

Federal Data Usage by City Governments

Welcome!

Thank you for participating in the Sunlight Foundation's Survey of Federal Data Usage by City Governments! We hope you'll take 7 minutes to share with us how your department or city works with federal data so we can build a comprehensive and unprecedented view of federal data use across city governments. We look forward to sharing the results with you!

Your individual responses will be anonymous.

All references to federal data throughout this survey refer to data published by the U.S. Federal Government.

About You

1) What city do you work for?*

2) What department do you work for?*

3) What department(s)' data usage are you able to speak to?

*If your role is citywide please answer "citywide" here and complete the survey with citywide data in mind.**

What Federal Data is Used

4) Does your department use federal data?*

Yes

No

Why doesn't your department use federal data? Select all that apply. *

Our department does not see the benefit of federal data.

Accessing and using federal data is too challenging or time consuming.

We use data produced by our city instead.

We purchase data instead.

Other - Write In:

5) What types of federal data does your department use? Select all that apply. *

Demographic

Economic

Environmental

Education

Health

Housing

Criminal Justice

Scientific

Regulatory

Transportation

Legal

Campaign Finance

Electoral

Legislative

6) What federal agencies does your department rely on most for data? Please pick up to three. *

Department of Labor (employment, expenditures, price indices)

Department of Justice (crime, arrests, jails)

Department of Transportation (driver registry, crashes, freights, airline performance)

Census Bureau (demographics, population estimates, business patterns)

Department of the Interior (municipal boundaries, geography of natural manmade structures, weather)

Department of Health and Human Services (drug use, hospital performance, TANF, health and disease, deaths)

Department of Education (public schools, civil rights, student loans)

Environmental Protection Agency (air and drinking water quality, brownfields)

Department of Housing and Urban Development (housing characteristics and affordability, fair market rents, public housing)

Department of Agriculture (food access and security, agriculture, SNAP)

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (summary of deposits, bank failures)

Federal Housing Finance Agency (house price indices, interest rates, mortgages)

Internal Revenue Service (income, taxes, migration)

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (consumer complaints, mortgages)

Other - Write In (Required): *

How Federal Data is Used

7) How does your department typically access federal data?*

A text report

An online tool (like [American Fact Finder](#))

Downloading a data file

API

8) If your department uses geographic data, what levels of geography do you look at? Select all that apply.*

State

County

County Subdivision

Core-based Statistical Area (CBSA)

Census Tracts

Census Block Groups

Census Blocks

All of the above

Not applicable

9) How does your department use federal data? Select all that apply.*

Track city or department performance

Identify local issues

Make budgeting decisions

Inform policy decisions

Create predictive models

Regulatory enforcement

Other - Write In (Required): *

10) How important is federal data to your department's mission?*

Not important Slightly important Fairly important Important Very important

The Past and Future of Federal Data

11) When did your department start using federal data?*

Less than a year ago

1 to 3 years ago

3 to 5 years ago

5 to 10 years ago

More than a decade ago

12) Does your department use more or less federal data today than 5 years ago?*

A lot less Slightly less About the same Slightly more A lot more

Why does your department use less federal data today than it did 5 years ago? Select all that apply.*

Federal data is not updated often enough

The quality of federal data is not good enough

Federal data is too difficult to access or use

Federal data is not useful to our department

Other - Write In (Required): *

Since reducing use of federal data has your department predominantly:*

Replaced federal data with data collected by our city

Replaced federal data with data we purchase

No replacement for federal data previously used

13) Do you anticipate your department using more or less federal data in the next 5 years?*

A lot less Slightly less About the same Slightly more A lot more

Why does your department plan to use less federal data over the next 5 years? Select all that apply.*

Federal data is not updated often enough

The quality of federal data is not good enough

Federal data is too difficult to access or use

Federal data is not useful to our department

Other - Write In (Required): *

Does your department plan predominantly to:*

Replace federal data with data collected by your city

Replace federal data with data we purchase

No replacement for federal data currently used

Working with Federal Data

14) How would you describe the publishing schedule of federal data?*

Too infrequent Just right Too frequent

15) How easy it is to find and access federal data?*

Very difficult Difficult Neutral Easy Very easy

16) How easy is it to use federal data? Please consider documentation, data standards, and any data cleaning that is required.*

Very difficult Difficult Neutral Easy Very easy

17) How would you rate the accuracy of federal data?*

Very Poor Poor Acceptable Good Very Good

Working with Federal Data: Looking Ahead

18) How do you expect the following characteristics of federal data to change in the next 5 years?*

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	About the same	Somewhat better	Much better
Frequency					
Access					
Ease of use					
Accuracy					

19) There are a number of changes in discussion for the 2020 Census. Please indicate how valuable the below additions to the Census race question would be to your department.

	Not at all valuable	Slightly valuable	Moderately valuable	Very valuable	Extremely valuable

Middle Eastern and North African					
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin (instead of separate ethnicity question)					

Federal Data Access

20) Has your department lost access to any federal data since January?*

Yes

No

What data has your department lost access to?*

21) What would be the most likely impact of the loss of federal data on your city and its residents?*

22) Is there any federal data your department would like but do not have access to? *

Yes

No

What federal data would you like but don't currently have access to?

Please provide your contact information.

Name: *

Email:*

Thank You!