HEALTH AND RETIREMENT STUDY

SSA Permissions Consent History: 1992-2020
Restricted Data

Data Description and Usage

Updated through Consents/Matches as of the HRS 2020 Wave
Released Date: January 2023

To the Restricted Data Investigator: This restricted data set is intended for exclusive use by you
and the persons specified in the *Agreement for Use of Restricted Data from the Health and
Retirement Study* and/or the *Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff for Use of Restricted
Data from the Health and Retirement Study*.

If there are any questions about this data set and its use, refer to the HRS Restricted Data page
(https://hrs.isr.umich.edu/data-products/restricted-data) or contact the HRS Help Desk
(hrsquestions@umich.edu).

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Retirement Study, The Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan.

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1. Overview and Acknowledgments

The Health and Retirement Study (HRS) is a national longitudinal study of the economic, health, marital, and family status, as well as public and private support systems, of older Americans. The HRS is a rich source of longitudinal, cross-sectional data for researchers and policymakers who study aging. Funding for the Health and Retirement Study is provided by the National Institute on Aging at NIH, with supplemental support from the Social Security Administration. The study is conducted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan.

The HRS gratefully acknowledges the special assistance of the Social Security Administration's Office of Research and Statistics for their assistance in retrieving the administrative records of HRS respondents who gave consent for those records to be used for research purposes.

2. Obtaining the Data

2a. Restricted Data Agreement

This restricted data set is intended for exclusive use by you and the persons specified in the *Agreement for Use of Restricted Data from the Health and Retirement Study* and/or the *Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff for Use of Restricted Data from the Health and Retirement Study*. If you have questions about the content and use of this data set, refer to the HRS Restricted Data Web site or contact the HRS Help Desk (hrsquestions@umich.edu).

2b. Access to Restricted Data

Although most HRS data sets are available to the public without restriction, certain HRS data sets contain sensitive respondent information and are only available under terms of a formal agreement negotiated between the researcher and HRS. Prospective users of HRS restricted data have two access options:
- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (recommended)
- Traditional Licensing Agreement (deprecated)

For instructions on how to proceed, visit the HRS Restricted Data page or contact the HRS Restricted Data Applications Processing Team (hrsrdaapplication@umich.edu) by email.

2c. Publications Based on Restricted Data

Your restricted data agreement specifies that you will inform HRS of any papers, publications, or presentations based on this restricted data set. Please send a copy of such publications in PDF format via e-mail to hrsquestions@umich.edu with "Attn: Papers and Publications" in the subject line. If you wish, you may include a bibliographical reference. As an alternative, you may transmit publications in paper format by postal mail:

```
Health and Retirement Study
Attn: Papers and Publications
The Institute for Social Research
Ann Arbor, Michigan  48104
```

3. Setup

3a. Distribution Set (Built)

HRS Enclave Virtual Desktop Environment users are given access to pre-built SAS, Stata and SPSS versions of this dataset as described in Table 1. The pre-built version of this data set is also available for traditional users, packaged for distribution in a ZIP file, `conssa2020built.zip`

Table 1: Contents of Pre-Built Distribution Package

Directory	File	Type
.\conssa\	CONSENTSSA2020.zip	zip file
.\conssa\built\docs\	CONSENTSSA2020.txt	Codebook file (ASCII text)
	SSAConsentsDD_Restricted2020	Data Description
.\conssa\built\sas\	CONSENTSSA2020.sas7bdat	SAS system file
.\conssa\built\spss\	CONSENTSSA2020.sav	SPSS system file
.\conssa\built\stata\	CONSENTSSA2020.dta	Stata system file

3b. Distribution Set (Traditional)

In prior years, this dataset was distributed as an ASCII data file with matching SAS, SPSS, and Stata syntax files. For those users who require this format, the data set is available. It is packaged for distribution in a ZIP file, `conssa2020trad.zip.` The build process for the traditional distribution is described below.

Table 2: Contents of Traditional Distribution Package

Directory[1]	File	Type
c:\conssa\	CONSENTSSA2020.zip	zip file
c:\conssa\docs\	CONSENTSSA2020.txt	Codebook files (ASCII text)
	SSAConsentsDD_Restricted2020	Data Description
c:\conssa\data\	CONSENTSSA2020.da	Data files (ASCII text)
c:\conssa\sas\	CONSENTSSA2020.sas	SAS program statements
c:\conssa\spss\	CONSENTSSA2020.sps	SPSS program statements
c:\conssa\stata\	CONSENTSSA2020.dct/	Stata dictionary and "do" files
	CONSENTSSA2020.do	

3b-1. Windows Environment

Extract the data file, the program statement file that matches your analysis environment, the data description (this file), and the codebook file. If you require a special file format or experience system problems, please contact the [HRS Help Desk](). If all files are decompressed, they will require approximately 1 GB of free space on your storage device.

Copy the ZIP file to the Windows folder where you plan to do your work. Do not use the built-in Windows decompression utility; use a third-party tool such as **7-ZIP** or **WinZIP** to extract the ZIP folder

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[1] While a specific folder arrangement is not required for using HRS files, we have traditionally suggested a directory structure for the Windows environment. By using this directory structure (or a Unix equivalent), you will not have to change the path name references in your data descriptor files. If you use a different structure, just change the directory references in the program files.

contents. When you are prompted for the pass-phrase, respond with the character string that you received via e-mail. The output will be the files listed in Table 2.

The ASCII data file is distributed with associated SPSS, SAS or Stata program statements to read the data and create system files. Files containing SPSS statements are named with an .sps extension, those with SAS statements with an .sas extension, and those with Stata statements with .do and .dct extensions. The ASCII data file for this distribution set is keyed on Household Identifier, and Person Number.

3b-1a. Using the Files with SAS

To create a SAS system file for a particular data set, two file types must be present for that data set -- .sas program statement files and .da data files. To create a SAS system file, load the *.sas file into the SAS Program Editor. If the *.sas file is located in "c:\conssa\sas" and the data file is located in "c:\conssa\data", you can run the file as is. A SAS system file will be saved to directory "c:\conssa\sas". If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SAS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

3b-1b. Using the Files with SPSS

To create an SPSS system file for a particular data set, two file types must be present for that data set -- .sps program statement files and .da data files. To create an SPSS system file, open the *.sps file in SPSS as an SPSS Syntax File. If the *.sps file is located in "c:\conssa\spss" and the data file is located in "c:\conssa\data", you can run the file as is. An SPSS system file (*.sav) will be saved to directory "c:\conssa\spss". If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.sps file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

3b-1c. Using the Files with Stata

To use Stata with a particular data set, the following three file types must be present for that data set -- .dct files, .do files, and .da data files. Files with the suffix ".da" contain the raw data for Stata to read. Files with the suffix ".dct" are Stata dictionaries used by Stata to describe the data. Files with the suffix ".do" are short Stata programs ("do files") which you may use to read in the data. Load the .do file into Stata and then submit it. If the *.do and .dct files are located in "c:\conssa\stata" and the data file is located in "c:\conssa\data", you can run the .do file as is. If the files are not located in these directories, you must edit the *.do and *.dct files to reflect the proper path names before you run the files.

3b-2. Non-Windows Environments

Non-Microsoft users should modify the default Windows file structure syntax to match that of their own operating system. The following examples should work for both Macintosh OS X and any Unix/Linux distribution. Open the SAS program file(s), SPSS syntax file(s) or the Stata do/dct files in an ASCII editor and make the changes indicated below.

3b-2a. SPSS in an OSX environment

In this example, we assume that:
- The username is "user1"
- The encrypted zip file containing the data set has been copied to the Desktop.
- The user has decrypted/decompressed the zip file (use Stuffit for OS X) into a Desktop folder named **conssa**
- The ASCII data files are stored in sub-folder **data** and the syntax files in sub-folder **spss**.

The commands in the syntax file should be modified to look like this:
```
FILE HANDLE conssa
/name='Desktop/conssa/data/ CONSENTSSA2020.da' RECL=858.
```

```
DATA LIST FILE= conssa/
HHID 1-6(A)
[rest of syntax file goes here]
.
execute.
SAVE /outfile
'Desktop/conssa/spss/ CONSENTSSA2020.sav'. Execute.
```

3b-2b. STATA in an OS X Environment

In the following example we assume that:

- The username is "user1"
- The encrypted zip file containing the data set has been copied to the Desktop.
- The user has decrypted/decompressed the zip file (use Stuffit for OS X) into a desktop folder named **conssa**
- The ASCII data file is stored in sub-folder **data** and the .do/.dct files in sub-folder **stata**.

File `CONSSA2020.do` should be modified as follows:

> *Change…*
> ```
> infile using c:\conssa\stata\conssa2020.dct
> ```
> *To…*
> ```
> infile using /Users/user1/Desktop/conssa/stata/conssa2016v6.dct
> ```
> *Change…*
> ```
> save c:\conssa\stata\conssa2020.dta
> ```
> *To…*
> ```
> save /Users/user1/Desktop/conssa/stata/conssa2020.dta
> ```

File `CONSSA2020.dct` should be modified as follows:

> *Change…*
> ```
> dictionary using c:\conssa\data\conssa2020.da {…}
> ```
> *To…*
> ```
> dictionary using /Users/user1/Desktop/conssa/data/conssa2020.da {…}
> ```

4. File Content

This version of the *SSA Permissions Consent History (Restricted)* summarizes available information relating to the status of social security permissions for 43,559 HRS respondents.[2] The data set contains summary information by wave for permissions requested from 1992 through 2020. For each wave in which respondents were asked to grant HRS access to earnings and benefits held by the SSA, status variables were constructed as described in Table 3.

Table 3: Code Frame

xASK	0	self-interview, not asked
	1	self-interview, asked
	.	no interview in wave
xCON	0	asked, consent not given for anything
	1	asked, consent given; consent given for earnings and/or benefits
	2	asked, consent given; consent given for benefits only (2010 onward)
	3	asked, consent given; consent given for earnings only (2010 onward)
	9	not asked (xASK ne 1)
xSENT	0	nothing sent to SSA
	1	in finder; in finder for earnings and/or benefits
	2	in finder; in benefits finder only (2010 onward)
	3	in finder; in earnings finder only (2010 onward)
	9	no consent (xCON = 0 or 9)
xMATCH	0	no data sent by SSA could be matched to this R
	1	SSA matched data sent on earnings and benefits
	2	SSA benefits data only
	3	SSA earnings data only
	9	nothing sent to SSA (xSENT = 0 or 9);

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[2] This data set is based on a provisional update to the early version of the 2020 public-use Tracker File.

5. If You Need to Know More

This document is intended to serve as a brief overview that provides guidelines for using this data product. If you have questions or concerns that are not adequately covered here or on our Web site, or if you have any comments, please contact us. We will do our best to provide answers.

5a. HRS Internet Site

Health and Retirement Study public release data and additional information about the study are available on the Internet. To access public data or to find out more about restricted data products and procedures, visit the [HRS Web site](#).

5b. Contact Information

If you need to contact us, you may do so by one of the methods listed below.

```
Internet: Help Desk at the HRS Web site (https://hrs.isr.umich.edu/help)

E-mail: hrsquestions@umich.edu

Postal service:
    Health and Retirement Study
    The Institute for Social Research
    426 Thompson Street, 3450 ISR
    Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
```

Appendix: Cohort Permission Status

Cohort	1992/94/96	1993/95	1998/2000	2004	2006: Asked If Face-to-face and…	2008: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…	2010: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…	2012: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…	2014: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…	2016: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…	2018: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…	2020: Asked if Enhanced Face-to-face and…
New spouses or never-interviewed R in any cohort	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all	Asked all
AHEAD (Born <=1923)	NO	Asked all	NO	NO	R was not asked in 2004	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2004 or 2006	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2006 or 2008	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2006, 2008 or 2010	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2006, 2008, 2010 or 2012	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 or 2014	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, or 2016	R refused, did not provide valid permission information, was not asked, or was non-response in 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, or 2018
CODA (1924-1930)	NA	NA	Asked all	NO								
HRS (1931-1941)	Asked all	NO	NO	Asked all								
WAR BABY (1942-1947)	NA	NA	Asked all	Only asked refusers								
EARLY BOOMERS (1948-1953)	NA	NA	NA	Asked all								
MID BOOMERS (1954-1959)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Asked all					
LATE BOOMERS (1960-1965)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Asked all		

Source Information

As seen in the foregoing table, the inputs to this dataset were received at different points in time over the past decade from the Social Security Administration:

- In 1992, 1994 or 1996 for HRS cohort members
- In 1993 or 1995 for AHEAD cohort members
- In 1998 or 2000 for CODA and War Baby cohort members as well as new spouses
- In 2004 for EBB and HRS cohort members, new spouses, and War Baby 1998/2000 refusers
- In 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 for
  - New sample members (MBB, LBB)
  - Respondents (in all older cohorts) interviewed enhanced face-to-face who were not asked previously or refused or were non-response.

Information Received from SSA in Spring 2022

Consent Wave	Summary Earnings	Detail Earnings	Benefits (MBR and PHUS)	Form 831 SSI
2006	No	No	Yes, through 2018	Yes, through 2018
2008	No	No	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020
2010	No	No	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020
2012	No	No	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020
2014	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020
2016	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020
2018	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020
2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020	Yes, through 2020

Limits for Information Obtained Through Respondent Consent Forms

1. Prior to 2006, respondent permissions were based on separate agreements between HRS and SSA. This meant that information was obtained only for the time period and respondent cohort(s) covered by the agreement.
2. In 2006 the terms of the consent form were altered, allowing HRS to obtain updates of earnings and benefits data for all years up to and including the current year. The term of these consents was defined as year of signing through 2030.
3. In 2018 the respondent consent form[3] MOA terms were revised, limiting earnings permissions to year of signing through Survey Year + 6, and earnings permissions to year of signing through Survey Year + 12.
4. In future years, post-2004 respondents will need new earnings/benefits data consents once their Survey Year + 6/+12 anniversary has been reached.

> **Note: New record sets obtained from SSA reflect the most recent information available under terms of the governing MOA. Therefore the latest version of *SSA Permissions Consent History* will always be the most accurate. If current information for a given respondent is missing, the most recent data elements from past datasets are used.**

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[3] In 1998 through 2014, HRS-SSA agreements included provisions for obtaining benefits and earnings information for deceased spouses. The deceased spouse option was dropped in 2016.