



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20415-1000

AUG 30 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM: LINDA M. SPRINGER
DIRECTOR 

Subject: Revisions to Ethnicity and Race Reporting to the
Central Personnel Data File

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) revised its Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity in 1997. Because of this revision, the method by which ethnicity and race information is reported to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) has been modified.

For accessions occurring on or after January 1, 2006, the new Standard Form (SF) 181 *Ethnicity and Race Identification* (dated July 2005) will be the government-wide standard for reporting ethnicity and race information. The new form is attached to this memorandum and can be downloaded from <http://www.opm.gov/forms> when available. From the above date onward, the old SF 181 (dated May 1982) will no longer be acceptable or stocked by the General Services Administration (GSA). OPM Form 1468 *Ethnicity and Race Identification* (dated May 1982 for use in Hawaii) will be discontinued. OPM form 1386B *Applicant Race and National Origin Questionnaire* will also be revised according to these new standards. OPM Form 1386B, when available, can be downloaded from <http://www.opm.gov/forms>. Further instructions on its use will be sent to agencies when it is revised. Agencies will be expected to begin reporting the new format no later than the June 2006 data submission.

In the past, race and ethnicity information had been collected from only one question on SF 181 asking the employee to select the single race/ethnicity category with which he or she most closely identifies. The revised SF 181 (attached) employs a two-question format: (1) the first question asks whether or not the employee is of Latino/Hispanic ethnicity; and regardless of the response to the first question, (2) the second question asks the employee to mark an "X" next to any of the five given race categories that apply.

Please be aware that the new question format has, in turn, led to a new coding sequence to be used in reporting this information to OPM and CPDF. For specifics, please view the revised section on race and ethnicity in the *Guide to Personnel Data Standards*, which is available at <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/guidance.asp>. The most significant changes are the creation of separate categories for "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific

Islander” (creating a level of detail not available within the previous “Asian or Pacific Islander” category), and the requirement that agencies allow employees the opportunity to identify with any combination of races listed on the SF 181.

Old race and national origin (RNO) codes are not being terminated. However, they should only be used for employees appointed to your agency prior to January 1, 2006. There is no OPM requirement to resurvey current employees. Agencies may wish to resurvey in order to provide consistent ethnicity and race data for their internal purposes as well as for reporting to OPM through CPDF and Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI.)

Any questions or concerns about the revised policy should be directed to David Anderson, Deputy Associate Director, Center for Human Resources Systems Requirements and Strategies. He can be reached by phone at (202) 606-2203 or by email at david.anderson@opm.gov.

I thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this reporting change. It is vital that we ensure ethnicity and race data from SF 181 reporting is both valid and accurate, as the resulting diversity information is used to monitor and plan for equal employment opportunity throughout the federal government.

Attachment

cc: Human Resources Directors
Human Resources Systems Directors