



THE 2006 HHS POVERTY GUIDELINES

One Version of the [U.S.] Federal Poverty Measure

[Further Resources on Poverty Measurement, Poverty Lines, and Their History]
[aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/contacts.shtml]
[Computations for the 2006 Poverty Guidelines]
[aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/06computations.shtml]

There are two slightly different versions of the federal poverty measure:

- The poverty thresholds, and
- The poverty guidelines.

The **poverty thresholds** are the original version of the federal poverty measure. They are updated each year by the **Census Bureau** (although they were originally developed by Mollie Orshansky of the Social Security Administration [[/aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/papers/hptgssiv.htm](http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/papers/hptgssiv.htm)]). The thresholds are used mainly for **statistical** purposes — for instance, preparing estimates of the number of Americans in poverty each year. (In other words, all official poverty population figures are calculated using the poverty thresholds, not the guidelines.) Poverty thresholds since 1980 (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld.html) and weighted average poverty thresholds since 1959 (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/histpov/hstpov1.html) are available on the Census Bureau's Web site. For an example of how the Census Bureau applies the thresholds to a family's income to determine its poverty status, see "How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty" on the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/povdef.html).

The **poverty guidelines** are the other version of the federal poverty measure. They are issued each year in the *Federal Register* by the **Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS). The guidelines are a simplification of the poverty thresholds for use for **administrative** purposes — for instance, determining financial eligibility for certain federal programs. (The full text of the *Federal Register* notice with the 2006 poverty guidelines is available.)

The poverty guidelines are sometimes loosely referred to as the "federal poverty level" (FPL), but that phrase is ambiguous and should be avoided, especially in situations (e.g., legislative or administrative) where precision is important.

Key differences between poverty thresholds and poverty guidelines are outlined in a table under Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). See also the discussion of this topic on the Institute for Research on Poverty's web site (www.irlp.wisc.edu/faqs/faq1.htm).

2006 HHS Poverty Guidelines

Persons in Family or Household	48 Contiguous States and D.C.	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$ 9,800	\$12,250	\$11,270
2	13,200	16,500	15,180
3	16,600	20,750	19,090
4	20,000	25,000	23,000
5	23,400	29,250	26,910
6	26,800	33,500	30,820
7	30,200	37,750	34,730
8	33,600	42,000	38,640
For each additional person, add	3,400	4,250	3,910

SOURCE: *Federal Register*, Vol. 71, No. 15, January 24, 2006, pp. 3848-3849

The separate poverty guidelines for Alaska and Hawaii reflect Office of Economic Opportunity administrative practice beginning in the 1966-1970 period. Note that the poverty thresholds — the original version of the poverty measure — have never had separate figures for Alaska and Hawaii. The poverty guidelines are not defined for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Palau. In cases in which a Federal program using the poverty guidelines serves any of those jurisdictions, the Federal office which administers the program is responsible for deciding whether to use the contiguous-states-and-D.C. guidelines for those jurisdictions or to follow some other procedure.

The poverty guidelines apply to both aged and non-aged units. The guidelines have never had an aged/non-aged distinction; only the Census Bureau (statistical) poverty thresholds have separate figures for aged and non-aged one-person and two-person units.

Programs using the guidelines (or percentage multiples of the guidelines — for instance, 125 percent or 185 percent of the guidelines) in determining eligibility include Head Start, the Food Stamp Program, the National School Lunch Program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and the Children’s Health Insurance Program. Note that in general, cash public assistance programs (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Security Income) do NOT use the poverty guidelines in determining eligibility. The Earned Income Tax Credit program also does NOT use the poverty guidelines to determine eligibility. For a more detailed list of programs that do and don’t use the guidelines, see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). (see below)

The poverty guidelines (unlike the poverty thresholds) are designated by the year in which they are issued. For instance, the guidelines issued in January 2006 are designated the 2006 poverty guidelines. However, the 2006 HHS poverty guidelines only reflect price changes through calendar year 2005; accordingly, they are approximately equal to the Census Bureau poverty thresholds for calendar year 2005. (The 2005 thresholds are expected to be issued in final form in August 2006; a preliminary version of the 2005 thresholds is now available from the Census Bureau.)

The computations for the 2006 poverty guidelines are available ([/aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/06computations.shtml](http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/06computations.shtml)).

The poverty guidelines may be formally referenced as “the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).”

Frequently Asked Questions Related to the Poverty Guidelines and Poverty

Questions

- What are the differences between the poverty guidelines and the poverty thresholds?
- When are the poverty guidelines usually published each year?
- When are the poverty guidelines effective?
- I have a chart showing percentage multiples [e.g., 125 percent, 150 percent, etc.] of last year’s poverty guidelines. How can I get an updated version of that chart based on this year’s guidelines?
- I have a sliding fee scale [indicating that families between certain percentage multiples of the poverty guidelines should pay a certain percentage of the full fee] based on last year’s poverty guidelines. How can I get an updated version of that sliding fee scale based on this year’s guidelines?
- What programs use the poverty guidelines?
- Are the poverty guidelines before-tax or after-tax? Are they gross income or net income? What definition of income is used with the poverty guidelines?
- To calculate the 2006 poverty guidelines, do you use a projection of what the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) will be for 2006?
- Where can I find historical tables of the poverty guidelines and the poverty thresholds?
- What is “the official poverty line defined by the Office of Management and Budget”?
- How was the poverty line developed?
- Was the thrifty food plan used to develop or update the poverty thresholds?
- Are the poverty thresholds calculated every year by multiplying the cost of an Agriculture Department food plan by three?
- What share of the poverty line goes for housing? for transportation? for home heating?

- How many people are in poverty in the United States? How many people are in poverty in [my state OR my county OR my city]?
- What is the poverty line for [my state OR my metropolitan area OR my city]?
- Since there is an official federal definition of “poverty,” does the federal government also have official definitions for such terms as “middle class,” “middle income,” “rich,” and “upper income”?

Answers

What are the differences between the poverty guidelines and the poverty thresholds?

Poverty thresholds are used for calculating all official poverty population **statistics** — for instance, figures on the number of Americans in poverty each year. They are updated each year by the **Census Bureau**. Poverty thresholds since 1980 and weighted average poverty thresholds since 1959 are available on the Census Bureau’s web site (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld.html). For poverty thresholds before 1980, contact the Census Bureau at (301)763-3242. For an example of how the Census Bureau applies the thresholds to a family’s income to determine its poverty status, see “How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty” on the Census Bureau’s web site. (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/povdef.html)

The **poverty guidelines** are a simplified version of the federal poverty thresholds used for **administrative** purposes — for instance, determining financial eligibility for certain federal programs. They are issued each year in the *Federal Register* by the **Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS).

Key differences between the poverty thresholds and the poverty guidelines are summarized in the table below. For more information, see the discussion of poverty thresholds and poverty guidelines (www.irp.wisc.edu/faqs/faq1.htm) on the Institute for Research on Poverty’s web site.

Key Differences Between Thresholds and Guidelines		
	Poverty Thresholds	Poverty Guidelines
Issuing Agency	Census Bureau	Department of Health and Human Services
Purpose/Use	Statistical — calculating the number of people in poverty	Administrative — determining financial eligibility for certain programs
Characteristics by Which They Vary	Detailed (48-cell) matrix of thresholds varies by family size, number of children, and, for 1- & 2-person units, whether or not elderly. Weighted average thresholds vary by family size and, for 1- & 2-person units, whether or not elderly. There is	Guidelines vary by family size. In addition, there is one set of figures for the 48 contiguous states and D.C.; one set for Alaska; and one set for Hawaii.

	no geographic variation; the same figures are used for all 50 states and D.C.	
Timing of Annual Update	The Census Bureau issues preliminary poverty thresholds in January, and final poverty thresholds in August of the year after the year for which poverty is measured. The poverty thresholds are adjusted to the price level of the year for which poverty is measured. For example, the poverty thresholds for calendar year 2002 were issued in 2003 (preliminary in January, final in September), were used to measure poverty for calendar year 2002, and reflect the price level of calendar year 2002.	HHS issues poverty guidelines in February of each year. Some programs make them effective on date of publication, others at a later date. For example, the 2003 poverty guidelines were issued in February 2003, calculated from the calendar year 2001 thresholds issued in September 2002, updated to reflect the price level of calendar year 2002. Therefore the 2003 poverty guidelines are approximately equal to the poverty thresholds for 2002 (for most family sizes).
How Updated or Calculated	The <i>48-cell matrix</i> is updated each year from the 1978 threshold matrix using the CPI-U. The preliminary weighted average thresholds are updated from the previous year's final weighted average thresholds using the CPI-U. The final weighted average thresholds are calculated from the current year's 48-cell matrix using family weighting figures from the Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Supplement.	Guidelines are updated from the latest published (final) weighted average poverty thresholds using the CPI-U. (Figures are rounded, and differences between adjacent-family-size figures are equalized.)
Rounding	Rounded to the nearest dollar	Rounded to various multiples of \$10 — may end only in zero

When are the poverty guidelines usually published each year?

The poverty guidelines have generally been published in February. (In 2006, however, they were published on January 24.) There is a list of the dates (aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/figures-fed-reg.shtml#dates) on which the poverty guidelines have been published since 1982.

When are the poverty guidelines effective?

The poverty guidelines may be used as soon as they are published in the *Federal Register* each year — usually about mid-February — **unless** a program has chosen to make them effective at a later date. **To determine when the poverty guidelines are effective for a particular program, one must contact the office or organization that administers that program.**

I have a chart showing percentage multiples [e.g., 125 percent, 150 percent, etc.] of last year's poverty guidelines. How can I get an updated version of that chart based on this year's guidelines?

The only way to get an update of a chart showing percentage multiples of the poverty guidelines is to contact the organization or office that prepared it. While ASPE calculates the poverty guidelines each year, **ASPE does not calculate or prepare any charts showing percentage multiples of the poverty guidelines** even though such charts may indicate the HHS poverty guidelines as the source.

In general, one can calculate various percentage multiples of the guidelines by taking the current guidelines and multiplying each number by 1.25 for 125 percent, 1.50 for 150 percent, etc. Be aware, however, that the rounding rules for these calculations, as well as procedures for calculating monthly income, are determined by the federal, state, and local program offices that use the poverty guidelines for eligibility purposes.

I have a sliding fee scale [indicating that families between certain percentage multiples of the poverty guidelines should pay a certain percentage of the full fee] based on last year's poverty guidelines. How can I get an updated version of that sliding fee scale based on this year's guidelines?

The only way to get an update of a sliding fee scale is to contact the organization or office that prepared it. While ASPE calculates the poverty guidelines each year, **ASPE does not calculate or prepare any sliding fee scales** even though such scales may indicate the HHS poverty guidelines as the source.

What programs use the poverty guidelines?

The HHS poverty guidelines, or percentage multiples of them (such as 125 percent, 150 percent, or 185 percent), are used as an eligibility criterion by a number of federal programs, including those listed below. For examples of major means-tested programs that do not use the poverty guidelines, see the end of this response.

- **Department of Health and Human Services:**
 - Community Services Block Grant
 - Head Start
 - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
 - Community Food and Nutrition Program
 - PARTS of Medicaid (28 percent of eligibles in Fiscal Year 2003)
 - Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program
 - AIDS Drug Assistance Program
 - State Children's Health Insurance Program
 - Medicare – Prescription Drug Coverage (subsidized portion only)

- Community Health Centers
- Migrant Health Centers Grants
- Family Planning Services
- Health Professions Student Loans — Loans for Disadvantaged Students
- Health Careers Opportunity Program
- Scholarships for Health Professions Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds
- Job Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals
- Assets for Independence Demonstration Program
- **Department of Agriculture:**
 - Food Stamp Program
 - Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
 - National School Lunch Program (for free and reduced-price meals only)
 - School Breakfast Program (for free and reduced-price meals only)
 - Child and Adult Care Food Program (for free and reduced-price meals only)
 - Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
- **Department of Energy:**
 - Weatherization Assistance for Low-Income Persons
- **Department of Labor:**
 - Job Corps
 - National Farmworker Jobs Program
 - Senior Community Service Employment Program
 - Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities
- **Department of the Treasury:**
 - Low-Income Taxpayer Clinics
- **Corporation for National and Community Service:**
 - Foster Grandparent Program
 - Senior Companion Program
- **Legal Services Corporation:**
 - Legal Services for the Poor

Most of these programs are non-open-ended programs — that is, programs for which a fixed amount of money is appropriated each year. The only open-ended or “entitlement” programs that use the poverty guidelines for eligibility are Food Stamps, the National School Lunch Program, certain parts of Medicaid, and the subsidized portion of Medicare – Prescription Drug Coverage.

Some state and local governments have chosen to use the federal poverty guidelines in some of their own programs and activities. Examples include financial guidelines for child support enforcement and determination of legal indigence for court purposes. Some private companies (such as utilities, telephone companies, and pharmaceutical companies) and some charitable agencies also use the guidelines in setting eligibility for their services to low-income persons.

Major means-tested programs that do not use the poverty guidelines in determining eligibility include the following:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and its predecessor, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) (in most cases)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- State/local-funded General Assistance (in most cases)
- Large parts of Medicaid (72 percent of eligibles in Fiscal Year 2003)
- Section 8 low-income housing assistance
- Low-rent public housing

Are the poverty guidelines before-tax or after-tax? Are they gross income or net income? What definition of income is used with the poverty guidelines?

There is no simple answer to these questions. When determining program eligibility, some agencies compare before-tax income to the poverty guidelines, while other agencies compare after-tax income. Likewise, eligibility can be dependent on gross income, net income, or some other measure of income. Federal, state, and local program offices that use the poverty guidelines for eligibility purposes may define income in different ways. **To find out the specific definition of income (before-tax, after-tax, etc.) used by a particular program or activity, one must consult the office or organization that administers that program.**

While there is no standard definition of income for program eligibility purposes, the Census Bureau uses a standard definition of income for computing poverty statistics based on the official poverty thresholds. More information is available on the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/povdef.html).

To calculate the 2006 poverty guidelines, do you use a projection of what the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) will be for 2006?

No. **ASPE does not project price changes for the current year; instead, we issue guidelines based on price changes through the most recent completed year.** Accordingly, the 2006 poverty guidelines, issued in January 2006, reflect actual price changes through calendar year 2005.

Where can I find historical tables of the poverty guidelines and the poverty thresholds?

For the poverty guidelines since 1982, summary figures are available on this HHS web site (aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/figures-fed-reg.shtml). For a historical table of the poverty guidelines since 1965, see Table 3.E8 in the *Annual Statistical Supplement of the Social Security Bulletin*, available on the Social Security Administration's web site (www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2005/3e.html#table3.e8).

For historical tables of weighted average poverty thresholds since 1959, see the historical poverty threshold table on the Census Bureau's Poverty web site (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/histpov/hstpov1.html), or Table 3.E1 in the *Annual Statistical Supplement of the Social Security Bulletin* (www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2005/3e.html#table3.e1). The Census Bureau also has tables showing the detailed matrix of poverty thresholds for

individual years back to 1980 (www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld.html). For the detailed matrix of poverty thresholds for years before 1980, contact the Census Bureau at (301)763-3242.

What is “the official poverty line defined by the Office of Management and Budget”?

This phrase refers to the Census Bureau poverty thresholds, although it is included in the legislative section of the 1981 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) that requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to update the poverty guidelines annually. The thresholds are mentioned in this legislative section because they are the starting point from which the poverty guidelines are calculated. (The legislative section is section 673(2) of OBRA-1981 or of the Community Services Block Grant Act; the U.S. Code citation is 42 U.S.C. 9902(2) [www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode42/usc_sec_42_00009902----000-.html].)

The Census Bureau poverty thresholds are described using this phrase because in August 1969, the Bureau of the Budget (the predecessor of the Office of Management and Budget) issued a document designating the Census Bureau poverty thresholds as the federal government’s official statistical definition of poverty. (The 1978 version of this document is available on the Census Bureau website. [www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/povmeas/ombdir14.html]) However, the role of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) vis-a-vis the poverty line was limited to this one-time designation of the poverty thresholds as the official federal statistical definition of poverty. OMB has never issued either the poverty thresholds or the poverty guidelines.

To make a statutory reference to the poverty guidelines, one can use the phrase “the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the *Federal Register* by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2) [www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode42/usc_sec_42_00009902----000-.html].”

How was the poverty line developed?

The poverty thresholds were originally developed in 1963-1964 by Mollie Orshansky of the Social Security Administration. **Orshansky took the dollar costs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s economy food plan for families of three or more persons and multiplied the costs by a factor of three.** She followed somewhat different procedures to calculate thresholds for one- and two-person units in order to allow for the relatively larger fixed costs that small family units face. (The economy food plan used by Orshansky is included in a 1962 Agriculture Department report that is available on the Census Bureau’s website [aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/familyfoodplan.pdf].)

Orshansky used a factor of three because the Agriculture Department’s 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey found that for families of three or more persons, the average dollar value of all food used during a week (both at home and away from home) accounted for about one third of their total money income after taxes.

In May 1965, the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity adopted Orshansky's poverty thresholds as a working or quasi-official definition of poverty. In August 1969, the U.S. Bureau of the Budget (predecessor of the Office of Management and Budget) designated the poverty thresholds with certain revisions as the federal government's official statistical definition of poverty.

More information is available on how Orshansky developed the thresholds and their subsequent history as the official U.S. poverty measure (aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/contacts.shtml#f).

Was the thrifty food plan used to develop or update the poverty thresholds?

No. The Agriculture Department's economy food plan — the predecessor of the current thrifty food plan — was used in developing the poverty thresholds in 1963-1964. (The economy food plan used to develop the thresholds is included in a 1962 Agriculture Department report that is available on the Census Bureau's website [aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/familyfoodplan.pdf].) The thrifty food plan was not established until 1975, when it replaced the economy food plan at the same general level of cost. The thrifty food plan has never been used to update or revise the poverty thresholds. Poverty thresholds are updated for price changes only using the Consumer Price Index.

Are the poverty thresholds calculated every year by multiplying the cost of an Agriculture Department food plan by three?

No. The "three-times-the-cost-of-the-food-plan" calculation was done only once, for the 1963 base year poverty thresholds, using the Agriculture Department's economy food plan. Poverty thresholds for years since 1963 have been updated for price changes only using the Consumer Price Index.

What share of the poverty line goes for housing? for transportation? for home heating?

The poverty thresholds were not developed as an item-by-item budget with specific dollar amounts for each consumption category. If one tries to consider the thresholds as a budget, all that one can say is that they were developed in 1963-1964 by multiplying the cost of the economy food plan by three. Other than that, **it is not possible to say what share of the poverty line goes for any specific consumption category.** (Note that the food share used to develop the thresholds does not represent today's consumption pattern for either the general population or the poverty population.)

How many people are in poverty in the United States? How many people are in poverty in [my state OR my county OR my city]?

The Census Bureau is the federal agency that prepares statistics on the number of people in poverty in the United States. **To obtain figures on the number of people in poverty since 1959, see the Poverty section of the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html), or contact the Census Bureau directly at:**

Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division
Room G251
Federal Office Building #3
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233-8500
Telephone: (301) 763-3242
U.S. Census Bureau Question and Answer Center: <<http://ask.census.gov>>

The Census Bureau's poverty statistics represent the number of people below the Census Bureau poverty thresholds. Neither the Census Bureau nor the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services prepare tabulations of the number of people below the HHS poverty guidelines, which are a simplified version of the poverty thresholds used for program eligibility purposes. The best approximation for the number of people below the HHS poverty guidelines in a particular area would be the number of persons below the Census Bureau poverty thresholds in that area.

What is the poverty line for [my state OR my metropolitan area OR my city]?

The Census Bureau's poverty thresholds are the same nationwide, with no separate figures for different states, metropolitan areas, or cities.

The Department of Health and Human Services' poverty guidelines, which are a simplified version of the Census Bureau's poverty thresholds used for program eligibility purposes, are the same for the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. Due to Office of Economic Opportunity administrative practices beginning in the 1966-1970 period, there are separate poverty guidelines for Alaska and for Hawaii.

Since there is an official federal definition of "poverty," does the federal government also have official definitions for such terms as "middle class," "middle income," "rich," and "upper income"?

No. The federal government does not have official definitions for such terms as "middle class," "middle income," "rich," and "upper income."

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Space in Public Buildings and Grounds, to request the use of public space in Federal buildings and on Federal grounds for cultural, educational, or recreational activities. A copy, sample, or description of any material or item proposed for distribution or display must also accompany this request.

B. Annual Reporting Burden

Respondents: 8,000.
 Responses Per Respondent: 1.
 Hours Per Response: 0.05.
 Total Burden Hours: 400.

Obtaining Copies of Proposals:

Requesters may obtain a copy of the information collection documents from the General Services Administration, Regulatory Secretariat (VIR), 1800 F Street, NW., Room 4035, Washington, DC 20405, telephone (202) 208-7312. Please cite OMB Control No. 3090-0044, GSA Form 3453, Application/Permit for Use of Space in Public Buildings and Grounds, in all correspondence.

Dated: January 13, 2006.

Michael W. Carleton,
Chief Information Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines

AGENCY: Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice provides an update of the HHS poverty guidelines to account for last calendar year's increase in prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

DATES: *Effective Date:* Date of publication, unless an office administering a program using the guidelines specifies a different effective date for that particular program.

ADDRESSES: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Washington, DC 20201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information about how the guidelines are used or how income is defined in a particular program, contact the Federal, state, or local office that is responsible for that program. Contact information for two frequently requested programs is given below:

For information about the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program (free

or reduced-fee health care services at certain hospitals and other facilities for persons meeting eligibility criteria involving the poverty guidelines), contact the Office of the Director, Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery, Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS, Room 10-105, Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857. To speak to a person, call (301) 443-5656. To receive a Hill-Burton information package, call 1-800-638-0742 (for callers outside Maryland) or 1-800-492-0359 (for callers in Maryland). You may also visit <http://www.hrsa.gov/osp/dfcr/>. The Division of Facilities Compliance and Recovery notes that as set by 42 CFR 124.505(b), the effective date of this update of the poverty guidelines for facilities obligated under the Hill-Burton Uncompensated Services Program is sixty days from the date of this publication.

For information about the percentage multiple of the poverty guidelines to be used on immigration forms such as USCIS Form I-864, Affidavit of Support, contact U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at 1-800-375-5283 or visit <http://uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/affsupp.htm>.

For information about the number of people in poverty or about the Census Bureau poverty thresholds, visit the Poverty section of the Census Bureau's Web site at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html> or contact the Housing and Household Economic Statistics Information Staff at (301) 763-3242.

For general questions about the poverty guidelines themselves, contact Gordon Fisher, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Room 404E, Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20201—telephone: (202) 690-7507—or visit <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) requires the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to update, at least annually, the poverty guidelines, which shall be used as an eligibility criterion for the Community Services Block Grant program. The poverty guidelines also are used as an eligibility criterion by a number of other Federal programs. The *poverty guidelines* issued here are a simplified version of the *poverty thresholds* that the Census Bureau uses

to prepare its estimates of the number of individuals and families in poverty.

As required by law, this update is accomplished by increasing the latest published Census Bureau poverty thresholds by the relevant percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The guidelines in this 2006 notice reflect the 3.4 percent price increase between calendar years 2004 and 2005. After this inflation adjustment, the guidelines are rounded and adjusted to standardize the differences between family sizes. The same calculation procedure was used this year as in previous years. (Note that these 2006 guidelines are roughly equal to the poverty thresholds for calendar year 2005 which the Census Bureau expects to publish in final form in August 2006.)

2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
1	\$9,800
2	13,200
3	16,600
4	20,000
5	23,400
6	26,800
7	30,200
8	33,600

For family units with more than 8 persons, add \$3,400 for each additional person.

2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR ALASKA

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
1	\$12,250
2	16,500
3	20,750
4	25,000
5	29,250
6	33,500
7	37,750
8	42,000

For family units with more than 8 persons, add \$4,250 for each additional person.

2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR HAWAII

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
1	\$11,270
2	15,180
3	19,090
4	23,000
5	26,910
6	30,820
7	34,730

2006 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR HAWAII—Continued

Persons in family unit	Poverty guideline
8	38,640

For family units with more than 8 persons, add \$3,910 for each additional person.

Separate poverty guideline figures for Alaska and Hawaii reflect Office of Economic Opportunity administrative practice beginning in the 1966–1970 period. (Note that the Census Bureau poverty thresholds—the version of the poverty measure used for statistical purposes—have never had separate figures for Alaska and Hawaii). The poverty guidelines are not defined for Puerto Rico or other outlying jurisdictions. In cases in which a Federal program using the poverty guidelines serves any of those jurisdictions, the Federal office that administers the program is responsible for deciding whether to use the contiguous-states-and-DC guidelines for those jurisdictions or to follow some other procedure.

Due to confusing legislative language dating back to 1972, the poverty guidelines have sometimes been mistakenly referred to as the “OMB” (Office of Management and Budget) poverty guidelines or poverty line. In fact, OMB has never issued the guidelines; the guidelines are issued each year by the Department of Health and Human Services. The poverty guidelines may be formally referenced as “the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the **Federal Register** by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).”

Some programs use a percentage multiple of the guidelines (for example, 125 percent or 185 percent of the guidelines), as noted in relevant authorizing legislation or program regulations. Non-Federal organizations that use the poverty guidelines under their own authority in non-Federally-funded activities can choose to use a percentage multiple of the guidelines such as 125 percent or 185 percent.

The poverty guidelines do not make a distinction between farm and non-farm families or between aged and non-aged units. (Only the Census Bureau poverty thresholds have separate figures for aged and non-aged one-person and two-person units).

Note that this notice does not provide definitions of such terms as “income” or “family.” This is because there is considerable variation in how different programs that use the guidelines define

these terms, traceable to the different laws and regulations that govern the various programs. Therefore, questions about how a particular program applies the poverty guidelines (e.g., Is income before or after taxes? Should a particular type of income be counted? Should a particular person be counted in the family or household unit?) should be directed to the organization that administers the program.

Dated: January 18, 2006.

Michael O. Leavitt,

Secretary of Health and Human Services.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Solicitation for Nominations for New Primary and Secondary Health Topics To Be Considered for Review by the United States Preventive Services Task Force

AGENCY: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), DHHS.

ACTION: Solicit for new topic nominations.

SUMMARY: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) invites individuals and organizations to nominate primary and secondary prevention topics pertaining to clinical preventive services that they would like the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) to consider for review. A list of topics that have been recently reviewed or are currently under review by the USPSTF is listed below in the supplementary information section.

The USPSTF is an independent panel of experts that makes evidence-based recommendations regarding the provision of clinical preventive services. Clinical preventive services include screening, counseling and preventive medications. The USPSTF makes recommendations about preventive services for asymptomatic people—people without recognized signs or symptoms of the specific conditions targeted by the preventive service.

Topics can be nominated by individuals, organizations, evidence-based practice centers (EPC) and USPSTF members. The USPSTF will consider nominations and prioritize topics for review based on the following set of criteria: Public health importance (burden of suffering, potential of preventive service to reduce the burden); new evidence that has the

potential to change prior recommendations including inactive ones; and, potential for greatest Task Force impact (e.g., clinical controversy, practice does not reflect evidence, inappropriate timing in delivery of services). The USPSTF will prioritize topics for which there is a performance gap and the potential to significantly improve clinical practice. Individuals and organizations may nominate new topics or topics previously reviewed by the USPSTF.

Basic Topic Nomination

Requirements: Nominations must be no more than 500 words in length and must include the following information. Nominations may include an appendix that contains references and supporting documents (not included in word count).

1. Name of topic.
2. Rationale for consideration by the USPSTF, to include:
 - a. Primary or secondary prevention topic (screening, counseling or preventive medication).
 - b. Primary care relevance (applicable clinical preventive service must be initiated in the primary care setting which can be defined as family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics or obstetrics/gynecology and provided by a primary care provider).
 - c. Description of public health importance (burden of disease/suffering, potential of preventive service to reduce burden, including effective interventions). Citations and supporting documents are recommended.
 - d. Summary of new evidence, if any, that has potential to affect the Task Force’s recommendation on a previously reviewed topic. Please refer to <http://preventiveservices.ahrq.gov> for USPSTF recommendations. Citations and supporting documents are recommended.
 - e. Description of potential impact of USPSTF’s review of the topic, i.e., change in clinical practice, research focus, etc.

DATES: Topic nominations should be submitted by February 23, 2006, in order to be considered for 2006–2008. AHRQ will not reply to submissions in response to the request for nominations, but will consider all topic nominations during the selection process. If a topic is selected for review by the USPSTF, the nominator will be notified by AHRQ.

ADDRESSES: Please submit nominations to: Therese Miller, DrPH, ATTN: USPSTF Topic Nominations, Center for Primary Care, Prevention & Clinical Partnerships, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 540 Gaither Road,