

AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY



# MEPS-HC Employment Data

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# Employment Data

## Public Use Files: Release Timeline



### 2021 Data

- **March 2023**  
**Full-Year Population Characteristics File**  
**JOBS File**
- **August 2023**  
**Full-Year Consolidated Data File**
- **September 2023**  
**Panels 23, 24, and 25 Longitudinal Data File**

# Questionnaire Sections that Collect Employment Variables

- **Employment (EM)**
- **Employment Wages (EW)**
- **Review of Employment Information (RJ)**

# Employment Section Design

- **Employment data is collected for each person age 16 and older in each round.**
- **Emphasis is on having a continuous timeline of employment history over the panel for each person.**
- **The employment section is also designed to collect the information such as:**
  - ▶ **Indicators of job quality**
  - ▶ **Employment data that relates to earnings**
  - ▶ **Employer-sponsored health insurance (ESI)**

# The Basics

- **Most workers have only one job at time of initial interview.**
- **If more than one job, the respondent designates one as the current main job; the others are current miscellaneous jobs.**
- **Job held in the round that ended before interview date is “former” job.**

# The Basics (continued)

- Although information about jobs is collected over time, basic information is collected only once in the first round the job is reported.
- Special update module used in later rounds.
  - ▶ If current job continues from prior round, updates are limited.
    - Change in hours worked?
    - Change in wages?
    - If no ESI last round, ask for current round.
- If a person was not working in the previous round, he or she is asked in the current round if working.
  - ▶ If yes, then complete information is collected.

# The Basics (continued)

- **More information is collected about current main jobs than other types of jobs.**
- **More information is collected if the person is an employee and is not self-employed.**

**(See “Variables Set for Each SUBTYPE” table in the [JOBS file documentation](#) for the detail.)**

# Full-Year Consolidated Data File vs. Jobs file



- **Full-Year Consolidated Data file includes the information about current main jobs only.**
- **Jobs file includes the information on all types of jobs reported:**
  - ▶ **Current Main Job**
  - ▶ **Current Miscellaneous Job**
  - ▶ **Former Main Job**
  - ▶ **Former Miscellaneous Job**
  - ▶ **Last Job Outside Reference Period**
  - ▶ **Retirement Job**



# Full-Year Consolidated Data File: Employment variables



- **Employment status (EMPST31/42/53) categories are as follows:**
  - 1 = “currently employed” if job at interview date;
  - 2 = “has job to return to” if did not work during the reference period but had a job to return to as of the interview date;
  - 3 = “employed during the reference period” if no job at the interview date but did work during the round; and
  - 4 = “not employed with no job to return to” if the person did not have a job at the interview date, did not work during the reference period, and did not have a job to return to.
- **Categories are mutually exclusive.**

# Full-Year Consolidated Data File: Information on Current Main Jobs



- **Self-employment status**
- **Employer characteristics\***
  - single vs. multi-location firm
  - private for-profit, not-for profit, or a government entity
- **Hourly wage\***
- **Benefits\***
  - Paid leave to visit a doctor
  - Paid sick leave
  - Paid vacation
  - Pension plan

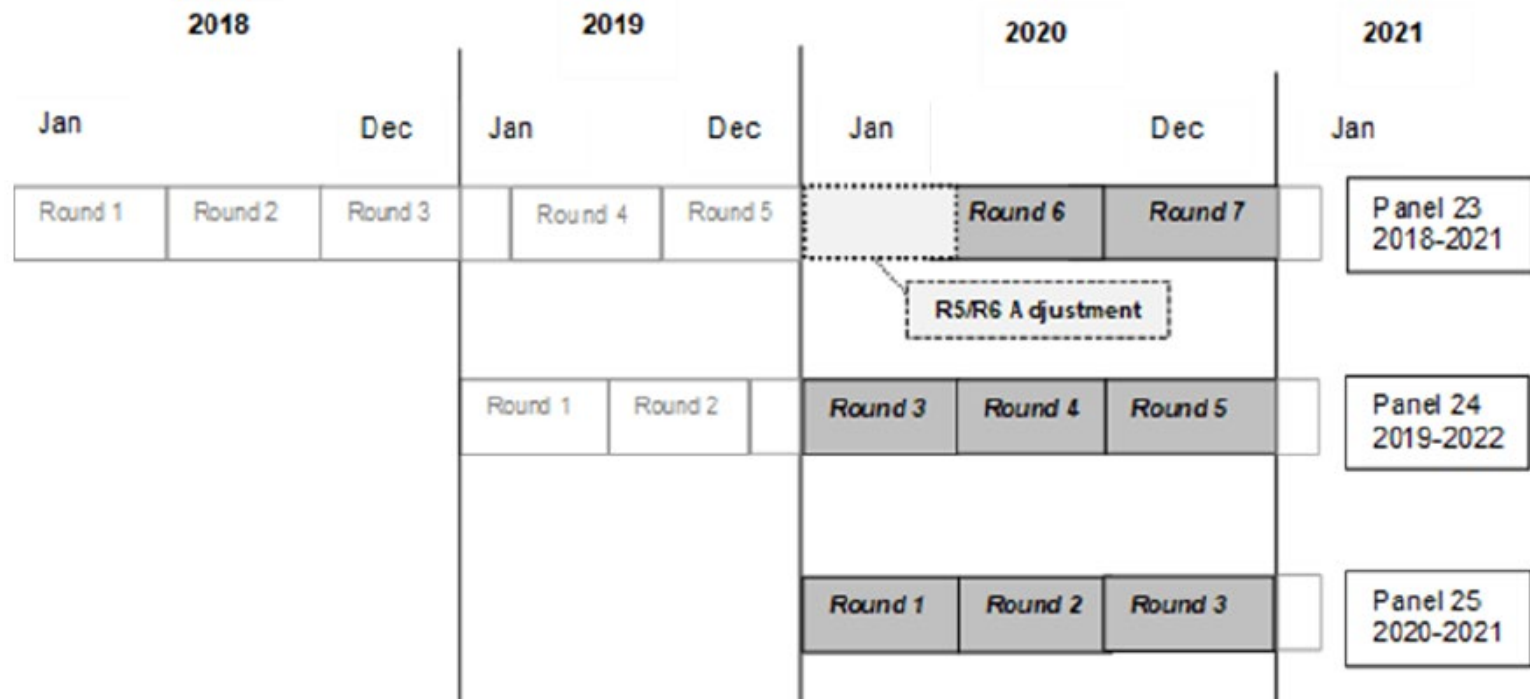
**\* The questions are asked for individuals who report not being self-employed at their current main job.**

# Full-Year Consolidated Data File: Information on Current Main Jobs



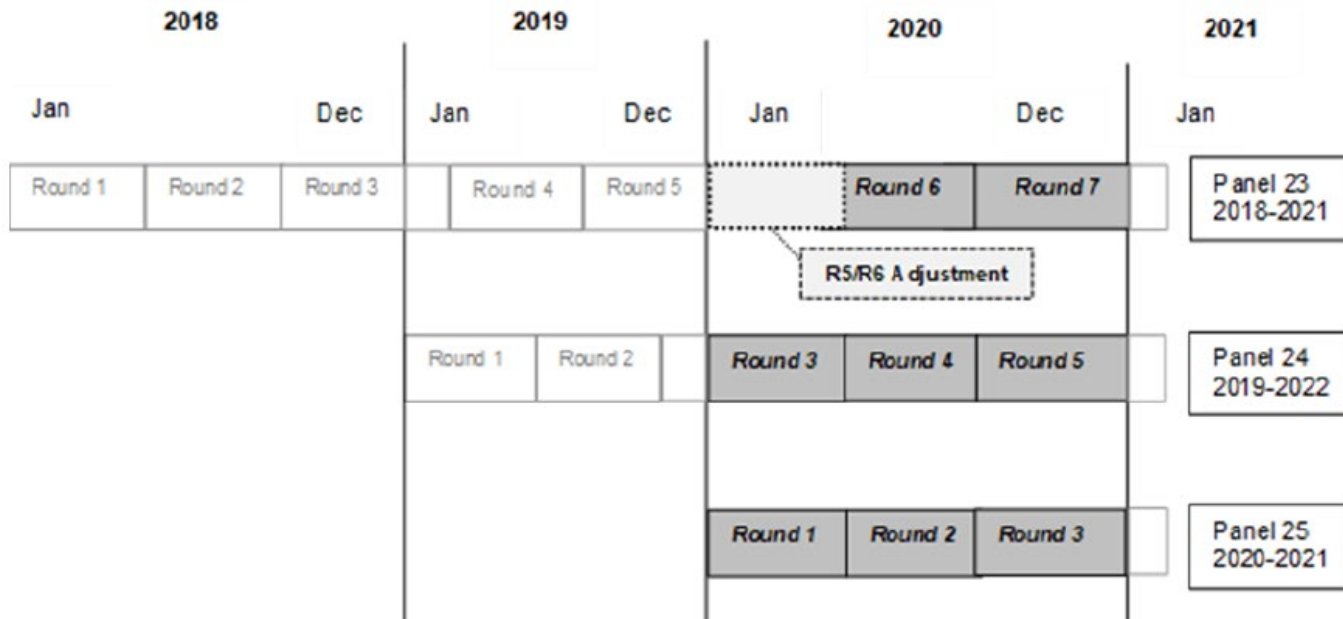
- **Health Insurance**
  - Held at a current main job
  - Offered through a current main job
  - Offered to anyone through the employer
  - Choice of health plans available
- Usual hours worked per week
- Temporary job, seasonal job
- Number of employees
- Other employment variables
  - Industry, occupation
  - Union status
  - Job start month

# Major Changes in 2020 due to COVID-19 Pandemic



- The decision to extend Panel 23 occurred after Panel 23 Round 5 was fielded.
- Therefore, Round 5 was fielded as a traditional terminal round where questions are asked as of 12/31/2019.

# Major Changes in 2020 due to COVID-19 Pandemic



Using the information obtained in R6, adjustments are made so that:

- R5 would represent employment from 1/1/2020 and the R5 interview date.
- R6 would represent employment from the R5 interview date to the R6 interview date.

# Jobs File

- Each Jobs file covers one calendar year.
- All jobs are included in the file.
  - ▶ Population/Consolidated files only have current main job
- Limited editing is done to Jobs variables.
- There are no weights in the file.
  - ▶ Must link to file with weights

# Jobs Records

- **Records are at person/round/job level.**
  - ▶ **If same job continues for more than one round, then there is a separate record for each round on file.**
  - ▶ **A person reporting on multiple jobs in round will have one record per job in the file for that round.**

# Jobs File: Earnings Data

- Earnings data on Jobs file reflect the variety of ways in which people are paid.
- Earnings variables can be reported as gross salary, bonuses, tips, etc.
- Job may have more than one type of earnings associated with it.
  - ▶ Hourly wage plus tips
  - ▶ Annual salary plus commission



# Thank you!



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