

# HEALTH AND RETIREMENT STUDY

## **Exit Date of Death Restricted Data**

All Cohorts, 1992-2020

Data Description and Usage

December 2022 Version

**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 Web Site (<http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/rda>) or contact the HRS Help Desk ([hrsquestions@umich.edu](mailto:hrsquestions@umich.edu)).

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## 1. Overview

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 (U01 AG009740), with supplemental support from the Social Security Administration. The study is conducted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan.

## 2. Obtaining the Data

### 2a. Access to Restricted Geographic 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 geocode data have two access options:

- [MiCDA Enclave](#) Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (recommended)
- Traditional Licensing Agreement (deprecated)

For instructions on how to proceed, visit the [HRS Restricted Data Web](#) site or contact the HRS Restricted Data Applications Processing Team ([hrrdaapplication@umich.edu](mailto:hrrdaapplication@umich.edu)) by email.

### 2b. Restricted Data Agreement

This restricted data set is intended for exclusive use by you and the persons specified in the *Confidentiality Agreement for Use of Restricted Data from the Health and Retirement Study*. Traditional licensing agreements that include multiple users are also bound by the *Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff for Use of Restricted Data from the Health and Retirement Study*.

### 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. You may send a bibliographical reference (including a URL link whenever possible) for each item to [hrrdaapplication@umich.edu](mailto:hrrdaapplication@umich.edu) with "Attn: Papers and Publications" in the subject line. If possible, you should also include a PDF-formatted copy of the publication.

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, Room 3450  
P.O. Box 1248  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-1248

### 3. Data Set Content

This version of the *Exit Date of Death* restricted data product is based on respondents coded as deceased in the current version of the tracker file (Tracker 2020)<sup>1</sup>. It has 43,559 records, which are uniquely identified by Household Identifier (HHID) and Person Number (PN). The file adds exit day of death (EXDEATHDAY) from data elements in the original Surveycraft and Blaise extract files to the variables already available in the Tracker (EXDEATHMO and EXDEATHYR).

### 4. 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.

#### 4a. 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](https://hrs.isr.umich.edu).

#### 4b. 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](mailto:hrsquestions@umich.edu)

Postal Service:

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

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<sup>1</sup> The HRS tracker file is created to facilitate the use of HRS data within and across waves. It contains one record for every person who was ever eligible to be interviewed in any wave. The tracker file version used in preparation of this dataset (Tracker 2020) covers all types of interviews (core, exit, and post-exit) for 1992 through the 2020 interviewing year.

## Appendix: Installation (Traditional License)

### 1. Distribution Set

The *Exit Date of Death* data set is packaged for distribution in a .ZIP file, `XDOD2020.zip`. In order to keep the contents secure, the ZIP file has been encrypted using WinZIP 256 bit AES encryption. SAS, Stata, and SPSS system files are provided as part of this distribution set and can be used as is. Extract these files plus the data description (this file), and the codebook file.

If you wish to build your own versions of the system files, you will need to extract the ASCII text data file(s), the program statement file(s) matching 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 12MB of free space on your storage device.

#### 1-1. Windows Environment

Copy the ZIP file to the Windows folder where you plan to do your work. Use a third-party<sup>2</sup> file compression/decompression tool such as **WinZIP** or **7-zip** to extract the ZIP folder 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 1.

#### 1-2. UNIX/Linux Environment

Copy the ZIP file to the folder where you plan to do your work. Use the ZIP file decompression software installed on your system, (e.g. **7z**, **gunzip**) to decrypt and decompress the ZIP folder 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 1.

#### 1-3. Macintosh OS X Environment (10.4.x and above)

Copy the ZIP file to the folder where you plan to do your work and use **stuffit** to decrypt and decompress the ZIP folder 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 1.

**Note: MiCDA Enclave Virtual Desktop Environment users are given access to pre-built SAS, Stata and SPSS versions of this dataset; therefore the information in this appendix does not apply to such users**

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<sup>2</sup> The built-in Windows decompression utility will not process AES-256bit encrypted zip files; it halts with "an unexpected error is keeping you from copying the file".

*Table 1: Contents of Distribution Package*

Directory	File	Type
.\xdod\docs\	XDOD2020.txt	Codebook files (ASCII text)
.\xdod\ascii\data\	XDOD2020.da	Data files (ASCII text)
.\xdod\ascii\sas\	XDOD2020.sas	SAS program statements
.\xdod\ascii\spss\	XDOD2020.sps	SPSS program statements
.\xdod\ascii\stata\	XDOD2020.dct/XDOD2020.do	Stata dictionary and "do" files
.\xdod\built\sas\	XDOD2020.sas7bdat	SAS system file
.\xdod\built\spss\	XDOD2020.sav	SPSS system file
.\xdod\built\stata\	XDOD2020.dta	Stata system file

**Note: Users should be aware that there are 819 cases which have missing data for "Day of Death" (EXDEATHDAY). HRS does not have any additional information about these cases.**

## 2. Program Statements

This restricted data product is distributed with pre-built versions of SAS, Stata, and SPSS system files. Once these have been extracted from the distribution medium no further action is necessary. Users who wish to build system files using the included ASCII text file(s) and SPSS, SAS or Stata program statements should read on.<sup>3</sup>

### 2-1. 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 XDOD2020.sas file into the SAS Program Editor. If the \*.sas file is located in "c:\xdod\ascii\sas" and the data file is located in "c:\xdod\ascii\data", you can run the file as is. A SAS system will be saved to directory "c:\xdod\ascii\sas". If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the XDOD2020.sas file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

### 2-2. 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 -- XDOD2020.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:\xdod\ascii\spss" and the data file is located in "c:\xdod\ascii\data", you can run the file as is. An SPSS system file will be saved to directory "c:\xdod\ascii\spss". If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the XDOD2020.sps file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

<sup>3</sup> While a specific setup is not required for using HRS files, we have traditionally suggested a directory structure for the Windows environment to be used in building system files. 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.

### 2-3. 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:\xdod\ascii\stata" and the data file is located in "c:\xdod\ascii\data", you can run the .do file as is. If the files are not located in these directories, you must edit the XDOD2020.do and XDOD2020.dct files to reflect the proper path names before you run the files.

### 3. 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.

#### SPSS in an OSX environment

In this example, we assume that the user has extracted the 2020 files from the *Exit Date of Death* data set and placed the files in a **Desktop** folder called **xdod20** with the ASCII data file stored in subfolder **data** and the syntax file in subfolder **spss**. Then the commands in the syntax file would be modified to look like this:

```
FILE HANDLE xdod20 /name='Desktop/xdod20/data/xdod2020.da' RECL=65.  
DATA LIST FILE= xdod20/  
HHID 1-6 (A)  
[rest of syntax file goes here]  
.  
execute.  
SAVE /outfile 'Desktop/xdod20/spss/xdod2020.sav'. Execute.
```

#### STATA in an OS X Environment

In the following example we assume that:

- The username is "user1"
- The encrypted zip file containing *Exit Date of Death* data has been copied to the user's desktop from the CDROM sent by HRS.
- The user has decrypted /decompressed the zip file (use Stuffit for OS X) into a desktop folder named **xdod20**
- The statistical package is stata

File xdod2020.do should be modified as follows:

Change...

```
infile using c:\czip\stata\xdod2020.dct
```

To...

```
infile using /Users/user1/Desktop/xdod20/stata/xdod2020.dct
```

Change...

```
save c:\czip\stata\xdod2020.dta
```

To...

```
save /Users/user1/Desktop/czip/stata/xdod2020.dta
```

File `xdod2020.dct` should be modified as follows:

*Change...*

dictionary using `c:\czip\data\xdod2020.da {...}`

*To...*

dictionary using `Users/user1/Desktop/xdod20/data/xdod2020.da {...}`