting effective public comments.

4. What is the due date for comments to the September 30, 2016 notice?

   Comments are due by **October 31, 2016.**

5. Will my comments, identity, and email address be disclosed on the public docket?

   All comments are made public in their entirety. If you wish to provide comments without disclosing your personal information, please do not include your name, email address, or other identifying information in your comment.

6. Will I receive confirmation that my comment has been received?

   Yes, it will appear on regulations.gov.

7. How do I find my comment on the public docket?

   You can find your comment on the public docket by clicking on the "View All" link in the Comments section, and using the search box on the top of the page to search by name, keyword, etc. If you wish to edit your comment after submitting, please resubmit your comment with the changes noted.

8. Whom should I contact if I have additional questions, and how should I contact that individual or agency?

   For additional questions, please contact **Jennifer Park, Senior Statistician, 1800 G St., 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20503**, Email address: Race-ethnicity@omb.eop.gov. You may also send questions to jpark@omb.eop.gov.

9. Is this my only/last opportunity to comment on the notice of potential revision?

   No. OMB plans to post a second FRN in early November. That notice should provide a summary of public comment to date; results of ongoing research, if any; and initial recommendations regarding potential revisions. We plan to request comments on the initial recommendations, taking into account both the quality of information that would result and the cost and burden to the public if implemented. A third FRN is anticipated to notify the public of OMB's decision.

10. What happens when OMB has concluded its review?

    When OMB has reviewed all public comments, input and recommendations from the Federal Interagency Expert Group on Race/Ethnicity, and the research conducted to date, OMB plans to issue its decision regarding proposed revisions to the standards. OMB may concur with the recommendations of the Federal Interagency Expert Group, disagree and choose another alternative, decide that not enough information is available to warrant a decision to revise at this time, or some combination of all of these. OMB plans to notify the public of its final decision, along with its rationale. After this final notice has been issued, OMB plans to reconvene the Federal Interagency Expert Group to recommend implementation guidance for revisions made to the standard.

Content FAQs:

11. What is the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)?

    The OMB assists the President in overseeing the preparation of the Federal budget and in supervising its administration in Federal agencies. The OMB also is charged by statute with several management/oversight responsibilities. One of these is coordinating the U.S. Federal statistical system. This includes the promotion of the quality of Federal statistical information, which facilitates evidence-based policies and programs. To learn more about the OMB and its oversight of statistical programs and standards, *see* https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg_statpolicy.

12. What are the OMB Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity?

    The OMB Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (referred to in the FRN as "the standard" and also known as the "OMB standards" or "Federal standards") are used by Federal agencies that collect and report race and ethnicity data. The standard guides information collected and presented for the decennial census, household surveys, administrative forms, and numerous other statistical collections, as well as for civil rights enforcement and program administrative reporting.

13. What is the purpose of the OMB Standards?

    The purpose of the OMB Standards is to promote uniformity and comparability for data on race and ethnicity for the population groups specified in the standards. The standards were developed in cooperation with Federal agencies to provide consistent data on race and ethnicity throughout the Federal Government. Development of the standards originally stemmed in large measure from the responsibilities to enforce civil rights laws. Data were needed to monitor equal access in housing, education, employment, and other areas, for populations that historically had experienced discrimination and differential treatment because of their race or ethnicity. The standards are used not only in the decennial census (which provides the data for the "denominator" for many measures), but also in household surveys, on administrative forms (e.g., school registration and mortgage lending applications), and in medical and other research. The categories are not anthropologically or scientifically based. Instead, the categories represent a social-political construct designed for collecting data on the race and ethnicity of broad population groups in this country.

    The OMB first issued the standard in 1977, and later revised the standard in 1997. The 1997 revised standard are still in effect today. *See* https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg_1997standards for a full description of the current standard.

14. What are the primary proposed revisions being considered in this FRN?

The FRN seeks public comment on four areas in the standard for potential revision:

1. The use of separate questions versus a combined question to measure race and ethnicity;
2. The classification of a Middle Eastern and North African group and distinct reporting category;
3. The description of the intended use of minimum reporting categories; and
4. The salience, or relevance, of terminology used for race and ethnicity classifications and other language in the standard.

15. What are the "minimum reporting categories?"

The standard provides five categories for data on race: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White. It also presents two categories for data on ethnicity: "Hispanic or Latino," and "Not Hispanic or Latino." Federal agencies are required to use these race and ethnicity categories as the minimum categories for collecting and presenting data on race and ethnicity for all Federal reporting purposes. *See* https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/information_and_regulatory_affairs/re_app-a-update.pdf for definitions of each race and ethnicity category.

The goal of the standard is to yield detailed but comparable Federal information on race/ethnicity. The standard encourages Federal agencies to report detailed race/ethnicity categories. However, it is also important that information collected in one survey, set of administrative records, or census be comparable to another. To facilitate these comparisons, the standard says that if an agency collects race/ethnicity information, *at a minimum* it must at least collect and present such information using five categories for data on race (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White) and at least two categories for data on ethnicity ("Hispanic or Latino" and "Not Hispanic or Latino"). If a more detailed information collection on race/ethnicity (ex. Decennial Census) is compared to a less detailed information collection on race/ethnicity (ex. a small survey on national park use) featuring the minimum reporting categories only, then the minimum reporting categories would be used to provide a common benchmark to compare estimates between the two surveys.

16. How will Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders be affected by the proposed revisions?

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, like all members of the general public, already participate in various Federal data collection and reporting surveys and forms. Individuals with an opinion about any or all of the four proposed areas for revision described in the FRN—such as the description of the intended use of the minimum categories in the current standard—are encouraged to submit comments.

17. What specific findings, reports, and data will OMB consider in evaluating the proposed revisions?

    The OMB welcomes evidence-based recommendations and findings. You may attach any findings, reports, and data that support your comment by uploading the item on the comments page. Comments that take into account specific policy issues—such as the costs and benefits of implementing suggested changes, or how a proposed revision can help improve response rates—are particularly helpful.

18. Can I review the work done by the Federal Interagency Working Group for Research on Race and Ethnicity regarding the proposed revisions?

    The second FRN (*see* the answer to Question 9 above) should include a summary of the Interagency Working Group's findings regarding the proposed revisions.

19. How will my comment impact OMB's decision on the proposed revisions?

    The OMB will review and consider all comments submitted in response to this FRN. Comments that take into account specific policy issues—such as the costs and benefits of implementing suggested changes, or how a proposed revision can help improve response rates—are particularly helpful.

20. What is considered a "consensus" on a general definition?

    In this context, "consensus" would describe the large majority of comments received favoring a particular approach. It is not intended to be a precise term, but an indication of general agreement or lack thereof. It is one measure of overall public sentiment.