



### What are the National Longitudinal Surveys?

The National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) are a set of surveys sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. The NLS has gathered information at multiple points in time on the labor market experiences and other significant life events of several groups of men and women.

NLS data collection and user services are provided, under contract, by CHRR at The Ohio State University and NORC at the University of Chicago. Funding for the NLSY79 Child/Young Adult survey is provided by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

### NLS cohort topics include:

Demographic and family background, education, military experiences, job characteristics and training, labor market status and histories, marital and family characteristics, income and assets, transfers of time and money, retirement, geographic location and mobility, health, nutrition, and physical activity, fertility and parenting, sexual activity, attitudes and expectations, behaviors and perspectives, environmental characteristics, and civic engagement.

### Additionally, NLSY79 Child and Young Adult surveys include:

Assessments of the quality of the home environment, cognitive development, temperament, and motor, social and emotional development.

### How do I obtain NLS data?

National Longitudinal Surveys data are made available to researchers through the Investigator website at: [nlsinfo.org/investigator](https://nlsinfo.org/investigator). Investigator allows users to search for variables of interest for any NLS cohort, create simple tabulations of the data, extract data sets for analysis, and access documentation. NLS public data are immediately available and free of charge.

### Where do I get more information?

Visit the NLS website at: [nlsinfo.org](https://nlsinfo.org) for online access to questionnaires and other documentation, a searchable, annotated bibliography of NLS research, news releases, updates, information on obtaining restricted-access data, such as geocoded files, and much more.

Questions about NLS data should be directed to NLS User Services: [usersvc@chrr.osu.edu](mailto:usersvc@chrr.osu.edu) or **614-442-7366**.

Questions about BLS publications and restricted-access NLS data should be directed to: [NLS\\_info@bls.gov](mailto:NLS_info@bls.gov) or **202-691-7410**.

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# Accessing RESTRICTED-USE NLS DATA

# National Longitudinal Surveys



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## NLSY Geocode Data

NLSY79, NLSY79 Young Adult, and NLSY97 confidential geocode data include the respondent's state, county and MSA of residence and codes identifying colleges attended. These restricted-use data are a small subset of the NLS dataset and when provided to the researcher, the included respondent ID variable facilitates linking to the public use data. More detail about the variables on the geocode data files is available in the NLSY79 Geocode Codebook Supplement and the NLSY97 Geocode Codebook Supplement at: [nlsinfo.org](http://nlsinfo.org)

To protect the confidentiality of respondents, the Bureau of Labor Statistics only grants access to geocode files for researchers in the United States who agree in writing to adhere to the BLS confidentiality policy and whose projects further the mission of BLS and the NLS program to conduct sound, legitimate research in the social sciences. Applications from abroad cannot be accepted. Applicants must provide a clear statement of their research methodology and objectives and explain how the geocode data are necessary to meet those objectives. Researchers who are granted access to NLSY geocode files may use them from approved locations on the physical premises of their institution.

## NLSY Restricted-Use Zip Code and Census Tract Data

For researchers who want to measure smaller geographic areas, the NLSY79 and NLSY97

surveys have restricted-use zip code and Census tract files. These files also include all of the geocode data.

These confidential files are available for use at the BLS National Office in Washington, DC, and at Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (FSRDCs) on statistical research projects approved by BLS. Access to data is subject to the availability of space and resources.

## NLSY97 Restricted-Use School Survey Data

The 1996 NLSY97 School Survey contains all public and private schools with a 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the 147 nationally representative primary sampling units (PSUs) used for the NLSY97 sample construction. School characteristics were specifically targeted to gain information on school-to-work programs. The 2000 NLSY97 School Survey is a sample of all schools in the original 1996 NLSY97 school survey. In addition, vocational education school in the PSUs are included in the sample. Where NLSY97 respondents have moved to secondary schools with a 12<sup>th</sup> grade outside the 147 PSUs, those schools also are included. The School & Transcript Survey section of the NLSY97 Topical Guide provides details about sample sizes and the types of information available. Additional information at: [nlsinfo.org/content/cohorts/nlsy97/topical-guide/education/school-transcript-surveys](http://nlsinfo.org/content/cohorts/nlsy97/topical-guide/education/school-transcript-surveys)



Like the restricted-use zip code and Census tract data, the school survey files are available for use at the BLS National Office in Washington, DC, and at Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (FSRDCs) on statistical research projects approved by BLS. Access to data is subject to the availability of space and resources.

## NLSY Restricted-Use Data Application Process

Applicants requesting access to restricted-use geocode, zip code, Census tract, and school survey data must complete the Standard Application Process (SAP) through the online portal at ResearchDataGov (RDG). Additional information at: <https://www.bls.gov/nls/request-restricted-data/questions-geocode-agreements.htm>

## NLSW and NLSM Restricted-Use Geographic Variables

Because data collection for the Original Cohorts was performed by the Census Bureau, geographic data are handled differently than the NLSY cohorts. The only geographic indicator available on the public data set is South/nonSouth region of residence. All other geographic variables are restricted to access at Federal Statistical Research Data Centers that have been established in several locations around the country.

For the NLS of Older Men and the NLS of Young Men (NLSM), variables are available on the State and county of residence in each round of the surveys. A variable also is available on the Primary Sampling Unit from which the samples were selected in the first round of the surveys in 1966.

For the NLS of Mature Women and the NLS of Young Women (NLSW), many more geographic variables are available. These variables include State, county, census tract and block, and latitude and longitude of residence in each round of the surveys. Variables are available on whether a respondent moved to a different

address from one round of the survey to the next. A variable also is available on the Primary Sampling Unit from which the samples were selected in the first round of the surveys in 1967 (Mature Women) and 1968 (Young Women). In addition, variables are available on the names and locations of colleges and universities that respondents attended.

## NLSW and NLSM Restricted-Use Data Request Process

The process established by BLS and the Census Bureau to request access to geographic variables from the NLS original cohorts includes two main steps:

1. Researchers must send a description of the project to BLS at: [NLS\\_info@bls.gov](mailto:NLS_info@bls.gov). The proposal should describe clearly and concisely the objectives of the project, the research hypotheses and methodology, the geographic information needed for the project, and the way in which that geographic information will be used. BLS staff will review and comment on the proposal and possibly ask follow-up questions. When BLS staff has all the information it feels is necessary, it will recommend whether to approve the project.
2. If BLS approves the project, BLS will notify the researcher and the Census Bureau. The researcher then can submit a formal proposal to the Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies (CES), which oversees the Federal Statistical Research Data Centers. Interested researchers should consult the CES web site at: [ces.census.gov](http://ces.census.gov) for proposal guidelines and information on the locations of Research Data Centers. Researchers also should work closely with CES staff and the administrator of the appropriate Research Data Center to develop the proposal adequately.