



What are Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (RDCs)?

- Secure computing labs where qualified researchers conduct approved statistical analysis on non-public data.
- These data are collected by various government agencies (Census Bureau, AHRQ, BLS, SSA, etc.).
- Established through an agreement between federal statistical agencies and a local research community.
- Managed by the Census Bureau.

Types of Restricted Data Available

- Economic Data: Microdata on firms and establishments
- Demographic Data: Microdata on individuals and households
- Employer-Employee Linked Data: Data on employees linked with data on employers
- Health Data
 - National Center for Health Statistics
 - Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality
- Bureau of Labor Statistics Data
- Bureau of Economic Analysis Data

How to Access the RDC

- Develop proposal
 - Different guidelines for Census data vs. NCHS/AHRQ/BLS/BEA guidelines
- Submit proposal for agency review
- Obtain Special Sworn Status (SSS)
 - Security clearance
 - Swear to protect respondent confidentiality for life
 - Residency requirement for foreign nationals (3 years out of last 5 years)
- May need to pay fees to other agencies and/or the local RDC

Advantages of Restricted Data

- Economic datasets that are not publicly available at the micro level
- More detailed level of geographic identifiers
- Much less top-coding
- Restricted variables (e.g., birthdate)
- Census datasets can be linked together and to external data

Nuts and Bolts of RDC Research

- Research conducted on-site
- Statistical software available: SAS, Stata, R, Matlab, etc.
- Physically secure location, restricted area with badge access
- No internet or laptops allowed in lab
- No paper or output allowed outside of lab
- Disclosure avoidance review required to present results
 - Discussion of specific results allowed only inside RDC (even among co-authors)

Stanford RDC Contact:

<https://www.census.gov/about/adrm/fsrdc/locations/california-stanford.html>

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For more information about the RDC program:

<https://www.census.gov/fsrdc>