



HCHS/SOL Question by Question Instructions

Occupation Classification and Exposures Form (OCE/OCS), Version A

General Instructions

The questions on occupation are designed to learn about the participants' current work environment and the work environment of their longest held job. Characteristics of the work environment will be related to various health outcomes for participants. Occupational codes used in the HCHS/SOL are not based on any standard Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) or Census occupation codes. These codes were developed by HCHS/SOL to reflect common occupational groups in the Hispanic/Latino population and are based on NIH-funded studies in developing countries including the Philippines and China.

Participants may have more than one job. Therefore, in administering this section of the survey, interviewers will need to help the participant carefully distinguish between questions regarding their PRIMARY job and questions that require the participant to consider ALL of their jobs.

Question by Question Instructions

- Q1 This initial question will guide the administration of the questionnaire by classifying participants as currently working or retired. Participants who have retired from one job but are continuing to work at another job or who re-entered the labor force after retirement should answer 'yes' to this question. They will have the opportunity to discuss the job that they are continuing to work at in questions 4-15 and in section B.
- Q2 The year of retirement should be recorded for those who are retired. This is important for understanding time since a participant's last exposure to occupational health issues.
- Q3 The participants are asked to identify their primary job as the job that they worked the MAJORITY of hours per week when they retired. They may have had more than one job and may have difficulty choosing their primary job but should be encouraged to do so based on the job that they spend the most time at. The occupation codes are provided in list A. The categorization of occupations is complex. These categories are more social and economic than related to physical activity. Thus, if the status of a person in terms of salary and pay is as a senior or junior professional use those categories.

For example, a person who works at a fast food or other service job is usually paid as a non-skilled person unless they manage the fast food restaurant. As a manager of the restaurant, then they should be classified as a junior or senior professional. Similarly, a person may work in the construction industry but work as an accountant in that industry. Thus, their occupation would be 01 (a senior professional/technical worker)

Keep in mind that we want this to reflect their relative status and economic level for their primary job and not for other jobs. Thus a writer might be a taxi driver and coded as item 10 though they also write novels on the side.

- Q4 Participants can combine homemaking and/or being a student with retirement and with other types of employment. Participants may need some clarification regarding what a homemaker is and

how to define a student. If the participant requests clarification, the following definitions may be used:

- a. **HOMEMAKER** Any person whose primary responsibility is caring for the children in their family and taking care of the home environment (*Alma de la casa*). This could also be a person whose primary responsibility is taking care of an ill person or elderly person at home. A person who is unemployed and looking for work is not considered a homemaker.
- b. **STUDENT** Any person attending a community college, technical school, or university either part-time or full-time.

- Q5 Any person who is earning some income in return for the services or work they provide is considered employed. In contrast to question 3, the participant should consider ALL of their jobs when determining their total hours worked per week. The cut-off of 35 hours or less is the standard cut-off used to identify part-time employees.
- Q6 This is a standard question used to determine if a participant faces seasonal unemployment, which occurs often in the US.
- Q7 A typical week can be understood as an average, common, or standard week. Participants should provide an average or estimated of the number of days worked. This will allow researchers to understand if participants' work, part-time, full time, or more than that. As with question 5, the interviewer will need to prompt the participant to consider ALL the participant's jobs when answering this question.
- Q8 As with Q7, participants should consider ALL of their jobs and should consider a typical or average day. The responses to this category can range from 0 to 24. While the average 40 hour/week job would require 8 hours of work per day, participants the HCHS/SOL may have more than one job and might work substantial overtime at one job. Alternatively, they may get very little work on an average day as day laborers or contractual employees. Therefore, we might have people who work on the average many more or less hours than the average American and we need their estimate of the number of hours they usually work each day.
- Q9 This question is intended to help researchers understand a number of issues related to sleep and health. A regular work schedule has predictable times and hours with little variation. The question is used to begin a skip pattern that helps to identify those that do shift work and/or perform overtime work.
- Q10 Participants should be directly to note the EARLIEST time that they start work ON TYPICAL DAY.
- Q11 Participants should be directly to note the LATEST time that they end work ON TYPICAL DAY.
- Q12 The goal of this question is to determine if the participant works overtime all the time or only

occasionally.

Q13 This question should refer to the participant's PRIMARY job identified in Q3. Many people work in shift. The precise definitions of each shift may vary by an employer. However, if the participant needs clarification on the meaning or hours typically associated with each of these shifts, the following definitions can be provided with the understanding that the times may vary by 1-2 hours:

- DAY SHIFT The day shift will typically be between 6AM-2pm
- AFTERNOON SHIFT The afternoon shift will typically be 2pm-10pm or 2pm to 11pm
- NIGHT SHIFT The night shift will typically be 10pm-6AM or 11pm to 7pm
- SPLIT SHIFT A person with a split shift works twice over a day with 2 or more hours between work periods. For example, they might regularly work both four hours in the day and 4 hours in night shift on some days.
- IRREGULAR SHIFT OR ON-CALL A person with an irregular shift is one who works when called and never knows his/her shift for certain.
- ROTATING SHIFT A rotating shift means that you work one type of shift sometimes and another at other times. However, this is systematic. You know which shift you will work on each day.

Q14 This is important to learn if the person EVER has worked the after midnight work hours. They might work a different shift now but earlier worked at night. Or if they work the night shift now then this answer will automatically be coded yes.

Q15 Because working at night is felt to be particularly difficult, we are interested in continuing to probe this topic. This question asks if the night work noted in question 14 is on a regular basis or if it only occurs occasionally on a rotating basis.

Q16 This question is the equivalent of Q3 but is asked for those who are CURRENTLY working. Participants are asked to identify their primary job as the job that they work the MAJORITY of hours per week. They may have more than one job and may have difficulty choosing their primary job but should be encouraged to do so based on the job that they spend the most time at. If the participant's primary job varies by week, then they can be instructed to think of the job that they worked the most hours at over the past year.

The occupation codes are provided in list A. The categorization of occupations is complex. These categories are more social and economic than related to physical activity. Thus, if the status of a person in terms of salary and pay is as a senior or junior professional use those categories.

For example, a person who works at a fast food or other service job is usually paid as a non-skilled person unless they manage the fast food restaurant. As a manager of the restraint, then they should be classified as a junior or senior professional. Similarly, a person may work in the construction industry but work as an accountant in that industry. Thus, their occupation would be 01 (a senior professional/technical worker).

Keep in mind that we want this to reflect their relative status and economic level for their primary job and not for other jobs. Thus, a writer might be a taxi driver and coded as item 10 though they also write novels on the side.

- Q17 This question is in reference to the participant's PRIMARY JOB identified in question 16. If participants' work hours vary, they should be instructed to consider an average or typical week.
- Q18 Participants may have more than one job. This question allows us to determine if they have ANY additional jobs from which they earn income.
- Q19 Participants may have more than one additional job. Here we want to know the number of hours usually worked at their second job (i.e. the job at which the most hours at after their primary job).
- Q20 This question is the equivalent of Q16 but is asked for those who have a SECOND JOB. The occupation codes are provided in list A. The categorization of occupations is complex. These categories are more social and economic than related to physical activity. Thus, if the status of a person in terms of salary and pay is as a senior or junior professional use those categories.

For example, a person who works at a fast food or other service job is usually paid as a non-skilled person unless they manage the fast food restaurant. As a manager of the restraint, then they should be classified as a junior or senior professional. Similarly, a person may work in the construction industry but work as an accountant in that industry. Thus, their occupation would be 01 (a senior professional/technical worker)

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- Q21-24 These questions refer to the participant's PRIMARY JOB. If the participant seems to have trouble stating the answers in terms of 25%, 50%, etc of the time, the responses could be restated in terms of a quarter of the time, half the time, etc, or the participant could give the hours per week of exposure and the interviewer calculate the percentage, using the response to Q16 as a denominator. If a participant is not accustomed to the English measurement system, interviewer can say the equivalent of 2 feet in meters, i.e. approximately 1/2 meter.
- Q21 This question refers specifically to the job where the participant currently works the majority of his/her work hours (the job listed in B16). Read the choices. This is his/her opinion of what "noisy" means. You may probe with "for example, when you need to speak in a raised voice or louder".
- Q22. The question "At the job you currently work the majority of your work hours per week, how often

do you wear hearing (ear) protection?" refers to the participant's usual habits during time at work, not just during noisy time. For example, if 50% of the time at work is noisy and the participant wears hearing protection all the time that it is noisy but then does not wear hearing protection during the time that it is not noisy, the correct response is "50%".

- 23-24 Read as given, but if the participant is not familiar with what a given term means, (e.g., manganese) take this as a NO. Do not explain. People exposed will typically know. Those needing an explanation are much less likely to actually come in contact with these substances.
- Q25 The goal of this question is to elicit, in a succinct manner, whether the participant is exposed on the current job to agents that have been implicated in the incidence of asthma, chronic respiratory symptoms, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Although this question seems very simplistic, it has been validated against classification using a 16-item battery and a job exposure matrix. In that study, it was asked with the wording used here, without any additional explanation. People who use a respirator in the workplace might perceive themselves as unexposed, but this question is asking about what they would be exposed to if not wearing a respirator.
- Q26 This question should be asked even if the answer to Q25 is NO. If the participant seems to have trouble stating the answers in terms of 25%, 50%, etc of the time, the responses could be restated in terms of a quarter of the time, half the time, etc, or the participant could give the hours per week of exposure and the interviewer calculate the percentage, using the response to Q16 as a denominator.
- Q27 This question elicits exposure to a list of substances (a. through o) that provide more detail than is elicited by Q25. These were chosen because they have been shown to be risk factors for asthma, chronic respiratory symptoms or COPD. These items could be used for analyses of specific exposures that contribute to asthma and COPD. Read each item, but if they are not familiar with a given term means, take this as a NO. Do not explain. People exposed will typically know. Those needing an explanation are much less likely to actually come in contact with these substances. Mark the box if the subject says they are exposed, otherwise leave blank which is equivalent to NO.
- Q28. This question is the equivalent of Q16 but is asked with respect to the participant's LONGEST HELD JOB.

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For example, a person who works at a fast food or other service job is usually paid as a non-skilled person unless they manage the fast food restaurant. As a manager of the restaurant, then they should be classified as a junior or senior professional. Similarly, a person may work in the construction industry but work as an accountant in that industry. Thus, their occupation would be 01 (a senior professional/technical worker)

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- Q29 All of these questions refer to the same LONGEST HELD JOB identified in Q28. We would like to know the year that they started working in this job. If they started, stopped and started again we still want the earliest year they ever worked at this job
- Q30. All of these questions refer to the same type of job identified in Q28. If they changed companies but continued the same type of work [occupation] we want to know the earliest year working at this type of occupation at any location. We would like to know how many years total they worked at this type of job.
- Q31. All of these questions refer to the same type of job identified in Q28. If they changed companies but continued the same type of work [occupation] we want to know the total number of years working at this type of occupation at any location.
- Q32. All of these questions refer to the same type of job identified in Q28. If they changed companies but continued the same occupation [type of job], we want to know the year that the participant was last employed in his/her longest held occupation [type of job].
- Q33. All of these questions refer to the same type of job identified in Q28. If they changed companies but continued the same type of work [occupation] we want to know the average hours worked at this occupation/job. If participants' work hours vary, they should be instructed to consider an average or typical week.
- Q34-35 All of these questions refer to the same type of job identified in Q28. If they changed companies but continued the same type of work [occupation], we want them to use this occupation over all those years.. If the participant seems to have trouble stating the answers in terms of 25%, 50%, etc of the time, the responses could be restated in terms of a quarter of the time, half the time, etc, or the participant could give the hours per week of exposure and the interviewer calculate the percentage, using the response to Q16 as a denominator.
- Q34. The question "At that job, how often is it or was it noisy (you needed to speak in a raised voice or louder to be heard when a person was two feet away)?" refers specifically to the job where the participant currently works the majority of his/her work hours (the job listed in B16). Read the choices. This is his/her opinion of what "noisy" means. You may probe with "for example, when you need to speak in a raised voice or louder".
- Q35. The question "At the job you currently work the majority of your work hours per week, how often do you wear hearing (ear) protection?" refers to the participant's usual habits during time at work, not just during noisy time. For example, if 50% of the time at work is noisy and the participant wears hearing protection all the time that it is noisy but then does not wear hearing protection during the time that it is not noisy, the correct response is "50%".
- Q36. This question is identical to Q25 but refers to the LONGEST HELD JOB. According to the skip pattern in Q31, it will only be answered if the longest held job is different from the current job.
- Q37. This question is identical to Q27 but refers to the LONGEST HELD JOB. According to the skip pattern in Q31, it will only be answered if the longest held job is different from the current job.
- Q38. For other jobs, count the cumulative time; this must add up to 1 year or longer. The question refers to the voice level used for the majority of time on job.

List A. This list provides occupational codes for different types of jobs that participants may have. It is used in reference to questions 3, 16, 20, and 28.

- a. SENIOR PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL WORKER
This category represents workers with a professional degree that typically requires more than 4-years of college. This would include architects, doctors, engineers, lawyers, and college professors.
- b. JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL WORKER
This category represents workers with a professional degree that can typically be acquired within little if any additional schooling beyond 4 years of college. This category includes midwives, nurses, teachers, journalists, photographers.
- c. ADMINISTRATOR/EXECUTIVE/MANAGER
This category of workers includes the self-employed, government officials, and directors of departments in the government of private sector.
- d. OFFICE STAFF
This category of workers includes clerical workers who are not in leadership positions in their organization. Examples include secretaries, administrative assistants, typists, transcribers, and other office helpers.
- e. FARMER, FISHERMAN, HUNTER, MINER, LUMBERJACK
These are persons with special skills who work outdoors.
- f. SKILLED WORKER
These a persons with special skills that typically require some technical training or certification and who often take leadership roles in the production of goods and services. Examples include a foreman on a construction site, a dental technician, a general contractor, car mechanic, or machine operator.
- g. NON-SKILLED WORKER
Occupations in this category typically do not require a high school degree and involve manual labor. Examples include construction worker, farm worker, or migrant laborer.

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| h. ARMY OFFICER, POLICE OFFICER, FIRE DEPT OFFICER | This category includes all persons who are in leadership positions in health and safety occupations or the military services. |
| i. ORDINARY SOLDIER, POLICEMAN, FIREMAN | This category includes all persons who are in front-line position in health and safety occupations or the military services. |
| j. DRIVER | This category includes all persons whose primary job includes the transportation of goods from one location to another. |
| k. SERVICE WORKER | This category includes all persons who provide personal services to individuals. Examples include housekeeper, cook, waiter, doorkeeper, hairdresser, retail salesperson. Jobs in this category typically require social interaction with clients. |
| l. ATHLETE, ACTOR, MUSICIAN, ARTISTS, WRITER | This category includes all persons in the entertainment industry with specialized skills. |
| m. OTHER | Not covered by any category listed above. |
| n. UNKNOWN | Every effort should be made to probe individuals and determine the occupational category that best fits their job. |

EXAMPLES: To assist with understanding each of these categories, consider the following examples:

- If someone is OWNS and MANAGES a small lunch stand (even if s/he is the cook for the lunch stand), s/he should be classified as a MANAGER rather than a COOK.
- Similarly, if someone is a hairdresser and owns and manages their own beauty salon. S/he would be considered a self-employed proprietor/manager rather than a hairdresser. But, other persons working in his/her salon would be classified as hairdressers.
- The difference between a senior and junior level professional can be identified similarly.

An accountant in a firm would be a junior professional but an accountant who is the Central Financial Officer for a firm would be a senior professional.

- A person employed as a gardener for a landscape firm would be a non-skilled worker. Whereas, the owner of the landscape firm would be an Administrator/manager and a landscaper with professional training would be a junior professional.