MEPS HC-203:
2018 Jobs File

February 2020

The MEPS instrument design changed beginning in Spring of 2018, affecting Panel 23 Round 1, Panel 22 Round 3, and Panel 21 Round 5. For the Full-Year 2017 PUFs, the Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5 data were transformed to the degree possible to conform to the previous design.

The Full-Year 2018 PUFs are the first year all rounds of data were collected with the re-designed instrument, and no data were transformed to conform to the previous design. In addition, the value -9 NOT ASCERTAINED was removed as an allowable value in the Full-Year 2018 PUFs. **Data users should be aware of possible impacts on the data and especially trend analysis for these data years due to the design transition.**

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A. Data Use Agreement

Individual identifiers have been removed from the micro-data contained in these files. Nevertheless, under sections 308 (d) and 903 (c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242m and 42 U.S.C. 299 a-1), data collected by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and/or the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) may not be used for any purpose other than for the purpose for which they were supplied; any effort to determine the identity of any reported cases is prohibited by law.

Therefore in accordance with the above referenced Federal Statute, it is understood that:

1. No one is to use the data in this data set in any way except for statistical reporting and analysis; and

2. If the identity of any person or establishment should be discovered inadvertently, then (a) no use will be made of this knowledge, (b) the Director Office of Management AHRQ will be advised of this incident, (c) the information that would identify any individual or establishment will be safeguarded or destroyed, as requested by AHRQ, and (d) no one else will be informed of the discovered identity; and

3. No one will attempt to link this data set with individually identifiable records from any data sets other than the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey or the National Health Interview Survey. Furthermore, linkage of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey and the National Health Interview Survey may not occur outside the AHRQ Data Center, NCHS Research Data Center (RDC) or the U.S. Census RDC network.

By using these data you signify your agreement to comply with the above stated statutorily based requirements with the knowledge that deliberately making a false statement in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the Federal Government violates Title 18 part 1 Chapter 47 Section 1001 and is punishable by a fine of up to $10,000 or up to 5 years in prison.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality requests that users cite AHRQ and the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey as the data source in any publications or research based upon these data.

B. Background

1.0 Household Component

The Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) provides nationally representative estimates of health care use, expenditures, sources of payment, and health insurance coverage for the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population. The MEPS Household Component (HC) also provides estimates of respondents' health status, demographic and socio-economic characteristics, employment, access to care, and satisfaction with health care. Estimates can be produced for individuals, families, and selected population subgroups. The panel design of the survey, which includes 5 Rounds of interviews covering 2 full calendar years, provides data for examining person level changes in selected variables such as expenditures, health insurance coverage, and health status. Using computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) technology, information about each household member is collected, and the survey builds on this information from interview to interview. All data for a sampled household are reported by a single household respondent.

The MEPS-HC was initiated in 1996. Each year a new panel of sample households is selected. Because the data collected are comparable to those from earlier medical expenditure surveys conducted in 1977 and 1987, it is possible to analyze long-term trends. Each annual MEPS-HC sample size is about 15,000 households. Data can be analyzed at either the person or event level. Data must be weighted to produce national estimates.

The set of households selected for each panel of the MEPS HC is a subsample of households participating in the previous year's National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics. The NHIS sampling frame provides a nationally representative sample of the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized. In 2006, the NHIS implemented a new sample design, which included Asian persons in addition to households with Black and Hispanic persons in the oversampling of minority populations. NHIS introduced a new sample design in 2016 that discontinued oversampling of these minority groups. The linkage of the MEPS to the previous year's NHIS provides additional data for longitudinal analytic purposes.

2.0 Medical Provider Component

Upon completion of the household CAPI interview and obtaining permission from the household survey respondents, a sample of medical providers are contacted by telephone to obtain information that household respondents cannot accurately provide. This part of the MEPS is called the Medical Provider Component (MPC) and information is collected on dates of visits, diagnosis and procedure codes, charges and payments. The Pharmacy Component (PC), a subcomponent of the MPC, does not collect charges or diagnosis and procedure codes but does collect drug detail information, including National Drug Code (NDC) and medicine name, as well as date filled and sources and amounts of payment. The MPC is not designed to yield national estimates. It is primarily used as an imputation source to supplement/replace household reported expenditure information.

3.0   Survey Management and Data Collection

MEPS HC and MPC data are collected under the authority of the Public Health Service Act. Data are collected under contract with Westat, Inc. (MEPS HC) and Research Triangle Institute (MEPS MPC). Data sets and summary statistics are edited and published in accordance with the confidentiality provisions of the Public Health Service Act and the Privacy Act. The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) provides consultation and technical assistance.

As soon as data collection and editing are completed, the MEPS survey data are released to the public in staged releases of summary reports, micro data files, and tables via the [MEPS website](). Selected data can be analyzed through MEPSnet, an on-line interactive tool designed to give data users the capability to statistically analyze MEPS data in a menu-driven environment.

Additional information on MEPS is available from the MEPS project manager or the MEPS public use data manager at the Center for Financing, Access, and Cost Trends, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 5600 Fishers Lane Rockville, MD 20857 (301-427-1406).

C. Technical and Programming Information

Section C of this document offers a brief overview of the data provided in MEPS public use release HC-203, as well as the content and structure of the codebook, reserved code values, and variable naming conventions. It is followed by Section D containing the Variable-Source Crosswalk, Appendix 1 containing sample SAS program code, and Appendix 2 containing sample Stata program code. A copy of the survey instrument used to collect the information on this file is available on the [MEPS website](#).

1.0　　　　General Information

In the Employment section, MEPS collects complete job-related information in the round in which a job is first reported. While they vary by job type (see Section 2.0), the data reported for a job in its first survey round may include earnings by type (gross salary, tips, etc.), start and stop dates, hours and weeks worked, establishment size and industry, occupation, presence of retirement and other benefits, self-employment versus other status, temporary or seasonal situations, and health insurance availability. Minimal data updates are available for later rounds in which the job continues.

Each Full-Year Jobs file contains job records from two MEPS panels. The 2018 Jobs file provided in this release, MEPS HC-203, contains job-level information collected in Rounds 3 through 5 for Panel 22 and Rounds 1 through 3 for Panel 23 of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (i.e., the rounds for the MEPS panels covering calendar year 2018), as illustrated below.

MEDICAL EXPENDITURE PANEL SURVEY CALENDAR
2017 THROUGH 2019
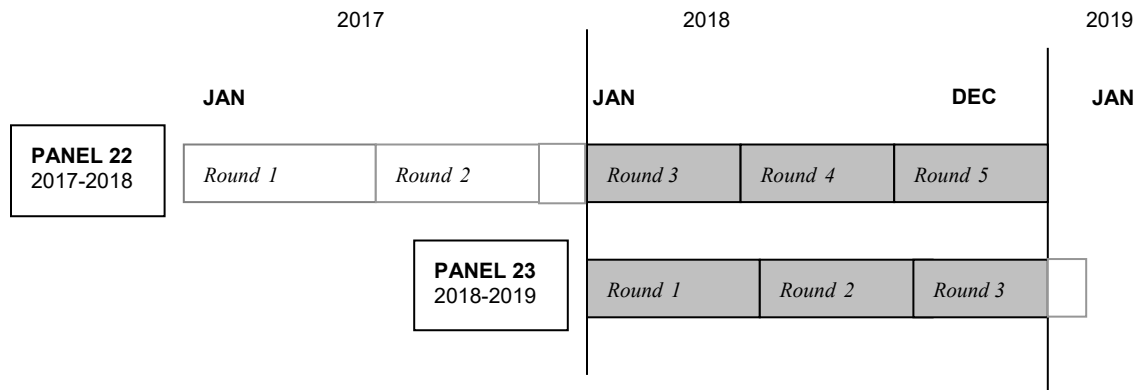
In order to obtain complete information for a job, users must note the round in which the job is first reported. This is because MEPS collects complete Jobs information in that round only, as noted above.

For the first year panel, in this case Panel 23, data from Rounds 1, 2, and 3 are included in the 2018 Jobs file. Complete information for any Panel 23 job is available, whether that job was first reported in Round 1, 2, or 3. This is the case for any first year panel (the panel that began its first year of interviewing in the given year) in a Full-Year Jobs file.

For the second year panel (the panel that continued with its second year of interviewing in the given year), in this case Panel 22, data from Rounds 3, 4, and 5 are included in this file. If the Round 3, 4, or 5 job continued from Round 1 or Round 2, users must look back to the Jobs file from the previous year (2017) to obtain complete information for the job. Appendix 1 includes sample SAS code and Appendix 2 contains sample Stata code to assist users in obtaining this information. Users should note that, because of differences in sample composition between the current year and the previous year files (i.e., a person was included in the previous year's delivery but not the current year or vice versa), or because more accurate information was received in Round 4 or Round 5 comments following the delivery of the Rounds 1 – 3 Jobs records in the previous year, there occasionally may not be a corresponding Round 1 or Round 2 job in the previous year file.

This file is being released as a research file and has undergone the standard quality control procedures usually performed on MEPS data files. The file includes a total of 53,323 records, with each record representing a unique job for a person by round. This file presents information about jobs starting on or before 12/31/2018 only. The 2019 Jobs file release will present information on Panel 23 jobs starting in 2019.

2.0 Data File Information

Jobs Records

Each record in the 2018 Jobs file represents one job reported by a person in a round. All persons age 16 and older in the MEPS are asked to report on jobs held. Depending on an individual's job history, these reported jobs may be held:

- at the interview date,
- in the round but prior to the interview date, or
- prior to the round.

Only those persons reporting a job in a round will have a record in the 2018 Jobs file.

Record Identifiers

The unique record identifier is the variable JOBSIDX, which is comprised of a person identifier (DUID + PID), a round identifier (RN), and a job number (JOBNUM). A panel indicator (PANEL) is included on the file to distinguish Round 3 jobs held by Panel 22 persons from Round 3 jobs held by those in Panel 23. As noted below, the DUID identifier in this data release now includes a 2-digit code to identify the panel, as a result, JOBSIDX now includes a panel identifier via DUID. Note that the variable OrigRnd is new to this file and indicates the round a job was created. Therefore, it may or may not contain the same value as RN.

As part of the new CAPI design, the length of ID variables (JOBSIDX, DUID, DUPERSID) has changed in the file. Each identifier now begins with the 2-digit panel number. This allows analysts to easily identify records delivered in a previous year Jobs file. In addition, CAPI now assigns a unique job number that *may not be used in subsequent rounds* on different jobs. This 3-byte number, JOBNUM, replaces the 2-byte JOBSN variable. Where JOBSN represented a

person's unique job, JOBNUM is unique to the *reporting unit* (RU) and is set to a value that corresponds with the RU in which a person's job was first reported (e.g. A RU is '1', B RU is '2', C RU is '3', etc). With these two revisions, the length of JOBSIDX changes from 11 bytes to 14 bytes.

EXAMPLE

Prior to 2018:
> **JOBSDIX**: 72201101301
> DUID (72201) + PID (101) + Round (3) + JOBSN (01)
> (5 bytes)   (3 bytes)   (1 byte)   (2 bytes)

Beginning in 2018:
> **JOBSIDX**: 22722011013101
> DUID (2272201) + PID (101) + Round (3) + JOBNUM (101)
> (7 bytes)   (3 bytes)   (1 byte)   (3 bytes)

In the example below, Persons 101, 102, and 103 are all in the A RU. Each person has one job. Prior to 2018, the two-byte identifier would be '01' for each person.

2017 Jobs File

DUID	PID	DUPERSID	RU	RN	JOBSN	JOBSIDX
	101	72201101	A	1	01	72201101101
	101	72201101	A	2	01	72201101201
	101	72201101	A	3	01	72201101301
	102	72201102	A	1	01	72201102101
	102	72201102	A	2	01	72201102201
	102	72201102	A	3	01	72201102301
72201						
	103	72201103	A	1	01	72201103101
	103	72201103	A	2	01	72201103201
	103	72201103	A	3	01	72201103301
	201	72201201	B	1		No job reported
	201	72201201	B	2	01	72201201201
	201	72201201	B	3	01	72201201301

As of 2018, the three-byte identifier JOBNUM is used and is unique to the RU. JOBNUM is numbered in sequence '101', '102', and '103.' The first byte '1' represents the A RU, the RU where the job was initially reported. Person 201 is a member of the B RU and her JOBNUM begins with '2.' Note how Person 201's job number is '202.' This means that this is the second job someone in the B RU has reported. Data analysts should note that, as with prior versions of CAPI, there may be gaps in job identifier sequencing. Also note that the example below includes a person who was in Panel 22, as indicated by the first two digits (22) added to their 2018 DUPERSID and to their 2018 JOBSIDX.

2018 Jobs File

DUID	PID	DUPERSID	RU	RN	JOBNUM	JOBSIDX
	101	2272201101	A	3	101	22722011013101
		2272201101	A	4	101	22722011014101
		2272201101	A	5	101	22722011015101
	102	2272201102	A	3	102	22722011023102
		2272201102	A	4	102	22722011024102
		2272201102	A	5	102	22722011025102
2272201						
	103	2272201103	A	3	103	22722011033103
		2272201103	A	4	103	22722011034103
		2272201103	A	5	103	22722011035103
	201	2272201201	B	3	202	22722012013202
		2272201201	B	4	202	22722012014202
		2272201201	B	5	202	22722012015202

These variations mean that JOBSIDX cannot be used to link the 2017 Jobs file with the 2018 Jobs file. Therefore, the variable JOBSIDX_17 has been created as a linking variable between the 2017 and 2018 Jobs files. It is set on any Panel 22 Round 3 2018 Job file record that also appeared in the 2017 Jobs file. Using the example case,

2018 Jobs File

JOBSIDX	JOBSIDX_17
22722011013101	72201101301
22722011014101	
22722011015101	
22722011023102	72201102301
22722011024102	
22722011025102	
22722011033103	72201103301
22722011034103	
22722011035103	
22722012013202	72201201301
22722012014202	
22722012015202	

Lastly, because CAPI now restricts the use of job identifier values, the combination of DUPERSID and JOBNUM allows data analysts to organize a complete job history without the possibility of mismatches due to re-use of an identifier. Therefore, JOBIDX has been created and is composed of DUPERSID and JOBNUM. Here is an example of a full cross-walk.

2018 Jobs File

JOBSIDX	JOBIDX	JOBSIDX_17
22722011013101	2272201101101	72201101301
22722011014101	2272201101101	
22722011015101	2272201101101	
22722011023102	2272201102102	72201102301
22722011024102	2272201102102	
22722011025102	2272201102102	
22722011033103	2272201103103	72201103301
22722011034103	2272201103103	
22722011035103	2272201103103	
22722012013202	2272201201202	72201201301
22722012014202	2272201201202	
22722012015202	2272201201202	

Initial Reporting Round

Most persons held only one job at the first interview date – their "Current Main Job." For persons who held more than one job at the round's interview date (a current job), respondents were asked to identify the main job. This job was classified as the "Current Main Job" and any other simultaneously held job was classified as a "Current Miscellaneous Job." The MEPS also obtained some information on any former job (Former Main Job or Former Miscellaneous Job) held in the reference period but not at the interview date. For those persons neither working at the interview date nor earlier in the reference period, limited information on the last job the person held was collected. Additionally, for those persons age 55 or older who were identified as having retired from a job, the MEPS obtained some job-level information (Retirement Job).

The variable SUBTYPE indicates the type of job record – current main (1), current miscellaneous (2), former main (3), former miscellaneous (4), last job outside reference period (5), or retirement job (6). When a job is initially reported, MEPS asks for detailed information about any "Current Main Job" and basic information about other job types. Refer to the questionnaire to see which information was asked for each job type. The following variable list identifies when a variable could be set based on the job SUBTYPE. Self-employed and wage-earner status at a job also defines when a variable may be set.

Variables Set for Each SUBTYPE

Variable	Self-Employed Jobs	Wage Earner Jobs	Current Main	Current Miscellaneous	Former Main	Former Miscellaneous	Last Job Outside Reference Period	Retirement
JOBTYPE	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
JSTRTM	x	x	x	x	x	x		
JSTRTY	x	x	x	x	x	x		
JSTOPM	x	x			x	x	x	x
JSTOPY	x	x			x	x	x	x
RETIRJOB	x	x						x
SUBTYPE	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
JOBHASHI	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
NUMEMPS		x	x		x			
ESTMATE1_M18		x	x		x			
ESTMATE2		x	x		x			
MORELOC		x	x		x			
BUSINC	x		x		x			
PROPRIET	x		x		x			
TYPEEMPL		x	x		x	x if not self-employed & retired	x	x
YLEFT_M18		x			x		x	
YNOBUSN_M18	x				x		x	
HRSPRWK	x	x	x	x	x			
HRS35WK	x	x	x		x			
SICKPAY		x	x		x			
PAYDRVST		x	x		x			

Variable	Self-Employed Jobs	Wage Earner Jobs	Current Main	Current Miscellaneous	Former Main	Former Miscellaneous	Last Job Outside Reference Period	Retirement
PAYVACTN		x	x		x			
RETIRPLN		x	x		x			
SESNLJOB	x	x	x	x	x			
TEMPJOB	x	x	x	x	x			
WKLYAMT	x	x		x				
EMPLINS	x	x	x					
OFFRDINS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
DIFFPLNS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ANYINS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
INUNION	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PROVDINS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
HHMEMBER_M18	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
TOTLEMP_M18	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
TotNumEmp	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
RvwTotNumEmp	x		x	x				
SALARIED		x	x		x			
HOWPAID		x	x		x			
DAYWAGE		x	x		x			
HRSPRDY		x	x		x			
MAKEAMT		x	x		x			
PERUNIT_M18		x	x		x			
MORE10		x	x		x			
MORE15		x	x		x			

Variable	Self-Employed Jobs	Wage Earner Jobs	Current Main	Current Miscellaneous	Former Main	Former Miscellaneous	Last Job Outside Reference Period	Retirement
MOREMINM		x	x		x			
GROSSPAY		x	x		x			
GROSSPER		x	x		x			
SALRYWKS		x	x		x			
HRSALBAS		x	x		x			
EARNTIPS		x	x		x			
EARNBONS		x	x		x			
EARNCOMM		x	x		x			
TIPSUNIT_M18		x	x		x			
TIPSAMT		x	x		x			
BONSUNIT		x	x		x			
BONSAMT		x	x		x			
COMMUNIT		x	x		x			
COMMAMT		x	x		x			
HRLYWAGE		x	x		x			
STILLAT	x	x	x					
MAIN_JOB	x	x	x					
DIFFWAGE		x	x					
StillWorkFTPT	x	x	x					
WhyChngPTToFT	x	x	x					
WhyChngFTToPT	x	x	x					
STILLWRK	x	x		x				
OFFTAKEI	x	x	x	x				

Variable	Self-Employed Jobs	Wage Earner Jobs	Current Main	Current Miscellaneous	Former Main	Former Miscellaneous	Last Job Outside Reference Period	Retirement
NOWTAKEI	x	x	x	x				
ESTBTHRU	x	x	x	x				
INSESTB	x	x	x	x				
WHY_LEFT_M18	x	x			x	x		

Skip Patterns

Due to many skip patterns, it is recommended that users of the 2018 Jobs file become familiar with the Employment section in the MEPS questionnaire. To aid users, a crosswalk between variables and MEPS questionnaire numbers is provided in this release. The following examples of variables involved in skip patterns are presented to be illustrative; these examples do not represent the full range of variables affected by questionnaire skip patterns.

In one example of a skip pattern, the MEPS does not obtain job-related benefits such as vacation, sick leave, and pension information for self-employed jobs, so those variables are coded as -1 INAPPLICABLE for those types of jobs. Nor does the MEPS attempt to obtain wage, salary, and information regarding whether the job was in the private sector, federal or local government (TYPEEMPL) for the self-employed. So again, due to the skip pattern, TYPEEMPL is coded as -1 INAPPLICABLE for self-employed jobs.

Conversely, the questions relating to business organization type (BUSINC, PROPRIET) are asked only of the self-employed, so the skip pattern results in those variables being coded as -1 INAPPLICABLE for jobs performed by wage earners.

Job Updates and -1 INAPPLICABLE Values

The MEPS used dependent interviewing in Rounds 3, 4, and 5 for Panel 22 and in Rounds 2 and 3 for Panel 23 (see section RJ in the Employment section of the questionnaire). In these rounds, the MEPS asked about current main and current miscellaneous jobs held at the previous round interview date to determine whether the jobholder continued to work at these jobs. For other job types (former, last, or retirement) reported in the previous round, MEPS does not ask any follow-up questions. These jobs, by definition, are no longer held by the person and therefore are not included on the file except in the round they are first reported.

With dependent interviewing, if a person still held a Current Main Job from the previous round, the MEPS asked whether the job was still the main job. For most jobholders, it was reported that they still worked at the same job and it was still their main job. If, in a subsequent interview, a job was no longer held, it was designated as a former job for that follow-up round. It is also possible, although unusual, for a job to change from main to miscellaneous (or vice versa) in a round subsequent to the initial report.

If job status remained the same for a continuing job (either main or miscellaneous), the MEPS asked only a subset of the employment questions as a review. Because the MEPS asked only this subset of questions if job status for a person did not change in later rounds, many job-level variables on the subsequent round's job records are coded as -1 INAPPLICABLE; the complete information for a continued job is located on the record for the job in the first round in which it was reported. Thus, it is important to determine whether a job continues from the previous round when working with the job records. In rounds where this applies, the variables STILLAT (for jobs that were current main in the previous round) and STILLWRK (for jobs that were current miscellaneous in the previous round) indicate whether a person still holds the job at the subsequent round interview date. The variable SUBTYPE on the subsequent round record indicates whether the job is main or miscellaneous in that subsequent round. Note that if a Panel 22 job included in this 2018 file is continued from a Round 1 or 2 job (in the 2017 file), much of the information will be contained in the 2017 Jobs file (HC-195). Use that file to obtain the desired job characteristics. Appendix 1 provides a sample SAS program showing how to do this, and Appendix 2 provides a sample Stata program showing how to do this. Both sample programs take into account recent changes to JOBSIDX.

Any new job reported in a round following the initial interview is collected the same way as in the first interview round.

Variables that relate only to the review of a job reported in a previous round (DIFFWAGE, ESTBTHRU, INSESTB, MAIN_JOB, NOWTAKEI, OFFTAKEI, STILLAT, StillWorkFTPT, STILLWRK, RvwTotNumEmp, WHY_LEFT_M18, WhyChngPTToFT, WhyChngFTToPT) were not asked in Round 1, and these variables are coded as -1 INAPPLICABLE on a Jobs record for the round in which the job is initially reported.

Beginning in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, CAPI asks a question at RJ40 to indicate whether the person continues working in the same work status (either full-time or part-time) as the prior round. The variable StillWorkFTPT contains the response to that question. Prior to Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, the variable WORKSTAT was constructed from a similar question asked at RJ04. WORKSTAT indicated whether a person's work status was full or part time. To assist with this analytic transition, the variable STLFTPTB was constructed from RJ40 for the 2017 Jobs File. STLFTPTB has been dropped in this 2018 file and replaced with the new CAPI-named variable StillWorkFTPT.

When a person changes work status between full-time and part-time (and vice versa), the person is asked to report the reason for the work status change. Prior to Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, the same question was asked, regardless of whether the change was from full-time to part-time, or from part-time to full-time (RJ05). Beginning Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, that question was dropped, and instead, different questions for reason for work status change are asked of people moving from part-time to full-time (RJ50) and people moving from full-time to part-time (RJ55). They are WhyChngPTToFT and WhyChngFTToPT, respectively. They replace the single variable Y_CHANGE that no longer exists. Categories in the two new questions are different from the old single question. For persons in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, new values were converted in the 2017 Jobs File into the prior schema where possible. Otherwise, the variable was set to 91 OTHER. Crosswalks are available in the 2017 Jobs file documentation. In this 2018 delivery, values from Y_CHANGE collected prior to 2018

have been recoded to correspond to new values of either WhyChngFTToPT or WhyChngPTToFT:

Why Person is Moving from Part-time to Full-time

Prior to 2018			Beginning in 2018		
Categories	**As Collected RJ05**	**Y_CHANGE Recoded to WhyChgPTToFT**	**Categories**	**As Collected RJ50**	**Value WhyChgPTToFT**
Promotion or Demotion	1	91			
Change in Responsibility	2	91			
Change in Amount of Work Business Brings In	3	91			
Change in Shift Time	4	1	Change in Schedule or Shift	1	1
			Change in Pay	2	2
			Benefits/ Health Insurance	3	3
Change in Number of Employees Available to Work	5	91			
Illness/Disability	6	91			
Temporary Leave	7	4	Family, School, Temporary Leave	4	4
Maternity/Paternity Leave	8	4			
Going to School/Finished School	9	4			
Change in Home or Family Situation	10	4			
Needed Time Off/Wanted to Work More	11	91			
Other	91	91	Other	91	91
Refused	-7	-7	Refused	-7	-7
Don't Know	-8	-8	Don't Know	-8	-8

Why Person is Moving from Full-time to Part-time

Prior to 2018   **Beginning in 2018**

Categories	As Collected RJ05	Y_CHANGE Recoded to WhyChngFTToPT	Categories	As Collected RJ55	Value WhyChngFTToPT
Promotion Or Demotion	1	91			
Change in Responsibility	2	91			
Change in Amount of Work Business Brings In	3	1	Hours Cut, Business Slow	1	1
Change in Shift Time	4	2	Change in Schedule or Shift	2	2
Change in Number of Employees Available to Work	5	91			
Illness/Disability	6	3	Illness, Injury, Health Problem	3	3
Temporary Leave	7	4			
Maternity/Paternity Leave	8	4			
Going to School/Finished School	9	4			
Change in Home or Family Situation	10	4	Family, School, Temporary Leave	4	4
Needed Time Off/Wanted to Work More	11	91			
Other	91	91	Other	91	91
Refused	-7	-7	Refused	-7	-7
Don't Know	-8	-8	Don't Know	-8	-8

Also beginning Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, changes were made to the categorical responses available for the question asking why a person left a job that continued from the previous round but ended in the current round (WHY_LEFT_M18). New values were converted in the 2017 Jobs File to the prior schema where possible. Otherwise, the variable was set to 91 OTHER. Users may see increases on 91 OTHER. Crosswalks are available in 2017 Jobs file documentation. In this 2018 delivery, values from WHY_LEFT collected prior to 2018 have been recoded to correspond to new values of WHY_LEFT_M18:

Reason Why No Longer at Job Now

Prior to 2018			Beginning in 2018		
Categories	**As Collected RJ10**	**WHY_LEFT Recoded to WHY_LEFT_M18**	**Categories**	**As Collected RJ130**	**Value WHY_LEFT_M18**
Job ended	1	1	Job ended, temporary, seasonal, contract, etc.	1	1
Business dissolved/sold	2	2	Business closed or sold	2	2
Retired	3	3	Retired	3	3
Illness/Injury	4	4	Illness, Injury, any health problem	4	4
Laid off	5	6	Terminated, fired, dismissed	5	5
Quit to have a baby	6	7	Laid off, let go	6	6
Quit to take care of home or family	8	7	Quit - family reason, maternity leave	7	7
Quit to go to school	7	8	Quit - school	8	8
			Quit – job related	9	9
			Quit – any other reason	10	10
Quit because wanted time off	9	91			
Quit to take other job	10	91			
Unpaid leave	11	91			
Other	91	91	Other	91	91
Refused	-7	-7	Refused	-7	-7
Don't Know	-8	-8	Don't Know	-8	-8

Another type of job update pertains to situations where a reviewed current miscellaneous job becomes the current main job in the round. The flag variable TYPECHGD indicates if a job changed from a current miscellaneous job to a current main job. For these types of jobs, questions asked when the job was first reported as a current miscellaneous job are not re-asked, with three exceptions.

1. Responses to both EM540 and EM620 populate the variable HRSPRWK. When originally reported, the current miscellaneous job was asked EM620. As a current main job, it will now be asked EM540. Consequently, there may be different values on HRSPRWK between rounds.

2. Responses to both EM560 and EM630 populate the variable TEMPJOB. When originally reported, the current miscellaneous job was asked EM630. As a current main job, it will now be asked EM560. Consequently, there may be different values on TEMPJOB between rounds.

3. Responses to both EM570 and EM640 populate the variable SESNLJOB. When originally reported, the current miscellaneous job was asked EM640. As a current main job, it will now be asked EM570. Consequently, there may be different values on SESNLJOB between rounds.

Exceptions to the -1 INAPPLICABLE Rule

Unlike the situation explained above for most variables on the file, for certain variables a value other than -1 INAPPLICABLE does not necessarily mean that a job is newly reported. There are two distinct situations in which this special treatment is used, due to internal processing needs.

The first type of exception occurs when questions related to the affected variables are skipped over as -1 INAPPLICABLE during the interview in rounds subsequent to the one in which the job was initially reported, but have their originally reported response carried forward from round to round. This group includes the following 14 variables: EMPLINS, HRSPRWK, HRS35WK, JOBTYPE, JSTRTY, JSTRTM, MORELOC, NUMEMPS, OFFRDINS, PROVDINS, TYPEEMPL, JOBHASHI, HRSALBAS, and RETIRJOB. Note that HRSALBAS and RETIRJOB may also be updated in subsequent rounds.

The second type of exception occurs for certain questions that are asked during the review of a job in rounds following the round in which the job was initially reported. If there is no change based on the review, the value for the affected variable is copied forward from the previous round. If there is a change, the variable is updated to reflect the new information. These five variables are: JSTOPY, NOWTAKEI, OFFTAKEI, SUBTYPE, and TOTLEMP_M18.

Variables related to earnings (such as HRLYWAGE, GROSSPAY, SALARIED) are treated similarly to the five variables just discussed. In the review section, the MEPS attempted to obtain information regarding changes in wages for the same job from round to round. If there were no wage changes (indicated by the DIFFWAGE variable), then the most recent round's information was carried forward. If changes were recorded, then the relevant variables were updated. For every new job reported for a person, the MEPS attempted to obtain current wage information.

Top-Coding, Bottom-Coding, Editing, and Confidentiality

Wage Information

For reasons of confidentiality, earnings variables on the file were top-coded. The earnings variables include HRLYWAGE, BONSAMT, COMMAMT, TIPSAMT, DAYWAGE, WKLYAMT, GROSSPAY, and MAKEAMT. A value of '-10' for one of these variables on a record indicates that the variable had a positive value and that the hourly rate for that earnings variable for the record was greater than or equal to $96.15. Beginning in 2005, the process by which the top-code value for the Jobs file is derived incorporates the wage top-code process used in the Full-Year Use file top-coding process. The purpose of this change in top-coding procedures is to ensure confidentiality for each person across files.

In addition to using wages from the first report of a Current Main Job, updated wages from that job reported in any subsequent round are also included in deriving the wage top-code value. On the Use file, any person who has a wage for any job in any round that is greater than or equal to the top-code value will have all wages for all jobs top-coded, regardless of round. Any person whose wages are top-coded on the Full-Year 2018 Use file has *all* wages on *all* jobs top-coded in the 2018 Jobs file.

Moreover, because other jobs where wages are reported are included in the 2018 Jobs file but not summarized in the Full-Year 2018 Use file (i.e., newly reported former main jobs and current/former miscellaneous jobs), and these wages may exceed the current year top-code value, wages for these jobs and all jobs belonging to the same jobholder are top-coded on the 2018 Jobs file. In turn, the wages of these persons are top-coded in the Full-Year 2018 Use file as well.

Note too that there are some jobs where respondents indicate that a supplemental wage, such as a commission, tip, or bonus, is greater than or equal to the wage top-code value, but, at that same job, base wage such as the annual salary is not. For these cases, only the tips, commissions, or bonus amounts were top-coded on the job where they are greater than or equal to the wage top-code value. All other wage amounts on all jobs for these persons were left as reported.

For some persons in Panel 22, whose wages were imputed in Round 1 or Round 2 and copied forward into the Full-Year 2018 Use PUF wage variable HRWG31X, the Round 3 wage as carried forward may meet or exceed the wage top-code value on the 2018 Jobs file. For these cases, the main wage at the job is set to '-15' (CANNOT BE COMPUTED) (instead of the 2017 imputed value carried forward) and all other wage responses remain as reported.

Note that in 2017, limited editing of wage variables was performed during data preparation as compared to prior years. In this 2018 release, the full wage editing process was performed and followed the same procedures as implemented prior to 2017.

To improve the quality of wage reports, CAPI prompts the respondent to confirm wages reported in the Employment Wage section if a wage amount falls outside a specified wage range. Ranges vary depending on the unit of pay as follows:

Unit of Pay	Wage Range
PER YEAR	$5,000.00 - $200,000.00
PER MONTH	$375.00 - $20,000.00
PER 2-WEEK PERIOD	$150.00 - $10,000.00
PER WEEK	$75.00 - $5,000.00
PER DAY	$10.00 - $750.00
PER HOUR	$1.00 - $125.00

Beginning in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, wage unit response categories changed on PERUNIT and TIPSUNIT variables. The response categories "PER HOUR" and "PER TWO WEEK PERIOD" were removed from CAPI. Therefore, these variables have been renamed to PERUNIT_M18 and TIPSUNIT_M18.

To calculate the hourly rate for earnings types not reported on an hourly basis, the number of hours per week worked and in some cases the number of weeks worked were used in conjunction with the various amounts. These hours and weeks are included on the file along with the reported earnings amounts, but not the calculated hourly rates. (Earnings variables were not reconciled with income data collected elsewhere in the MEPS.)

Beginning in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, a question asking how many hours were worked per day (EM106 APXHRDAY) was removed from the CAPI for persons who reported being paid via any of the following categories in their main job: piecework, job/mile, tips, commissions, or bonuses, and then also used "PER DAY" when reporting wages for that job.

Establishment Size Information

The establishment size variable for the self-employed is TOTLEMP_M18. Prior to Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, TOTLEMP was constructed in CAPI from questions RJ08B and EM124. Instead, it is now constructed outside of CAPI and named TOTLEMP_M18. In addition, two new variables are available containing the individual responses collected at RJ110 and EM740. They are RvwTotNumEmp (establishment size at self-employed job) and TotNumEmp (establishment size at newly reported self-employed job), respectively. To assist analysts, comparable variables were included in the 2017 Jobs File, RTOTEMPB and TOTNEMPB. These have been dropped from this file.

The establishment size for wage earners can be found in NUMEMPS (establishment size at non-self-employed job) and ESTMATE1_M18 (categorical approximate establishment size for non-self-employed job). Beginning in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, the categorical values available to respondents for establishment size on ESTMATE1 changed. The new CAPI collected range categories are reflected in the variable ESTMATE1_M18. The variable ESTMATE1_M18 is derived from a question that allowed respondents who did not know the actual establishment size (NUMEMPS) to choose from a number of size ranges.

There is not a one-to-one correspondence between schemas so a third schema is required. The constructed variable ESTMATE2 contains a third coding schema developed from both the pre- and post-2017 ranges. As of 2017, ESTMATE1 is no longer delivered in this file and ESTMATE2 was added. ESTMATE1_M18 is now delivered in this file.

Changes to Estimated Establishment Size Ranges - JOBS.ESTMATE2

Prior to Panel 22 Round 3/Panel 21 Round 5			Beginning Panel 22 Round 3/Panel 21 Round 5		
Categories	As Collected EM92	ESTMATE2	Categories	As Collected EM440	ESTMATE2
Inapplicable	-1	-1	Inapplicable	-1	-1
Refused	-7	-7	Refused	-7	-7
Don't Know	-8	-8	Don't Know	-8	-8
<10	1	1	2-9	2	1
10-25	2	2	10-25	3	2
26-49	3	3	26-50	4	3
50-100	4	4	51-100	5	4
101-500	5	5	101-200	6	5
			201-500	7	
501-1,000	6	6	501+	8	6
1001-5,000	7				
5001+	8				

The value -15 CANNOT BE COMPUTED is an allowed value for ESTMATE2. It may be used during editing of this variable. -15 is not an allowed value for ESTMATE1_M18.

For confidentiality reasons, NUMEMPS, TOTLEMP_M18, RvwTotNumEmp and TotNumEmp were top coded to -10 for establishment sizes greater than or equal to 11,000 employees.

Job Start/Stop Year

In addition to top coding wages and establishment size, the start year of job (JSTRTY) and the stop year of job (JSTOPY) are bottom-coded. This is done because a person's age may be calculated using the job start or stop year and that age may indicate that the jobholder is older than 85 years, the age top-code value. This value is calculated by taking the current delivery year (e.g. 2018), subtracting the age top-code value (i.e. 85 years of age), then adding back 15 (i.e. the age of a person in the year before entering the work force as defined in MEPS). For the 2018 Jobs file, the bottom code value for the job start and stop year on jobs reported in Panel 23 Round 1, Round 2, or Round 3 and Panel 22 Round 4 or Round 5 is 1948. Jobs that began in Panel 22 Round 1, Round 2 or Round 3 were delivered in the 2017 Jobs file. These records may retain the 2017 bottom code value of 1947.

Temporary and Seasonal Jobs

Two variables on the file pertain to the temporary and seasonal nature of a person's main or miscellaneous job. The variable TEMPJOB indicates whether a main or miscellaneous job is temporary (i.e., is a current main job for a limited amount of time or until the completion of a project). The variable SESNLJOB indicates either that a main or miscellaneous job is available only during certain times of the year or that the individual is working throughout the entire year at that job. Teachers and other school personnel who work only during the school year are

considered to work year round. These questions are asked of newly reported jobs only. These variables are set to -1 INAPPLICABLE for all subsequent rounds. These questions are not asked of newly reported former miscellaneous jobs, last jobs outside of reference period, and retirement jobs.

Reason No Longer at Place of Employment

In cases where a former job is newly reported, questions are asked regarding why the person is no longer at that place of work. For wage earners, this information is found in YLEFT_M18. For self-employed persons, this information is collected in YNOBUSN_M18. Response categories for the questions used to create both variables changed beginning in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5. Consequently, these variables were renamed from YNOBUSN to YNOBUSN_M18 and from YLEFT to YLEFT_M18. New values were converted in the 2017 Jobs File into the prior schema where possible. Otherwise, the variable was set to 91 OTHER. Crosswalks are available in 2017 Jobs file documentation. In this 2018 delivery, values from YLEFT and YNOBUSN collected prior to 2018 have been recoded to correspond to new values of YLEFT_M18 and YNOBUSN_M18, respectively. Because YLEFT and YNOBUSN were coded differently in the 2018 Jobs PUF file, users can review 2017 Jobs file documentation for those details.

Reason Why No Longer At Job for Wage Earners

Prior to 2018   Beginning in 2018

Categories	As Collected EM101	YLEFT Recoded to YLEFT_M18	Categories	As Collected EM520	Value YLEFT_M18
Job Ended	1	1	Job Ended, Temporary, Seasonal, Contract, etc.	1	1
Retired	2	91			
			Business Closed or Sold	2	2
Illness or Injury	3	3	Illness, Injury, Any Health Problem	3	3
			Terminated, Fired, Dismissed	4	4
Laid Off	4	5	Laid Off, Let Go	5	5
Quit to Have Baby	5	6			
Quit to Go to School	6	7	Quit —School	7	7
Quit to Take Care of Home or Family	7	6	Quit —Family Reason, Maternity Leave	6	6
Quit Because Wanted Time Off	8	91			
Quit to Take Other Job	9	91			

Categories	As Collected EM101	YLEFT Recoded to YLEFT_M18	Categories	As Collected EM520	Value YLEFT_M18
			Quit —Job Related Reason	8	8
			Quit —Any Other Reason	9	9
Other	91	91	Other	91	91
Refused	-7	-7	Refused	-7	-7
Don't Know	-8	-8	Don't Know	-8	-8

Reason Why No Longer Has Business for Self-Employed

Prior to 2018   Beginning in 2018

Categories	As Collected EM102	YNOBUSN recoded to YNOBUSN_M18	Categories	As Collected EM530	Value YNOBUSN_M18
Business Dissolved or Sold	1	1	Business Closed or Sold	1	1
Retired	2	2	Retired	2	2
Illness or Injury	3	3	Illness or Injury	3	3
Stopped/Left Business to Have a Baby	4	91			
Stopped/Left Business to Go to School	5	91			
Stopped/Left Business to Take Care of Home or Family	6	91			
Stopped/Left Business Because Wanted Time Off	7	91			
Stopped/Left Business to Take Other Job	8	91			
Other	91	91	Other	91	91
Refused	-7	-7	Refused	-7	-7
Don't Know	-8	-8	Don't Know	-8	-8

It is important to note that the retirement job classification in the variable SUBTYPE is independent of any retirement response in the following variables:

- YNOBUSN_M18, which relates to the question why a person no longer has a self-employed business;

- WHY_LEFT_M18, which relates to the question why a person left a job in the current round.

Last Job Outside of Reference Period and Retirement Jobs

Beginning in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, collection details were reduced for last job outside of reference period and retirement jobs in cases where the job ended more than two years prior to the reference period. Users may see changes in frequencies on these variables (such as HHMEMBER_M18 and TOTLEMP_M18) for these types of jobs. Note that precise calculation of the two-year cut-off date is not possible for some persons due to allowed negative values on stop year, stop month, and reference period start month. Therefore, variables may be collected for some jobs that ended more than two years prior to the reference period. For example, because of negative values in the month variable, the HHMEMBER_M18 and TOTLEMP_M18 variables for a person in 2018 would be collected for any last job outside of reference period or retirement job that ended within the 2016 calendar year, regardless of which month a respondent was interviewed in Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5 and regardless of which month the job ended in 2016. Like other variables whose population changed, HHMEMBER was renamed to HHMEMBER_M18.

Health Insurance Data

Questions about employment-related health insurance are asked both when any type of job is newly reported and when any continuing job is reviewed. For main jobs, either newly reported or changing from miscellaneous, the variable that indicates whether insurance is held through that establishment is EMPLINS. For all non-main jobs, the variable JOBHASHI indicates whether insurance is held through that establishment.

For a newly reported job, depending on whether employment-related insurance is held or not, there may be follow-up information gathered which is contained in the following variables:

- OFFRDINS, which notes if insurance was *not* held through the job, whether it was offered through the job;
- DIFFPLNS, which notes if a choice of plans is available where insurance is either offered or held through the job;
- ANYINS, which notes if insurance coverage through the job is available to *any other* employees at the establishment in cases where the jobholder does not hold and is not offered coverage through the job.

For a continuing job, when no insurance was held through the job in the round in which the job was first reported but insurance was offered through the job, and no insurance through the job has ever been reported at RJ70, OFFTAKEI (RJ70) is asked to determine if insurance is now held through the job in this round.

Similarly, the insurance status question RJ80 (NOWTAKEI) is asked where:

- insurance through the job ended in a prior round or
- insurance coverage was never reported through the job and the person was not offered insurance through the job in the round a job was first reported or
- the respondent disavows coverage through the job in the Health Insurance section that was previously indicated in the Employment section of the interview

MEPS then includes several clarifying questions regarding health insurance availability at an employer. Where the person does not report, does not know, or refuses to indicate the insurance coverage status through the job at RJ70 or reports no insurance coverage through the job at RJ80, the respondent is asked if the person was offered insurance through the job at RJ90 (ESTBTHRU).

Lastly, when a respondent indicates that the jobholder of a reviewed job neither holds insurance through the job nor was offered health insurance at the job, the respondent is asked if *any other* employees were offered health insurance through the job at RJ100 (INSESTB).

Beginning Panel 22 Round 3 and Panel 21 Round 5, if newly reported health insurance through the job is disavowed in the Health Insurance section, follow-up questions regarding whether health insurance is offered at the job and whether more than one plan is available are now asked in the Health Insurance section. This information is used in a new editing process whereby responses in the Health Insurance section are transferred into the Employment or Review of Jobs sections. Consequently, more information is now available on EMPLINS, JOBHASHI, OFFRDINS, DIFFPLNS, ANYINS, NOWTAKEI, OFFTAKEI, ESTBTHRU, and INSESTB. Health insurance through an employer can be disavowed in MEPS based on a respondent's answer to one of four questions. To help users understand the source of the disavowal, a new variable HIDISAVW indicates which of the following questions resulted in the disavowal. HIDISAVW will include only one source among these options. Please note, however, that it is possible for a respondent to disavow one source of coverage at HX15 and then later disavow the second source of coverage at HP70. In these cases, HIDISAVW will be set to HP70.

1. HX14 – This question is asked if both employer and union coverage are reported at EM710 (PROVDINS) to determine if there is 1 ONE PLAN, 2 TWO PLANS, or if 3 INSURANCE WAS REPORTED IN ERROR. HIDISAVW = HX14 indicates that there is neither insurance coverage through the employer nor insurance coverage through the union and that updates were made to the insurance variables collected in the Employment section during the disavowal clean-up process.

2. HX15 – This question is asked if, at HX14, the respondent indicates 1 ONE PLAN. At HX15, the respondent must select either insurance coverage through the employer or insurance coverage through the union. Depending on which of these are chosen (employer or union) the other source of coverage was disavowed. For example, if HX14 = 1 and HX15 = employer, the insurance coverage through the union will be disavowed.

3. HX20 – This question is asked if either insurance coverage through the employer only or insurance coverage through the union only are reported at EM660 ((EMPLINS or JOBHASHI=1) and INUNION<>1) or EM710 (PROVDINS = 1 EMPLOYER ONLY or 2 UNION ONLY). If the respondent volunteers that the job-related insurance coverage reported at HX20 was in error, the insurance coverage reported in HX20 is removed during the disavowal clean-up process.

4. HP70 – This question is asked of private health insurance coverage through a job that was reported in the Employment section. The respondent is asked to verify that the

jobholder is the policyholder of the job related insurance coverage. If the response is NO, REFUSED, DON'T KNOW, the job-related insurance coverage is removed during the disavowal clean-up process.

It should also be noted that, due to a processing error, data users may see an increase in values of -8 DON'T KNOW in these rounds on several insurance-related variables collected in the Review of Jobs section including NOWTAKEI, OFFTAKEI, and ESTBTHRU.

Industry and Occupation Coding

Industry and occupation codes were assigned by professional coders at the Census Bureau based on verbatim descriptions provided by respondents during the survey interview. The codes are determined at a detailed 4-digit level and then collapsed into broader groups on the file to ensure the confidentiality of the records. INDCODEX contains industry information and OCCCODEX contains occupation information. The page on the MEPS website describing the 2018 Jobs file contains a crosswalk between the detailed and collapsed codes for both industry and occupation.

With the 2010 file, the Census Bureau began using 2007 Industry and 2010 Occupation codes, which were developed for the Bureau's Current Population Survey and American Community Survey. These updated coding schemes incorporate minor changes from the 2003 industry and occupation codes used for the 2002-2009 files; therefore, INDCODEX and OCCCODEX for 2010 and later files will be comparable to those variables on the 2002-2009 files. (Industry and occupation variables for pre-2002 files are not comparable to those for later files.)

This 2018 Jobs file does not include any weights necessary to extrapolate this data to the U.S. population. To make person-level estimates, link to any of the 2018 MEPS files and use the person-level weight for the appropriate panel. The link should be made through the variable DUPERSID. Note that not all persons in the MEPS have positive weights and job records; only those persons who have either a positive person-level or family-level weight in the 2018 Full-Year Person-Level file are included in the 2018 Jobs file.

2.1   Codebook Structure

For each variable on the 2018 Jobs file, an unweighted frequency is provided in the accompanying codebook file.

2.2   Reserved Codes

The following reserved code values are used:

Value		Definition
-1	INAPPLICABLE	Question was not asked due to skip pattern
-7	REFUSED	Question was asked and respondent refused to answer question
-8	DK	Question was asked and respondent did not know answer or the information could not be ascertained

-10 TOP-CODED VALUE	Variable was top-coded for confidentiality, as described above
-15 CANNOT BE COMPUTED	Value cannot be derived from data

As part of the MEPS instrument design change in Spring of 2018, -9 (NOT ASCERTAINED) was removed from the MEPS instrument. This affected responses starting in Panel 23 Round 1, Panel 22 Round 3, and Panel 21 Round 5 and will continue in subsequent Panels and Rounds. Cases that used to contain -9 (NOT ASCERTAINED) in MEPS variables are now distributed between -8 (DK) and -15 (CANNOT BE COMPUTED). Most of the cases that were previously -9 (NOT ASCERTAINED) will now be assigned -8 (DK). However, -15 (CANNOT BE COMPUTED) will be assigned for MEPS variables that are constructed from MEPS instrument variables in cases where there is not enough information from the MEPS instrument to calculate the constructed MEPS variables. "Lack of information" is often the result of skip patterns in the data or from missing information resulting from -7 (REFUSED) or -8 (DK). Also note that reserved code -8 previously identified cases where respondent chose "don't know" to a question. It now represents a broader category that includes cases where either the information from the question was "not ascertained" or the respondent chose "don't know".

2.3 Codebook Format

This codebook describes an ASCII dataset (with related SAS, SPSS, and Stata programming statements and data user information), although the data are also provided in a SAS transport file. The file contains 85 variables and has a logical record length of 281 with an additional 2-byte carriage return/line feed at the end of each record. The following codebook items are provided for each variable:

Identifier	Description
Name	Variable name
Description	Variable descriptor
Format	Number of bytes
Type	Type of data: numeric (indicated by NUM) or character (indicated by CHAR)
Start	Beginning column position of variable in record
End	Ending column position of variable in record

2.4 Variable Source and Naming Conventions

Beginning in 2018, as variable collection, universe, or categories are altered, the variable name will be appended with "_Myy" to indicate in which year the alterations took place. Details about these alterations can be found throughout this document.

In general, variable names reflect the content of the variable. Due to system changes, variable names are no longer restricted to 8 characters. Variables contained on this file were derived from the questionnaire itself or from the CAPI. The source of each variable is identified in Section D. Variable-Source Crosswalk. Sources for each variable are indicated in one of two ways:

1. Variables derived from CAPI or assigned in sampling are so indicated as "CAPI Derived" or "Assigned in Sampling," respectively;

2. Variables that come from one or more specific questions have those questionnaire sections and/or question numbers listed in the "Source" column.

3.0 Longitudinal Analysis

Panel-specific longitudinal files are available for downloading in the data section of the MEPS website. For each panel, the longitudinal file comprises MEPS survey data obtained in Rounds 1 through 5 of the panel and can be used to analyze changes over a two-year period. Variables in the file pertaining to survey administration, demographics, employment, health status, disability days, quality of care, health insurance, and medical care use and expenditures were obtained from the MEPS full-year Consolidated files from the two years covered by that panel. For more details or to download the data files, please see Longitudinal Weight Files.

3.1 Using MEPS Data for Trend Analysis

MEPS began in 1996, and the utility of the survey for analyzing health care trends expands with each additional year of data; however, it is important to consider a variety of factors when examining trends over time using MEPS. Tests of statistical significance should be conducted to assess the likelihood that observed trends are not attributable to sampling variation. The length of time being analyzed should also be considered. In particular, large shifts in survey estimates over short periods of time (e.g., from one year to the next) that are statistically significant should be interpreted with caution unless they are attributable to known factors such as changes in public policy, economic conditions, or MEPS survey methodology.

For example, as a result of improved methods for collecting priority conditions data implemented in 2007, prevalence measures prior to 2007 are not comparable to those from 2007 and beyond for many conditions. Users should refer to the documentation for the Conditions file (HC-206) for details.

With respect to methodological considerations, in 2013 MEPS introduced an effort to obtain more complete information about health care utilization from MEPS respondents with full implementation in 2014. This effort likely resulted in improved data quality and a reduction in underreporting starting in FY 2014 and could have some modest impact on analyses involving trends in utilization across years. The change in the NHIS sample design in 2016 could also potentially affect trend analyses. For example, coverage of the MEPS target population would be expected to have increased, so subpopulations whose coverage rates were particularly increased would have increased contributions from undercovered portions of their subpopulation.

Another change with the potential to affect trend analysis involved modifications to the MEPS instrument design and data collection process. These were introduced in the Spring of 2018 and thus affected data beginning with Round 1 of Panel 23, Round 3 of Panel 22, and Round 5 of Panel 21. Since the Full Year 2017 PUFs were established from data collected in Rounds 1-3 of Panel 22 and Rounds 3-5 of Panel 21, they reflected two different instrument designs. In order to mitigate the effect of such differences within the same full year file, the Panel 22, Round 3 data and the Panel 21 Round 5 data were transformed to make them as consistent as possible with

data collected under the previous design. The changes were designed to make the data collection effort more efficient and easy to administer with expectations that data on some items, such as those related to health care events, would be more complete with the potential of identifying more events. Increases in service use reported since the implementation of these changes are consistent with these expectations.

There are also statistical factors to consider in interpreting trend analyses. Looking at changes over longer periods of time can provide a more complete picture of underlying trends. Analysts may wish to consider using techniques to smooth or stabilize analyses of trends using MEPS data such as comparing pooled time periods (e.g., 1996-97 versus 2011-2012), working with moving averages or using modeling techniques with several consecutive years of MEPS data to test the fit of specified patterns over time. Finally, researchers should be aware of the impact of multiple comparisons on Type I error. Without making appropriate allowance for multiple comparisons, undertaking numerous statistical significance tests of trends increases the likelihood of concluding that a change has taken place when one has not.

D. Variable-Source Crosswalk

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION VARIABLES - PUBLIC USE

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
JOBSIDX	Job-round identifier	CAPI Derived/Encrypted
JOBSIDX_17	2017 Panel 22 Round 3 job-round identifier	CAPI Derived/Encrypted
JOBIDX	Person's unique job identifier	CAPI Derived/Encrypted
JOBNUM	Unique DU-job identifier	CAPI Derived
DUPERSID	Person ID (DUID + PID)	Assigned in Sampling
DUID	Panel # + encrypted DU identifier	Assigned in Sampling
PID	Person Number	Assigned in Sampling
RN	Round	CAPI Derived
OrigRnd	Round job reported	CAPI Derived
PANEL	Panel to which Jobholder Belongs	Assigned in Sampling

EMPLOYMENT VARIABLES - PUBLIC USE

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
JSTRTM	Job start date – month	EM60_02, EM90_02, EM110_02, EM130_02, EM190_02, EM250_02
JSTRTY	Job start date – year	EM60_01, EM90_01, EM110_01, EM130_01, EM190_01, EM250_01
JSTOPM	Job stop date – month	EM140_02, EM200_02, EM260_02, EM310_02, EM400_02, RJ120_02
JSTOPY	Job stop date – year	EM140_01, EM200_01, EM260_01,EM310_01, EM400_01, RJ120_01
RETIRJOB	Person retired from this job	EM50, EM80, EM100, EM270, EM380
SUBTYPE	Job sub-type	EM50, EM80, EM100, EM120, EM180, EM270, EM340, EM380, EM390, EM410 RJ10/RJ60

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
STILLAT	Still works at main job establishment	RJ10
TYPECHGD	Job sub-type changed between rounds	Constructed
MAIN_JOB	Still main job or business	RJ20
DIFFWAGE	Any change in wage amount	RJ30
StillWorkFTPT	Still works full or part time	RJ40
WhyChngPTToFT	Why change part to full time	RJ50
WhyChngFTToPT	Why change full to part time	RJ55
STILLWRK	Still works at misc job establishment	RJ60
OFFTAKEI	Offered insurance and now take	RJ70
NOWTAKEI	Now offered and take insurance	RJ80
ESTBTHRU	Offered insurance, did not take (review)	RJ90
INSESTB	Insurance offered to any employees (review)	RJ100
HIDISAVW	CAPI Q where emp/union health ins disvwd	Constructed
RvwTotNumEmp	Establishment size at continuing self-employed job	RJ110
WHY_LEFT_M18	Reason why no longer at job now	RJ130
JOBTYPE	Self-employed or works for someone else	EM420
NUMEMPS	Establishment size at not self-employed job	EM430
ESTMATE1_M18	Categorical approximate establishment size	EM440
ESTMATE2	Constr categorical approx estb size	Constructed
MORELOC	Employer has more than one location	EM450
BUSINC	Business incorporated	EM460
PROPRIET	Proprietorship or partnership	EM470
TYPEEMPL	Employee type	EM480
YLEFT_M18	Reason why no longer at job	EM520

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
YNOBUSN_M18	Reason why no longer has business	EM530
HRSPRWK	Number of hours worked per week	EM540, EM620
HRS35WK	Works at least 35 hours per week	EM550
TEMPJOB	Job at employer is temporary	EM560, EM630
SESNLJOB	Job available certain time of year	EM570, EM640
SICKPAY	Has paid sick leave thru job	EM580
PAYDRVST	Has paid sick leave for doc visit thru job	EM590
PAYVACTN	Has paid vacation leave thru job	EM600
RETIRPLN	Has pension/retirement plan thru job	EM610
WKLYAMT	Usual weekly gross income at misc job	EM650
EMPLINS	Has health insurance thru current main job	EM660
JOBHASHI	Has health insurance thru job	EM660
OFFRDINS	Offered insurance but chose not to take	EM670
DIFFPLNS	Choice of different health insurance plans	EM680
ANYINS	Health insurance offered to any employees	EM690
INUNION	Belongs to labor union	EM700
PROVDINS	Employer, union, both provides health ins	EM710
HHMEMBER_M18	Any other hh member wrk at this business	EM730
TOTLEMP_M18	Current establishment size at self-employed job	Constructed from EM740 and RJ110
TotNumEmp	Establishment size at new self-employed job	EM740
SALARIED	Person salaried, paid by hour, some other way	EW10
HOWPAID	How is person paid	EW20
DAYWAGE	Person's daily wage rate	EW30
HRSPRDY	Number of hours person worked in one day	EW40

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
MAKEAMT	How much money does person make	EW50
PERUNIT_M18	Period for which person is paid	EW60
HRLYWAGE	How much person makes per hour	EW70, EW140, EW190
MORE10	Person makes more or less than $10/hour	EW80, EW150, EW200
MORE15	Person makes more or less than $15/hour	EW90, EW160, EW210
MOREMINM	Person makes more or less than min. wage	EW100, EW170, EW220
GROSSPAY	Person's salary before taxes (gross)	EW110
GROSSPER	Period in which gross salary was earned	EW120
SALRYWKS	Number of weeks per year salary is based	EW130
HRSALBAS	Hours per week salary based on	EW180
EARNTIPS	Person earns tips	EW230A
EARNBONS	Person earns bonuses	EW230B
EARNCOMM	Person earns commission	EW230C
TIPSAMT	How much are person's tips	EW240
TIPSUNIT_M18	Period which tip earnings are based on	EW250
BONSAMT	How much are person's bonuses	EW260
BONSUNIT	Period which bonuses are based on	EW270
COMMAMT	How much are person's commissions	EW280
COMMUNIT	Period which commissions are based on	EW290
INDCODEX	Condensed industry code	EM490
OCCCODEX	Condensed occupation code	EM500, EM510

Appendix 1. Sample SAS Program

```
5          *** APP18.sas ***;
6
7              OPTIONS LS=132 PS=79;
8
9          ***********************************************************************************
10         ***    Program Name:  SAMPLE.SAS                                              ***
11         ***                                                                           ***
12         ***    Description:   This job provides an example of how to get job info     ***
13         ***                   from Round 1 or Round 2 in the FY2017 JOBS file when    ***
14         ***                   a Round 3 current main job in the FY2018 JOBS file      ***
15         ***                   is a continuation job.                                  ***
16         ***                                                                           ***
17         ***                   This example creates a dataset of Round 3 continuation  ***
18         ***                   JOBS records with a SICKPAYX variable copied from the   ***
19         ***                         Round 1 or Round 2 newly reported job.            ***
20         ***                                                                           ***
21         ***********************************************************************************;
22
23              libname  jobs17  "c:\mydata\jobs17";
24              libname  jobs18  "c:\mydata\jobs18";
25
26         ***  Select continuing Panel 22, Round 3 Current Main JOBS              ***
27         ***  (SUBTYPE=1, STILLAT=1) from the FY 2018 JOBS file and              ***
28         ***  print selected variables from the first 20 observations           ***;
29
30              data j18r3;
31                 set jobs18.jobs18;
32                 if  panel=22
33                 and rn=3
34                 and subtype=1
35                 and stillat=1
36                 and sickpay=-1;
37                 length jobsn 3;
38                 jobsn = input(substr(jobsidx_17, 11, 1),3.);
39                 dupid17 = substr(dupersid, 3, 8);
40              run;

NOTE: There were 53323 observations read from the data set JOBS18.JOBS18.
NOTE: The data set WORK.J18R3 has 5590 observations and 86 variables.
NOTE: Compressing data set WORK.J18R3 decreased size by 6.45 percent.
      Compressed is 29 pages; un-compressed would require 31 pages.


41
42              proc print data=j18r3 (obs=20);
43                 title 'Print Sample of Continuation Round 3 Records';
44                    var dupid17 panel rn jobsn subtype stillat sickpay;
45              run;

NOTE: There were 20 observations read from the data set WORK.J18R3.
NOTE: The PROCEDURE PRINT printed page 1.
NOTE: PROCEDURE PRINT used (Total process time):
      real time           0.03 seconds
      cpu time            0.03 seconds



46
47
48         ***  Select newly reported Panel 22 Current Main JOBS records from      ***
49         ***  the FY 2017 JOBS file and print selected variables from the        ***
50         ***  first 20 observations.                                             ***;
51
52              data j1712;
53                 set jobs17.jobs17 (rename=(dupersid=dupid17);
54                 if      subtype=1
55                 and     stillat=-1
56                 and     panel=22
57                 and     rn in (1,2);
58              run;

NOTE: There were 55035 observations read from the data set JOBS17.JOBS17.
NOTE: The data set WORK.J1712 has 7776 observations and 79 variables.
NOTE: Compressing data set WORK.J1712 decreased size by 5.41 percent.
      Compressed is 35 pages; un-compressed would require 37 pages.
NOTE: DATA statement used (Total process time):
      real time           0.45 seconds
      cpu time            0.06 seconds



59
60              proc print data=j1712 (obs=20);
61                 title 'Print Sample of Newly Reported Round 1 and Round 2 Records';
62                 var dupid17 panel rn jobsn subtype stillat sickpay;
63              run;

NOTE: There were 20 observations read from the data set WORK.J1712.
NOTE: The PROCEDURE PRINT printed page 2.
NOTE: PROCEDURE PRINT used (Total process time):
```

```
             real time           0.00 seconds
             cpu time            0.00 seconds


64
65                  proc freq data=j1712;
66                      tables sickpay/list missing;
67                      title 'Sickpay Value of FY2017 Round 1 and Round 2 Newly Reported CMJs';
68                  run;

NOTE: There were 7776 observations read from the data set WORK.J1712.
NOTE: The PROCEDURE FREQ printed page 3.
NOTE: PROCEDURE FREQ used (Total process time):
      real time           0.01 seconds
      cpu time            0.01 seconds


69
70
71                  ***  Prepare FY17 and FY18 data for merge                        ***;
72
73                  proc sort data=j18r3;
74                      by dupid17 jobsn;
75                  run;

NOTE: There were 5590 observations read from the data set WORK.J18R3.
NOTE: SAS sort was used.
NOTE: The data set WORK.J18R3 has 5590 observations and 86 variables.
NOTE: Compressing data set WORK.J18R3 decreased size by 6.45 percent.
      Compressed is 29 pages; un-compressed would require 31 pages.
NOTE: PROCEDURE SORT used (Total process time):
      real time           0.00 seconds
      cpu time            0.00 seconds


76
77                  proc sort data=j1712;
78                      by dupid17 jobsn;
79                  run;

NOTE: There were 7776 observations read from the data set WORK.J1712.
NOTE: SAS sort was used.
NOTE: The data set WORK.J1712 has 7776 observations and 79 variables.
NOTE: Compressing data set WORK.J1712 decreased size by 5.41 percent.
      Compressed is 35 pages; un-compressed would require 37 pages.
NOTE: PROCEDURE SORT used (Total process time):
      real time           0.01 seconds
      cpu time            0.01 seconds


80
81
82                  ***  Create a dataset (J18R3F) that includes all variables        ***
83                  ***  for the continuation Round 3 Current Main JOBS and create     ***
84                  ***  the new variable SICKPAYX by copying SICKPAY from the         ***
85                  ***  corresponding Round 1 or Round 2 newly reported job record.   ***;
86
87                  data j18r3f;
88                      merge j18r3 (in=a) j1712 (in=b  keep = dupid17 jobsn sickpay
89                              rename=(sickpay=SICKPAYX));
90                      by dupid17 jobsn;
91                      if a and b;
92                  run;

NOTE: There were 5590 observations read from the data set WORK.J18R3.
NOTE: There were 7776 observations read from the data set WORK.J1712.
NOTE: The data set WORK.J18R3F has 5590 observations and 87 variables.
NOTE: Compressing data set WORK.J18R3F decreased size by 3.23 percent.
      Compressed is 30 pages; un-compressed would require 31 pages.
NOTE: DATA statement used (Total process time):
      real time           0.01 seconds
      cpu time            0.01 seconds


93
94                  proc freq data=j18r3f;
95                      tables sickpay*sickpayx/list missing;
96                      title1  'Diagnostic Post-Merge - Sickpay * Sickpayx';
97                      title2  'Round 3 Continuation Current Main Jobs Only';
98                  run;

NOTE: There were 5590 observations read from the data set WORK.J18R3F.
NOTE: The PROCEDURE FREQ printed page 4.
NOTE: PROCEDURE FREQ used (Total process time):
      real time           0.01 seconds
      cpu time            0.01 seconds
```

Print Sample of Continuation Round 3 Records

Obs	DUPID17	PANEL	RN	JOBSN	SUBTYPE	STILLAT	SICKPAY
1	90002101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
2	90002102	22	3	2	1	1	-1
3	90003101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
4	90005101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
5	90005102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
6	90007102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
7	90008101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
8	90008102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
9	90009102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
10	90010101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
11	90010102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
12	90016101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
13	90016102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
14	90019102	22	3	1	1	1	-1
15	90019103	22	3	3	1	1	-1
16	90019104	22	3	1	1	1	-1
17	90020101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
18	90025101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
19	90027101	22	3	1	1	1	-1
20	90030101	22	3	1	1	1	-1

Print Sample of Newly Reported Round 1 and Round 2 Records

Obs	DUPID17	PANEL	RN	JOBSN	SUBTYPE	STILLAT	SICKPAY
1	90001101	22	1	1	1	-1	1
2	90001102	22	1	1	1	-1	2
3	90001102	22	2	2	1	-1	2
4	90002101	22	2	1	1	-1	2
5	90002102	22	1	1	1	-1	2
6	90002102	22	2	2	1	-1	2
7	90003101	22	2	1	1	-1	2
8	90003102	22	1	1	1	-1	2
9	90005101	22	2	1	1	-1	1
10	90005102	22	1	1	1	-1	1
11	90006101	22	1	1	1	-1	1
12	90006102	22	2	1	1	-1	2
13	90006103	22	2	1	1	-1	2
14	90007102	22	1	1	1	-1	1
15	90008101	22	1	1	1	-1	1
16	90008102	22	1	1	1	-1	1
17	90009102	22	1	1	1	-1	2
18	90010101	22	1	1	1	-1	2
19	90010102	22	1	1	1	-1	1
20	90012101	22	1	1	1	-1	-1

Sickpay Value of FY2017 Round 1 and Round 2 Newly Reported CMJs

DOES PERSON HAVE PAID SICK LEAVE

SICKPAY	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
-9*	16	0.21	16	0.21
-8	267	3.43	283	3.64
-7	12	0.15	295	3.79
-1	878	11.29	1173	15.08
1	4001	51.45	5174	66.54
2	2602	33.46	7776	100.00

*NOTE: -9 NOT ASCERTAINED is a valid value in the 2017 Jobs File but not in the 2018 Jobs File.

Diagnostic Post-Merge - Sickpay * Sickpayx
Round 3 Continuation Current Main Jobs Only

SICKPAY	SICKPAYX	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
-1	-9*	10	0.18	10	0.18
-1	-8	161	2.88	171	3.06
-1	-7	9	0.16	180	3.22
-1	-1	705	12.61	885	15.83
-1	1	3125	55.90	4010	71.74
-1	2	1580	28.26	5590	100.00

*NOTE: -9 NOT ASCERTAINED is a valid value in the 2017 Jobs File but not in the 2018 Jobs File.

Appendix 2. Sample Stata Program

Convert SAS Datasets to .dat Files

```
libname  jobs17  "c:\mydata\jobs17";
libname  jobs18  "c:\mydata\jobs18";

proc export data=jobs17.jobs17 outfile= jobs17.dta;
run;

proc export data=jobs18.jobs18 outfile= jobs18.dta;
run;
```

Sample Stata Program

```
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
      name:  <unnamed>
       log:  c:\mydata\APPdofile.log
  log type:  text


.
. **************************************************************
. * Select continuing Panel 22, Round 3 Current Main JOBS
. *(SUBTYPE=1, STILLAT=1) from the FY 2018 JOBS file
. * Since identifier structures differ in 2018 from prior years
. * Create JOBSN and 2017 formatted DUPERSID called DUPID17
. **************************************************************
.
. use "c:\mydata\jobs18.dta", clear


.
. gen JOBSN = substr(JOBSIDX_17,11,1)
(45,033 missing values generated)

. gen DUPID17 = substr(JOBSIDX_17,1,8)
(45,033 missing values generated)


.
. destring JOBSN, replace
JOBSN: all characters numeric; replaced as byte
(45033 missing values generated)

. format DUPID17 %12s


.
. format JOBSN %3.0f

. format PANEL SUBTYPE STILLAT SICKPAY %3.0f


.
.
.
. keep if PANEL==22 & RN==3 & SUBTYPE==1 & STILLAT==1 & SICKPAY==-1
(47,733 observations deleted)


.
.
. save "c:\mydata\j18r3.dta", replace
file c:\mydata\j18r3.dta saved


.
.
.
. asdoc list DUPID17 PANEL RN JOBSN SUBTYPE STILLAT SICKPAY if _n<=20, font(arial) fs(8) separator(0
> ) noobs, save(Stata_output.doc) title(Print Sample of Continuation Round 3 Records)
(File Stata_output.doc already exists, option append was assumed)


.
. **************************************************************
. * Select newly reported Panel 22 Current Main JOBS records from
. * the FY 2017 JOBS file and print selected variables
. * Rename JOBSIDX and DUPERSID for merge with 2018 data
. **************************************************************
.
. use "c:\mydata\jobs17.dta", clear


.
. rename JOBSIDX JOBSIDX_17

. rename DUPERSID DUPID17


.
. format JOBSN %3.0f

. format PANEL SUBTYPE STILLAT SICKPAY %3.0f


.
. keep if PANEL==22 & SUBTYPE==1 & STILLAT==-1 & inrange(RN,1,2)
(47,259 observations deleted)


.
.
. **************************************************************
. *Print Sample of Newly Reported Round 1 and Round 2 Records
. **************************************************************
.
. asdoc list DUPID17 PANEL RN JOBSN SUBTYPE STILLAT SICKPAY if _n<=20, font(arial) fs(8) separator(0
```

```
> ) noobs, save(Stata_output.doc) title(Print Sample of Newly Reported Round 1 and Round 2 Records)
(File Stata_output.doc already exists, option append was assumed)

.
.
. ***************************************************************
. *Sickpay Value of FY2017 Round 1 and Round 2 Newly Reported CMJs
. ***************************************************************
.
. asdoc tabulate SICKPAY, font(arial) fs(8), save(Stata_output.doc) title(Sickpay Value of FY2017 Ro
> und 1 and Round 2 Newly Reported CMJs)
(File Stata_output.doc already exists, option append was assumed)

.
.
. ***************************************************************
. *Prepare FY17 and FY18 data for merge
. ***************************************************************
.
. sort DUPID17 JOBSN

.
. save "c:\mydata\j1712.dta", replace
file c:\mydata\j1712.dta saved

.
.
. ***************************************************************
. * Create a dataset (J18R3F) that includes all variables
. * for the continuation Round 3 Current Main JOBS and create
. * the new variable SICKPAYX by copying SICKPAY from the
. * corresponding Round 1 or Round 2 newly reported job record
. ***************************************************************
.
.
. rename SICKPAY SICKPAYX

.
. keep DUPID17 JOBSN SICKPAYX

.
. merge m:m DUPID17 JOBSN using "c:\mydata\j18r3.dta", nogenerate keep(matc
> h using)

    Result                         # of obs.
    -----------------------------------------
    not matched                            0
    matched                            5,590
    -----------------------------------------

.
. save "c:\mydata\j18r3f.dta", replace
file c:\mydata\j18r3f.dta saved

.
.
. ***************************************************************
. * Diagnostic Post-Merge - Sickpay * Sickpayx
. * "\Round 3 Continuation Current Main Jobs Only
. ***************************************************************
.
. asdoc tabulate SICKPAY SICKPAYX, save(Stata_output.doc) font(arial) fs(8) title(Diagnostic Post-Me
> rge - Sickpay * Sickpayx)
(File Stata_output.doc already exists, option append was assumed)

.
. log close
      name:  <unnamed>
       log:  c:\mydata\APPdofile.log
  log type:  text

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```