TOOLS FOR ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY IN UTAH:

How to Collect Race and Ethnicity Data

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Office of Health Disparities

This document promotes a set of uniform data collection standards for race and ethnicity information conducted by, sponsored by, or reportable to the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) as required by Title 26 Utah Health Code. This is an initial document. A more detailed document will follow.

Uniform data collection improves data integrity and quality so relevant and reliable data is available for decision-making purposes.

The absence of standards for race and ethnicity data collection hinders public health's ability to report and track racial and ethnic health disparities.

WHY COLLECT RACE AND ETHNICITY DATA?

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Race and ethnicity data helps the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) create statistics by race and ethnicity.

Availability of this information is critical to identify, understand, and monitor racial and ethnic health disparities and advances health equity in Utah.

Decision-makers[1] across local, state, tribal and federal levels may use these data to[2]:

- Examine differences in opportunities and outcomes for specific groups
- Plan and administering programs for specific groups
- Fund programs that provide funds or services for specific groups
- Create equitable policies
- Evaluate programs and policies to ensure they are fair and equitable
- Monitor compliance with antidiscrimination laws, regulations, and policies

1. E.g., communities, government officials, public health agencies, health care organizations, researchers, advocacy groups, policymakers, etc.
2. American Community Survey. Why we ask questions about race. Accessed March 22, 2021.

What are health disparities?

Health disparities are differences in health outcomes that are closely linked to economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and geographic disadvantage.

What is health equity?

Health equity is the principle underlying the commitment to reduce and, ultimately, eliminate health disparities by addressing its determinants. Pursuing health equity means striving for the highest possible standard of health for all people and giving special attention to the needs of those communities at greatest risk for health disparities.

How to Collect Race and Ethnicity Data

The following guidance and standards have been adapted for Utah, but adhere to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Implementation Guidance on Data Collection Standards for Race, Ethnicity, Sex, Primary Language, and Disability Status.[3]

3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Implementation Guidance on Data Collection Standards for Race, Ethnicity, Sex, Primary Language, and Disability Status.

Utah Department of Health
Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Standards and Implementation Guidance

1 | **Self-Identification** | "Self-identification is the preferred means of obtaining information about an individual's race and ethnicity. The surveyor should not tell an individual who [they are], or specify how an individual should classify [themselves]."

2 | **Two Separate Questions** | "To provide flexibility and ensure data quality, separate questions for race and ethnicity should be used wherever feasible."

3 | **Order of Questions** | Ask ethnicity FIRST and then race SECOND " . . . when self-reporting or other self-identification approaches are used . . ." Order is very important to avoid confusion among those who identify themselves as "Hispanic or Latino/a/x".

4 | **Minimum Standards** | "The specified race and ethnicity categories provide a minimum set of categories except when the collection involves a sample of such size that the data on the smaller categories would be unreliable, or when the collection effort focuses on a specific racial or ethnic group."
- In accordance with federal OMB 4 standards, "The [UDOH] minimum categories for race are: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and White." 5 These must be set up as a multi-select choice option so that people can indicate multiple categories if applicable.
- In accordance with federal OMB standards, "The [UDOH] minimum categories for ethnicity are: Hispanic or [Latino/a/x] and Not Hispanic or [Latino/a/x]."

4. Office of Management and Budget
5. OMB definitions for race and ethnicity categories. https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html

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5 **Multi-Racial Heritage**

"When self-reporting or other self-identification approaches are used, respondents who wish to identify their multi-racial heritage may choose more than one race; there is no "multi-racial" category."

6 **Additional Granularity**

"[The] OMB and [UDOH] encourage additional granularity where it is supported by sample size and so long as the additional detail can be aggregated back to the minimum standard set of race and ethnicity categories." Agencies and organizations must consider the feasibility and practicality of collecting more granular race and ethnicity data.

7 **Other Variations**

The UDOH Office of Health Disparities is available to provide technical assistance with any other variation of race and ethnicity data collection.

HOW TO COLLECT RACE AND ETHNICITY DATA

In accordance with HHS, "the categories for [UDOH] data standards for race and ethnicity are based on the disaggregation of the OMB standard used in the American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2000, 2010, and 2020 Decennial Census. The data standard for race and ethnicity is listed below. Race and ethnicity data collection applies to survey participants of all ages."

Minimum Data Standards

Ethnicity Data Standard

Are you Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin?

a. _____Yes
b. _____ No

Race Data Standard

What is your race? (One or more categories may be selected)

a. _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
b. _____ Asian or Asian American
c. _____ Black or African American
d. _____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
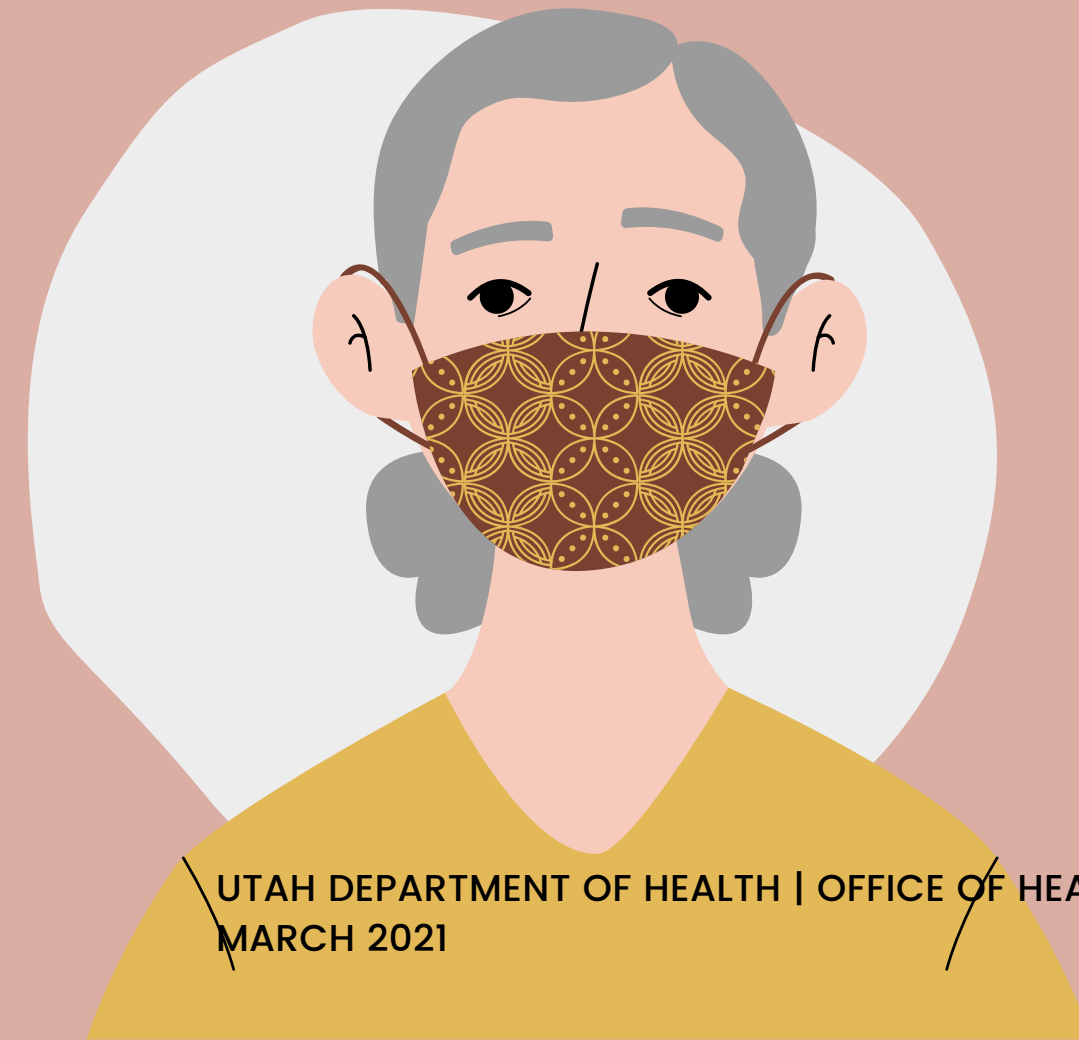e. _____ White
f. _____ Other (please specify):

Data Standards for Additional Granularity

Ethnicity Data Standard

Are you Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin? (One or more categories may be selected)

a. _____ No, not of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin
b. _____ Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
c. _____ Yes, Puerto Rican
d. _____ Yes, Cuban
e. _____ Yes, Another Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin

These categories roll-up to the Hispanic or Latino/a/x ethnicity category.

Data Standards for Additional Granularity

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Race Data Standard

What is your race? (One or more categories may be selected)

a. _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
b. _____ Black or African American
c. _____ White
d. _____ Other (please specify):

> These categories are part of the current standard.

e. _____ Asian Indian
f. _____ Chinese
g. _____ Filipino
h. _____ Japanese
i. _____ Korean
j. _____ Vietnamese
k. _____ Other Asian

> These categories roll-up into the Asian race category.

l. _____ Native Hawaiian
m. _____ Guamanian or Chamorro
n. _____ Samoan
o. _____ Tongan
o. _____ Other Pacific Islander

> These categories roll-up into the Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander race category.

COMBINED FORMAT DATA STANDARD

Race and Ethnicity Data Standard

What is your race/ethnicity? (One or more categories may be selected)

a. _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
b. _____ Asian or Asian American
c. _____ Black or African American
d. _____ Hispanic or Latino/a/x
e. _____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
f. _____ White
g. _____ Other (please specify):