APPENDIX D.

Collection and Processing Procedures

CONTENTS

Data Collection Procedures D-2

Enumeration and Residence Rules D-1

Processing Procedures D-4

ENUMERATION AND RESIDENCE RULES

In accordance with census practice dating back to the first United States census in 1790, each person was to be enumerated as an inhabitant of his or her "usual residence" in the 1990 census. Usual residence is the place where the person lives and sleeps most of the time or considers to be his or her usual residence. This place is not necessarily the same as the person's legal residence or voting residence. In the vast majority of cases, however, the use of these different bases of classification would produce substantially the same statistics, although there might be appreciable differences for a few areas.

The implementation of this practice has resulted in the establishment of rules for certain categories of persons whose usual place of residence is not immediately apparent. Furthermore, this practice means that persons were not always counted as residents of the place where they happened to be staying on Census Day (April 1, 1990).

Enumeration Rules

Each person whose usual residence was in the United States was to be included in the census, without regard to the person's legal status or citizenship. In a departure from earlier censuses, foreign diplomatic personnel participated voluntarily in the census, regardless of their residence on or off the premises of an embassy. As in previous censuses, persons in the United States specifically excluded from the census were foreign travelers who had not established a residence.

Americans with a usual residence outside the United States were not enumerated in the 1990 census. United States military and Federal civilian employees, and their dependents overseas, are included in the population counts for States for purposes of Congressional apportionment, but are excluded from all other tabulations for States and their subdivisions. The counts of United States military and Federal civilian employees, and their dependents, were obtained from administrative records maintained by Federal departments and agencies. Other Americans living overseas, such as employees of international agencies and private businesses and students, were not enumerated, nor were their counts obtained from administrative sources. On the other hand, Americans temporarily overseas were to be enumerated at their usual residence in the United States.

Residence Rules

Each person included in the census was to be counted at his or her usual residence--the place where he or she lives and sleeps most of the time or the place where the person considers to be his or her usual home. If a person had no usual residence, the person was to be counted where he or she was staying on April 1, 1990.

Persons temporarily away from their usual residence, whether in the United States or overseas, on a vacation or on a business trip, were counted at their usual residence. Persons who occupied more than one residence during the year were counted at the one they considered to be their usual residence. Persons who moved on or near Census Day were counted at the place they considered to be their usual residence.

Persons in the Armed Forces--

Members of the Armed Forces were counted as residents of the area in which the installation was located, either on the installation or in the surrounding community. Family members of Armed Forces personnel were counted where they were living on Census Day (for example, with the Armed Forces person or at another location).

Each Navy ship not deployed to the 6th or 7th Fleet was attributed to the municipality that the Department of the Navy designated as its homeport. If the homeport included more than one municipality, ships berthed there on Census Day were assigned by the Bureau of the Census to the municipality in which the land immediately adjacent to the dock or pier was actually located. Ships attributed to the homeport, but not physically present and not deployed to the 6th or 7th Fleet, were assigned to the municipality named on the Department of the Navy's homeport list. These rules also apply to Coast Guard vessels.

Personnel assigned to each Navy and Coast Guard ship were given the opportunity to report a residence off the ship. Those who did report an off-ship residence in the communities surrounding the homeport were counted there; those who did not were counted as residents of the ship. Personnel on Navy ships deployed to the 6th or 7th Fleet on Census Day were considered to be part of the overseas population.

Persons on Maritime Ships--

Persons aboard maritime ships who reported an off-ship residence were counted at that residence. Those who did not were counted as residents of the ship, and were attributed as follows:

The port where the ship was docked on Census Day, if that port was in the United States or its territories.

The port of departure if the ship was at sea, provided the port was in the United States or its territories.

The port of destination in the United States or its territories, if the port of departure of a ship at sea was a foreign port.

The overseas population if the ship was docked at a foreign port or at sea between foreign ports. (These persons were not included in the overseas population for apportionment purposes.)

Persons Away at School--

College students were counted as residents of the area in which they were living while attending college, as they have been since the 1950 census. Children in boarding schools below the college level were counted at their parental home.

Persons in Institutions--

Persons under formally authorized, supervised care or custody, such as in Federal or State prisons; local jails; Federal detention centers; juvenile institutions; nursing, convalescent, and rest homes for the aged and dependent; or homes, schools, hospitals, or wards for the physically handicapped, mentally retarded, or mentally ill, were counted at these places.

Persons Away From Their Usual Residence on Census Day--

Migrant agricultural workers who did not report a usual residence elsewhere were counted as residents of the place where they were on Census Day. Persons in worker camps who did not report a usual residence elsewhere were counted as residents of the camp where they were on Census Day.

In some parts of the country, natural disasters displaced significant numbers of households from their usual place of residence. If these persons reported a destroyed or damaged residence as their usual residence, they were counted at that location.

Persons away from their usual residence were counted by means of interviews with other members of their families, resident managers, or neighbors.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The 1990 census was conducted primarily through self-enumeration. The questionnaire packet included general information about the 1990 census and an instruction guide explaining how to complete the questionnaire. Spanish-
language questionnaires and instruction guides were available on request. Instruction guides also were available in 32 other languages.

Enumeration of Housing Units

Each housing unit in the country received one of two versions of the census questionnaire:

A short-form questionnaire that contained a limited number of basic population and housing questions; these questions were asked of all persons and housing units and are often referred to as 100-percent questions.

A long-form questionnaire that contained the 100-percent items and a number of additional questions; a sampling procedure was used to determine those housing units that were to receive the long-form questionnaire.

Three sampling rates were employed. For slightly more than one-half of the country, one in every six housing units (about 17 percent) received the long-form or sample questionnaire. In functioning local governmental units (counties and incorporated places, and in some parts of the country, towns and townships) estimated to have fewer than 2,500 inhabitants, every other housing unit (50 percent) received the sample questionnaire in order to enhance the reliability of the sample data for these small areas. For census tracts and block numbering areas having more than 2,000 housing units in the Census Bureau's address files, one in every eight housing units (about 13 percent) received a sample questionnaire, providing reliable statistics for these areas while permitting the Census Bureau to stay within a limit of 17.7 million sample questionnaires, or a one-in-six sample, nationwide.

The mail-out/mail-back procedure was used mainly in cities, suburban areas, towns, and rural areas where mailing addresses consisted of a house number and street name. In these areas, the Census Bureau developed mailing lists that included about 88.4 million addresses. The questionnaires were delivered through the mail and respondents were to return them by mail. Census questionnaires were delivered 1 week before Census Day (April 1, 1990)

The update/leave/mail-back method was used mainly in densely populated rural areas where it was difficult to develop mailing lists because mailing addresses did not use house number and street name. The Census Bureau compiled lists of housing units in advance of the census. Enumerators delivered the questionnaires, asked respondents to return them by mail, and added housing units not on the mailing lists. This method was used mainly in the South and Midwest, and also included some high-rise, low-income urban areas. A variation of this method was used in urban areas having large numbers of boarded-up buildings. About 11 million housing units were enumerated using this method.

The list/enumerate method (formerly called conventional or door-to-door enumeration) was used mainly in very remote and sparsely-settled areas. The United States Postal Service delivered unaddressed short-form questionnaires before Census Day. Starting a week before Census Day, enumerators canvassed these areas, checked that all housing units received a questionnaire, created a list of all housing units, completed long-form questionnaires, and picked up the completed short-form questionnaires. This method was used mainly in the West and Northeast to enumerate an estimated 6.5 million housing units.

Followup

Nonresponse Followup--

In areas where respondents were to mail back their questionnaires, an enumerator visited each address from which a questionnaire was not received.

Coverage and Edit-Failure Followup—

In the mail-back areas, some households returned a questionnaire that did not meet specific quality standards because of incomplete or inconsistent information, or the respondent had indicated difficulty in deciding who was to be listed on the questionnaire. These households were contacted by telephone or by personal visit to obtain the missing information or to clarify who was to be enumerated in the household. In areas where an enumerator picked up the questionnaires, the enumerator checked the respondent-filled questionnaire for completeness and consistency.

Special Enumeration Procedures

Special procedures and questionnaires were used for the enumeration of persons in group quarters, such as college dormitories, nursing homes, prisons, military barracks, and ships. The questionnaires (Individual Census Reports, Military Census Reports, and Shipboard Census Reports) included the 100-percent population questions but did not include any housing questions. In all group quarters, all persons were asked the basic population questions; in most group quarters, additional questions were asked of a sample (one-in-six) of persons.

Shelter and Street Night (S-Night)

The Census Bureau collected data for various components of the homeless population at different stages in the 1990 census. "Shelter and Street Night" (S-Night) was a special census operation to count the population in four types of locations where homeless people are found. On the evening of March 20, 1990, and during the early morning hours of March 21, 1990, enumerators counted persons in pre-identified locations:

Emergency shelters for the homeless population (public and private; permanent and temporary).

Shelters with temporary lodging for runaway youths.

Shelters for abused women and their children.

Open locations in streets or other places not intended for habitation.

Emergency shelters include all hotels and motels costing $12 or less (excluding taxes) per night regardless of whether persons living there considered themselves to be homeless, hotels and motels (regardless of cost) used entirely to shelter homeless persons, and pre-identified rooms in hotels and motels used for homeless persons and families. Enumeration in shelters usually occurred from 6 p.m. to midnight; street enumeration, from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m.; abandoned and boarded-up buildings from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m.; and shelters for abused women, from 6 p.m. on March 20 to noon on March 21.

Other components, which some consider as part of the homeless population, were enumerated as part of regular census operations. These include persons doubled up with other families, as well as persons with no other usual home living in transient sites, such as commercial

campgrounds, maternity homes for unwed mothers, and drug/alcohol abuse detoxification centers. In institutions, such as local jails and mental hospitals, the Census Bureau does not know who has a usual home elsewhere; therefore, even though some are literally homeless, these persons cannot be identified separately as a component of the homeless population.

There is no generally agreed-upon definition of "the homeless," and there are limitations in the census count that prevent obtaining a total count of the homeless population under any definition. As such, the Census Bureau does not have a definition and will not provide a total count of "the homeless." Rather, the Census Bureau will provide counts and characteristics of persons found at the time of the census in selected types of living arrangements. These selected components can be used as building blocks to construct a count of homeless persons appropriate to particular purposes as long as the data limitations are taken into account.

In preparation for "Shelter-and-Street-Night" enumeration, the regional census centers (RCC's) mailed a certified letter (Form D-33 (L)) to the highest elected official of each active functioning government of the United States (more than 39,000) requesting them to identify:

All shelters with sleeping facilities (permanent and temporary, such as church basements, armories, public buildings, and so forth, that could be open on March 20).

Hotels and motels used to house homeless persons and families.

A list of outdoor locations where homeless persons tend to be at night.

Places such as bus or train stations, subway stations, airports, hospital emergency rooms, and so forth, where homeless persons seek shelter at night.

The specific addresses of abandoned or boarded-up buildings where homeless persons were thought to stay at night.

The letter from the RCC's to the governmental units emphasized the importance of listing night-time congregating sites. The list of shelters was expanded using information from administrative records and informed local sources. The street sites were limited to the list provided by the jurisdictions. All governmental units were eligible for "Shelter and Street Night." For cities with 50,000 or more persons, the Census Bureau took additional steps to update the list of shelter and street locations if the local jurisdiction did not respond to the certified letter. Smaller cities and rural areas participated if the local jurisdiction provided the Census Bureau a list of shelters or open public places to visit or if shelters were identified through our inventory development, local knowledge update, or during the Special Place Prelist operation.

The Census Bureau encouraged persons familiar with homeless persons and the homeless themselves to apply as enumerators. This recruiting effort was particularly successful in larger cities.

For shelters, both long- and short-form Individual Census Reports (ICR's) were distributed. For street enumeration, only short-form ICR's were used. Persons in shelters and at street locations were asked the basic population questions. Additional questions about social and economic characteristics were asked of a sample of persons in shelters only.

Enumerators were instructed not to ask who was homeless; rather, they were told to count all persons (including children) staying overnight at the shelters, and everyone they saw on the street except the police, other persons in uniform, and persons engaged in employment or obvious money-making activities other than begging and panhandling.

At both shelter and street sites, persons found sleeping were not awakened to answer questions. Rather, the enumerator answered the sex and race questions by observation and estimated the person's age to the best of his or her ability. In shelters, administrative records and information from the shelter operator were used, when available, for persons who were already asleep.

Less than 1 percent of shelters refused to participate in the census count at first. By the end of the census period, most of those eventually cooperated and the number of refusals had been reduced to a few. For the final refusals, head counts and population characteristics were obtained by enumerators standing outside such shelters and counting people as they left in the morning.

The "street" count was restricted to persons who were visible when the enumerator came to the open, public locations that had been identified by local jurisdictions. Homeless persons who were well hidden, moving about, or in locations other than those identified by the local governments were likely missed. The number missed will never be known and there is no basis to make an estimate of the number missed from census data. The count of persons in open, public places was affected by many factors, including the extra efforts made to encourage people to go to shelters for "Shelter and Street Night," the weather (which was unusually cold in many parts of the country), the presence of the media, and distrust of the census. Expectations of the number of homeless persons on the street cannot be based on the number seen during the day because the night-time situation is normally very different as more homeless persons are in shelters or very well hidden.

For both "Shelter-and-Street-Night" locations, the Census Bureau assumed that the usual home of those enumerated was in the block where they were found (shelter or street).

The "Shelter-and-Street-Night" operation replaced and expanded the 1980 Mission Night (M-Night) and Casual Count operations. These two operations were aimed at counting the population who reported having no usual residence. M-Night was conducted a week after Census Day, in April 1980. Enumerators visited hotels, motels, and similar places costing $4 or less each night; missions, flophouses, local jails and similar places at which the average length of stay was 30 days or less; and nonshelter locations, such as bus depots, train stations, and all night movie theaters. Questions were asked of everyone, regardless of

age. Enumerators conducted M-Night up to midnight on April 8, 1980, and returned the next morning to collect any forms completed after midnight.

The Casual Count operation was conducted in May 1980 at additional nonshelter locations, such as street corners, pool halls, welfare and employment offices. This operation lasted for approximately 2 weeks. Casual Count was conducted during the day only in selected large central cities. Only persons who appeared to be at least 15 years of age were asked if they had been previously enumerated. Casual Count was actually a coverage-improvement operation. It was not specifically an operation to count homeless persons living in the streets. Persons were excluded if they said they had a usual home outside the city because it was not cost effective to check through individual questionnaires in another city to try to find the person.

PROCESSING PROCEDURES

Respondents returned many census questionnaires by mail to 1 of over 344 census district offices or to one of six processing offices. In these offices, the questionnaires were "checked in" and edited for completeness and consistency of the responses. After this initial processing had been performed, all questionnaires were sent to the processing offices.

In the processing offices, the household questionnaires were microfilmed and processed by the Film Optical Sensing Device for Input to Computers (FOSDIC). For most items on the questionnaire, the information supplied by the respondent was indicated by filling circles in predesignated positions. FOSDIC electronically "read" these filled circles from the microfilm copy of the questionnaire and transferred the information to computer tape. The computer tape did not include individual names, addresses, or handwritten responses.

The data processing was performed in several stages. All questionnaires were microfilmed, "read" by FOSDIC, and transferred to computer disk. Selected written entries in the race question on both the short and long forms were keyed from the microfilm and coded using the data base developed from the 1980 census and subsequent content and operational tests. Keying of other written entries on the long forms occurred in the seven processing offices.

The information (for example, income dollar amounts or homeowner shelter costs) on these keyed files was merged with the FOSDIC data or processed further through one of three automated coding programs. The codes for industry, occupation, place-of-birth, migration, place-of-work, ancestry, language, relationship, race, and Hispanic origin were merged with the FOSDIC data for editing, weighting, and tabulating operations at Census Bureau headquarters. All responses to the questions on Individual Census Reports (ICR's), Military Census Reports (MCR's), and Shipboard Census Reports (SCR's) were keyed, not processed by microfilm or FOSDIC.