



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Economic
Research
Service

1301 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.
20005-4788

ERS Policy 96-02

February 15, 1996

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM FOR ALL ERS STAFF

FROM: Susan E. Offutt /s/
Administrator

SUBJECT: ERS Policy and Procedures on Providing Special Tables or Analyses

Attached is an updated policy statement on the provision of special tables or analyses by ERS. This new policy was developed by a subcommittee of the Information Services Coordinating Committee and approved by the Agency IRM Committee.

This new policy revises the criteria for determining when ERS will consider requests for special tables, updates the fee schedule, and streamlines the process for collecting fees.

Please bring this policy to the attention of any of your staff who might receive requests for special tables or analyses.

This policy supersedes a similar policy statement that was issued on September 28, 1990 (unnumbered).

Attachment

ERS, POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON PROVIDING SPECIAL TABLES OR ANALYSES

Users of ERS data often need special tabulations or analyses of agency data to supplement or extend published tabulations. They also value the knowledge and expertise of agency staff in preparing such tabulations or analyses. This policy provides for reimbursement of agency expenses for special tabulations when appropriate, and insures consistent and fair treatment of individuals, institutions, and businesses requesting ERS assistance with these tabulations.

ERS will consider requests for special tables, with or without reimbursement¹, if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The request can be serviced in a reasonable time without affecting work on priority agency projects;
2. The tabulation or analysis cannot be done from published agency information and data, including standard data products; and
3. The information and data requested meets agency conditions for the dissemination of statistical information, including conditions on the release of tabulations of micro data when appropriate.²

When there is a need for special tables and analyses:

1. The requestor (an individual or organization) will provide a brief written description of the tabulations, data files, or analyses required. This request should go to the Director's office of the division from which the materials are requested. If the originating division is not known to the requestor or if more than one division is involved, the request may be sent to the Director of the Information Services Division, who will assist the requestor with locating the appropriate division(s).
2. The Director's office will assess the nature and extent of the request and assign branch responsibility as appropriate or decline the request without further consideration.
3. The branch will determine whether the information needed to respond to the request is available in the agency and whether ERS is the appropriate provider. In some cases, information available in ERS in the same form as received from another agency will be more appropriately provided by the originating agency. The branch also will determine whether meeting the request is possible given its resources and priorities for research and analysis. Sometimes it may be necessary to respond to a request later than initially suggested.

¹In general, ERS will not request reimbursement if the work needed is: (1) for another Federal agency in furtherance of a cooperative working relationship; (2) to provide tabulations and data as part of a cooperative research project; or (3) of a routine nature that can be serviced easily at an ERS cost of less than \$200 (including staff time).

² See the **ERS Policy on Dissemination of Statistical Information** issued September 19, 1989.

4. If the branch determines that the information is available and that the work can be done in a

reasonable time, a cost estimate will be prepared using the "Cost Estimate Worksheet" and the request will be documented with an "Agreement on Reimbursable Services" form. This form will be signed by the appropriate division Director and sent to the requestor for signature.

5. The requestor will send the signed Agreement and a check payable to ERS for the estimated cost to the ERS contact shown on the Agreement. No information and data will be released to the requestor until the signed Agreement and payment are received.
6. The ERS contact will deliver the check and the signed agreement to the division office.
7. The division office will send the check and two copies of both the signed Agreement and the Cost Estimate Worksheet to the Central Operations Staff, Room 112.
8. The Central Operations Staff will send the check and one copy of the Agreement and the Cost Estimate Worksheet to AFM/Financial Management Division for deposit and credit to the appropriate division account(s).

Revised 1/96

COST ESTIMATE WORKSHEET FOR SPECIAL TABULATIONS

(For ERS Use Only.¹)

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____ Phone: _____

Work to be performed: _____

Requested by: _____

Professional services	\$34.00/hr. x	_____	=	\$_____
Computer analyst services	\$29.00/hr. x	_____	=	_____
Clerical services	\$12.00/hr. x	_____	=	_____
Computer services ²				_____

Subtotal (\$200 minimum charge) \$_____

Costs to be absorbed by ERS (explain below) _____

TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS³

\$ _____

¹ See **ERS Policy and Procedures on Providing Special Tables and Analyses** for guidance on how to use this form.

² ERS Host and KC mainframe charges at current rates.

³ This total should be shown as the "Estimated Cost" on the **Agreement on Reimbursable Services** form.

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AGREEMENT ON REIMBURSABLE SERVICES

Note to requestor: Please sign and date this form in the space provided and return it, along with a check payable to ERS for the estimated cost, to the ERS contact listed below.

The Economic Research Service will undertake the following:

(Briefly describe the work and reference any earlier correspondence or discussions concerning the request. Include data sources and form of output. Attach layout of tables and describe analyses or products desired.)

Expected completion date: _____

Estimated Cost: \$ _____

Contacts:

For ERS:

For Requesting Organization:

(Name) (Name)

(ERS Division, Branch, and Room Number) (Address)

1301 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005-4788

Phone: _____ E- Phone: _____ E-
mail: _____ mail: _____

Approvals: (See terms below).

For ERS:

For Requesting Organization:

Division Director Date: Title: Date:

Terms of Agreement

ERS reserves the right to terminate this agreement at any time. Every reasonable effort will be made to complete the work described, but ERS will not be responsible for delays. ERS also will not be responsible for errors in the information or data provided or the services performed. Costs of recompilations, corrections, or accelerations in the schedule will be paid by the requesting organization and this Agreement will be amended accordingly. The information will be furnished subject to any limitations or qualifications transmitted with it. ERS may specify that the material provided is only for internal use of the requestor and not for publication. ERS also may request the right to review any proposed publication of the information and to have its review comments and concerns appropriately addressed before publication. ERS may retain a copy of the information for its own use and reserves the right to disseminate the same information without charge. If not disseminated, requests from other individuals and organizations for the same information received within 6 months of delivery will be charged the same as this request. ERS will have unrestricted use of the information to best serve the public interest.