

## Errata Description for Original 1979-2002 Reciprocity Variables

In 2002, several problems were discovered in the calculation of the created Reciprocity Event History variables (areas of interest RECIPIENT MONTH and RECIPIENT YEAR). Correcting these problems involved reprogramming of the reciprocity variables from 1979-2002. These reprogrammed variables have been identified by appending the text “\_REVISED” to the question names. The original 1979-2002 reciprocity variables in which problems were identified will not be included in future releases. The kinds of issues that were found to necessitate the reprogramming are described below.

1. ***Dollar values for unemployment compensation:*** For calendar years 1978-2000, many of the dollar values for yearly and monthly unemployment compensation (UC) for both the respondent and spouse/partner were inaccurate. These dollar values were improperly edited to be substantially lower than they should actually have been. From the 1993 interview until the 2000 interview, approximately 50% of those reporting UC receipt for themselves or their spouse/partners were affected. A much smaller proportion (around 10%) of UC recipients from the 1979-1992 interviews were affected. In addition, MONTHLY dollar values of UC were slightly off for data collected between the 1993 and 2000 interviews (inclusive). For data collected before 2002, MONTHLY values were calculated by multiplying the original WEEKLY values by “4” instead of “4.3”.
2. ***Edit flags for all reciprocity programs:*** The original Reciprocity variables series included a set of edit flags for each of the five types of program. In general, for all survey years through 2002, cases which received a code “3 - Edited value - reported value too high, calculated average consistent with state benefit structure” on the “[PROGRAM]-EDIT-[YEAR]” flags for variables other than UC receipt were problematic. The dollar amounts reported by respondents in these cases were incorrectly edited (affecting both the resulting monthly and yearly dollar amounts). Those with a code “3” on the [PROGRAM]-EDIT-[YEAR] flags were edited under the incorrect assumption that a reported MONTHLY amount higher than an arbitrarily set maximum was actually a YEARLY amount. Based on this evaluation, the decision was made not to create revised versions of the edit flag variables to accompany the revised reciprocity variable series.
3. ***Seam problem for AFDC/TANF receipt:*** Monthly AFDC/TANF receipt information created from survey year 2000 (round 19) data contained a small seam problem. For data created from this survey year ONLY, some respondents were coded as “-4” in the interview month (or a month immediately before or after the interview month) when they should have received a value indicating the dollar amount of receipt. This problem affected only respondents who reported continuous receipt up until the interview month in that survey year, or who reported the interview month as their receipt stop month. This error resulted in deflated values for yearly AFDC/TANF dollar amounts and combined welfare dollar amounts. It also might have also led to overestimation of the number of

receipt spells for a given respondent, since it erroneously appeared that respondents ended receipt and began another spell.

4. ***Coding of non-receipt:*** In survey year 2000 (round 19), the conventions used for assigning “0” or “-4” on some of the reciprocity created variables were not consistent with prior rounds. While this inconsistency may have made data use more complicated, it was unlikely to affect many users since these codes both indicated non-receipt.
5. ***Erroneous data for some June receipt:*** Respondents who reported during the 2000 interview that they had received program benefits during 1998 or earlier incorrectly may have been assigned a “-4” during the month of June. This problem is particularly prevalent for June 1998, because respondents interviewed in May 1998 or earlier reported June 1998 receipt in the 2000 interview. (For example, about 60 respondents out of over 200 who received AFDC had “-4” incorrectly assigned during June 1998.) The missing June data was far less prevalent for calendar years prior to 1998. Yearly receipt amounts **were** affected, with cases missing June data having had a one-month undercount in the yearly total dollar receipt amount. An exception to this is a small number of respondents who did not know the dates for their receipt—their yearly totals **may** have been correct.
6. ***Reciprocity stop month not counted:*** For data reported in survey year 2000, the stop month of receipt was not counted as a receipt month as it had been in reciprocity event histories for other years. This led to a truncated receipt spell and a slight downward bias in the yearly receipt totals.
7. ***Total Net Family Income and Poverty Status variables:*** The problems described above may affect 1998 and 2000 Total Net Family Income values for some respondents. Those reporting UC or AFDC/TANF receipt in June 1998 and continuous AFDC/TANF receipt at the 2000 interview will be most likely to require adjustments to the Total Net Family Income values. In addition, the Poverty Status released for the 1998 and 2000 survey years may require adjustment for a subset of those cases.