

[OMB Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 on Race and Ethnicity Data Standards](#) > [News](#) > OMB's 2024 Revisions to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 Are Final. What's Happening Now?

# OMB's 2024 Revisions to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 Are Final. What's Happening Now?

October 16, 2024

Written by: Dr. Karin Orvis, Chief Statistician of the United States

On March 28, 2024, OMB finalized revisions to [Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity](#) (SPD 15). The 2024 revisions to SPD 15 are effective as of its publication date, and Federal agencies must comply with these updates as soon as possible, and, in any case, no later than March 28, 2029. The revisions to SPD 15 require the use of one combined question for race and ethnicity, and encourage respondents to select as many options as apply to how they identify. These options now include Middle Eastern or North African as a required minimum category. The revised SPD 15 also requires the collection of additional detail beyond the minimum required race and ethnicity categories for most situations.

Starting the day the 2024 revisions to SPD 15 were published, OMB and Federal agencies began the critical work of updating all censuses, surveys, and forms that collect race and ethnicity data to begin using the updated [question format](#) and [data presentation approaches](#), as required by the revised SPD 15. This means, for example, that Federal agencies are working hard as they print or program new forms and surveys, re-program databases, ensure that various datasets are able to link as needed, and more.

I also want to highlight that the 24 Chief Financial Officers Act Agencies and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission are currently assembling action plans that will clearly describe: (1) how each agency will bring their collections and publications into compliance with the revised standards; (2) potential implementation challenges and mitigation strategies; and (3) how each agency will meaningfully engage with stakeholders to ensure transparent communication and public participation. These specific agencies must submit their action plans to OMB by or before September 28, 2025, and must make these plans publicly available through their websites. Importantly, agencies should not wait until they submit their action plans to start updating their collections using the revised SPD 15.

To support Federal agencies, and as described in the [Federal Register Notice announcing the revised SPD 15](#), I convened the Federal Committee on Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (FC-SPD15), composed of civil service representatives from over 30 agencies. The FC-SPD15 will provide statistical tools such as bridging programs to crosswalk data collected under the 1997 SPD 15 and the revised SPD 15, and best practices for coding detailed racial and ethnic groups and write-in responses to the now-[default question](#).

OMB knows, from past experience, that this process may take time.

Even still, we are happy to report that many programs are already on their way to collecting race and ethnicity data per the revised SPD 15, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's [online assistance application](#) with new demographic options, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Service's [guidance to state Medicaid agencies](#) to stratify their mandatory reporting using the detailed checkboxes established in the update, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's demographic questions update to its [National Weather Service Extreme Heat Survey](#).

The FC-SPD15 will undertake regular reviews of SPD 15, which will take place on a 10-year cycle. After Federal agencies' collections and publications are in compliance with the revised race and ethnicity data standards, including the 2030 Census, the FC-SPD15 will be tasked to analyze those data in preparation for the next SPD 15 review and potential revision.

## How can the public continue to participate in SPD 15 activities?

While the Federal Government works to make sure censuses, surveys, and forms use the revised SPD 15 standards, we encourage community partners to:

- Contact Federal agencies to share their thoughts and feedback on efforts to update censuses, surveys, and forms. Visit [Contact Us](#) for specific agency contacts related to SPD 15.
- Where relevant, provide feedback to agencies' Federal Advisory Committees, including those related to race and ethnicity data.
- Submit comments on agencies' proposals to update their information collection requests to comply with the new standards. For additional information on how to comment on such proposals, visit [How to Share Your Perspective on Federal Government Forms](#) on [reginfo.gov](#).

We encourage you to check [spd15revision.gov](#) for the latest updates.