



Center for the Study of Aging

A RAND LABOR AND POPULATION PROGRAM

RAND Enhanced Fat Files

The RAND Fat Files contain most of the raw HRS/AHEAD variables with Household data merged to the Respondent level. There is one file per year, each sorted by HHIDPN. The files correspond to those used in developing RAND HRS. There are 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 early release files.

The 1992 and 1994 Fat Files include all HRS raw variables. For all other years, all the raw variables at the Respondent or Household level are included. The other-person data, such as those about children, siblings, or helpers, are not included.

The files pertaining to each year are stored in the corresponding sub-directory, e.g., HRS 2000 final release VI files are in H00F1. Please see the README file of each year for details.

More detailed documentation is available on the RAND Center for the Study of Aging website:
<http://www.rand.org/labor/aging/dataproduct>.

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1. What makes these files different from the Public Release HRS Data?

The HRS surveys collect a considerable amount of information about elderly households, and utilize a complicated questionnaire structure to minimize the burden on any single respondent within the household. For example, the Respondent who answered the household finance module may not be the same person who answered the module on children and other household members. This format complicates the way the data is structured upon its public release. For instance, since only one person in a couple household provides financial and family information, the raw HRS data provides these data at the Household level, but many analyses use Respondent level observations.

We have created public use files which simplify this data structure in a number of ways. We reorganized the data so that each observation represents one individual, and we merged the appropriate information from the various modules to each observation. Thus, Household level information is present for each individual Respondent.

Similarly, certain individual-level information was collected by asking one household member to answer about another. For example, the Financial Respondent provides earnings information about himself or herself, and about his or her spouse. We reassigned this data to "self" and "spouse/partner" variables for both Respondents to clarify to whom the information applies.

Finally, we make the files easy to merge across waves and with the RAND HRS Data, and applied consistent variable naming conventions across waves that reflect those already used by the HRS data.

2. Additions and Changes to the Public Release HRS Data

The RAND Enhanced Fat Files include most of the public release data. "Other Person" files containing data on children, siblings, household members, helpers, and transfers between HRS Respondents and their children, with observations for each other person, are distributed by ISR but have not yet been included in the RAND Enhanced Fat Files.

However, the RAND Center for the Study of Aging has produced the RAND HRS Family data including the "Other Person" files. The RAND HRS Family data contains a cleaned, processed, and streamlined collection of variables related to the Respondent's family. The files described here include a subset of available characteristics of all children of HRS Respondents and spouses, data on children-in-law, and data on grandchildren of the Respondent.

Variables are added:

- Tracker file variables (version of tracker varies across years)
- Clarify the Household level data for applying to Respondent level data (for financial and family variables)
- Generally helpful variables or flag discrepancies
- Provide categorical bracket variables, that if not provided in the raw data, summarize unfolding bracket questions
- Correct raw data to reflect Data Alerts

Tracker or Tracker-like variables: not wave-specific

Description	Tracker Variable Name in <i>RAND Enhanced fat file</i>	Analogous Variable in <i>RAND Enhanced fat file</i> from 2004 HRS Public Release Data	Notes
HRS Household ID: Numeric	HHID	—	ID Fields are provided in both numeric and character format. HRS provides IDs in character format in HRS 1998, but numeric formats are included in the <i>RAND Enhanced fat file</i> to facilitate merging with data from previous waves.
HRS Household ID: Character	HHIDC	—	
HRS Household ID + Person Number: Numeric	HHIDPN	—	
HRS Household ID + Person Number: Character	HHIDPNC	—	
Person Number: Numeric	PN	—	
Person Number: Character	PNC	—	
Birthdate: Month	BIRTHMO	JX004_R	Birth Month from Tracker and Core data do not always agree.
Birthdate: Year	BIRTHYR	JX067_R	
		BIRTHYD	Max difference between Tracker and core data birth
		BIRTHYF	flags cases with birth year differences 0=No difference 1-Difference, used Tracker 2=Difference, used other
		BIRTHYR	Saved original Tracker BIRTHYR
Birth Year used for weights	WGTBYR		Not always the same as BIRTHYR. Used to determine eligibility in JWGTR

First Interview: Study Year	FIRSTIW	—	
Cohort	COHORT (derived)	JZ023	<p>COHORT is set to HZ023, exactly as is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1= AHEAD • 2=CODA (Children of depression) • 3=HRS • 4=War Babies (WB) • 5=Early Baby Boomers (EBB) <p>[NOTE: COHORT indicates the sample in which R entered the study, e.g., HRS in 1992, AHEAD in 1993, CODA or WB in 1998 and EBB in 2004]</p>
Cohort eligibility	ELIGIBLE (derived)		<p>ELIGIBLE is based on BIRTHYR. It may differ from COHORT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0=not eligible for any cohort (born after 1953) • 1=AHEAD (born before 1924) • 2=CODA (born 1924-1930) • 3=HRS (born 1931-1941) • 4=War Babies (born 1942-1947) • 5=Early Baby Boomers (born 1948-1953)
HRS/AHEAD Overlap: Result Code	OVRESULT	—	see Tracker file documentation for more details on overlap cases
OVERLAP CASE: in HRS W1 and AHEAD Waves	INOVRLAP (derived)	—	=1 if overlap case, =0 if not

Tracker or Tracker-like variables: wave-specific

Description	HRS 2004 Variable	Notes
2002 Sub-Household Identifier	JSUBHH (char)	ID Fields are provided in both numeric and character format. HRS provides IDs in character format in HRS 2002, but numeric formats are included in <i>the RAND data</i> to facilitate merging with data from previous waves.
	JSUBHHN (numeric)	
2002 Household Identifier	HHID (char) =HHID concatenated with JSUBHH	
	JHHIDN (numeric) = (HHIDx10) + JSUBHHN	
Household-Level Weight	JWGTHH	see wghtdoc.pdf available from the HRS web site
Respondent-Level Weight	JWGTR	
Family Respondent	JFAMR	JFAMR is the categorical variable from the core data
Financial Respondent		JFINR
Beginning of Interview: Month	JVIEWMO	
Beginning of Interview: Year	JVIEWYR	
Respondent in nursing home	JNURSHM JNHM	JNURSHM is from Tracker; JNHM is derived from core data.
Wave Household (Couple)	JCOUPLE	From Tracker
Proxy Flag	JPROXY	

Assignment of Income Variables to Self/Spouse-Partner Variables (FR/FP)

In a couple household, only the Financial Respondent provides information about all the household finances. In this file, the Household finance data are merged to the Respondent level. The Financial Respondent provides some income information, such as earnings, about both himself or herself, and about his or her spouse. In the raw data the Respondent earnings data apply to the Financial Respondent and the Spouse/partner earnings data apply to the Financial Respondent's spouse. In this data set, we assigned these data to added "self and "spouse/partner" variables for both Respondents so as to clarify to whom the information applies. Variables that begin with JQR apply to "self while variables that begin with JQP apply to "spouse/partner". Note that in 2004 JQ are the first two letters for the financial variables. Generally, if an individual is the Financial Respondent, then the JQnnnn variables for the Financial Respondent are assigned to JQRnnnn, and the JQpppp variables for the Financial Respondent's spouse are assigned to JQPnnnn (not JQPpppp). We always keep the Respondent variable stem so that it is easier for you to pick the correct spouse variable. And if an individual is the spouse/partner of the Financial Respondent then the JQnnnn variables for the Financial Respondent are assigned to JQPnnnn, and the JQpppp variables for the Financial Respondent's spouse are assigned to JQRnnnn. The table below summarizes these assignments.

Variable		Name assignments	
HRS 2004			
Original Variable		Reassigned Variable	
FinR	Finr's Spouse	Self	Spouse/Partner
JQnnnn	JQpppp	JQRnnnn	JQPnnnn

For example, the Financial Respondent's report of earnings from wages and salaries for him/herself is in JQ020, and for his/her spouse in JQ045 F467. In the observation for the Financial Respondent, JQR020 = JQ020 and JQP020 = JQ045. In the observation for the Financial Respondent's spouse, JQR020 = JQ045 and JQP020 = JQ020.

Income Variables Assigned to Self/Spouse-Partner Variables (FR/FP) Recoded, Reassigned, or Combined versions of variables

1. Who worked for pay last year?

The questions on who worked for pay last year are different depending on whether the Respondent (and spouse) are over 65 years old:

- JQ010: Did you (or your spouse) do any work for pay last year? (*if single Respondent is 65 or older OR married/partnered Respondent and both*); Respondent and spouse are 65+
- JQ011: Which one of you worked for pay last year? (*if single Respondent is 65+ OR married/partnered Respondent and both Respondent and*); spouse are 65+ and F4629=YES
- JQ012: Did you do any work for pay last year? (*if single Respondent < 65 OR either Respondent or spouse < 65*)
- JQ013: Did your spouse do any work for pay last year? (*if Respondent married/partnered and Respondent or spouse < 65*)

We made 4 new variables that are not dependent on the Financial Respondent or Financial Respondent's spouse's ages:

Variable: description	If individual is FinR	If individual is NOT FinR
JQR012 <i>R did any work for pay last year</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1=Yes if single R and JQ010=1, JQ011=1 or 3 (FinR or both), or JQ012=1 • 5=No if JQ010=5, or JQ011=2 (spouse), or JQ012=5 • 8=DK, 9=Ref if JQ010=8,9 or JQ012=8,9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1=Yes if JQ011=2 or 3 (spouse or both), or JQ013=1 • 5=No if JQ010=5, or JQ011=1 (FinR), or JQ013=5 • 8=DK, 9=Ref if JQ010=8,9 or JQ013=8,9
JQP012 <i>Spouse/Partner did any work for pay last year</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1=Yes if JQ011=2 or 3 (spouse or both), or JQ013=1 • 5=No if JQ010=5, or JQ011=2 (FinR), or JQ013=5 • 8=DK, 9=Ref if JQ010=8,9 or JQ013=8,9 • .Z=inapplicable (no FinR spouse) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1=Yes if JQ011=1 or 3 (FinR or both), or JQ012=1 • 5=No if JQ010=5, or JQ011=2 (spouse), or JQ012=5 • 8=DK, 9=Ref if JQ010=8,9 or JQ012=8,9

JQR010 <i>Either R or spouse did any work for pay last year</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • =1, if JQR012=1 or JQP012=1 • =5, if JQR012=5 and, if FinR married/partnered, JQP012=5 • 8=DK, 9=Ref, from JQR012=8,9 or JQP012=8,9
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JQR011 <i>Who did any work for pay last year</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• =1, if JQR012=1 and (single R or JQP012 not equal 1)• =2, if JQP012=1 and JQR012 not equal 1• =3, if JQR012=1 and JQP012=1• 8=DK, 9=Ref, from JQR012=8,9 or JQP012=8,9
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2. Who receives transfer, IRA/pension, trust income?

Each type of transfer income and the retirement pension and annuity income questions begin with 2 variables:

- A. Was any income of this type received?
- B. If yes, who received it?

In questions about IRA or Keogh accounts (the first and second largest) the question is asked: "Is that yours or your spouse's account?" And for assets put into a trust, up to 4 relations of those receiving income from the trust can be specified, including the Financial Respondent and spouse.

For these questions where the Financial Respondent or spouse can be specified in the answer, we create an FRnnnn version which is recoded to be relative to "self." For example, JQ065 indicates whether the Financial Respondent, Financial Respondent's spouse, or both received Unemployment Compensation last year:

1 = FinR received 2= Spouse/Partner received 3= Both received 8,9=DK, NA
 For the Financial Respondent, JQR065 would be set to JQ065 exactly as it is.
 For the Financial Respondent's spouse, JQR065 would be set to JQ065 with the following recoding: Set JQR065 to 2, if JQ065=1. Set JQR065 to 1, if JQ065=2

The variables listed below are recoded in this way when assigned to their Financial Respondent versions:

Original Variable	Self (FR) Variable	Description
JQ065	JQR065	WHO RECEIVED INC FROM UNEMPLOYMENT LCY
JQ075	JQR075	WHO RECEIVED FROM WORKERS COMP LCY
JQ106	JQR106	WHO RECEIVED INC FROM SSI LAST MONTH
JQ114	JQR114	WHO RECEIVED INC FR WELFARE NOT SSI LCY
JQ120	JQR120	WHO RECEIVES VET BEN MILITARY PENSION
JQ165_1	JQR165_1	WHO HAS IRA ACCOUNTS -1
JQ165_2	JQR165_2	WHO HAS IRA ACCOUNTS -2
JQ165_3	JQR165_3	WHO HAS IRA ACCOUNTS -3
JQ183	JQR183	WHO HAS OTHER IRA ANNUITIES
JQ216	JQR216	WHO REC PENSION RETIREMENT INC
JQ274	JQR274	WHO RECEIVED INC FROM ANNUITIES
JQ465M1 thru JQ465M4	JQR465M1 thru	RELATION TRUST BENEFITS REC

3. Whose parents and inheritance is from

If the Respondent or his/her spouse received any inheritance, the Financial Respondent was asked: "From whom was that inheritance received, that is what was their relationship to you?"

The relationships include the Financial Respondent's parents and spouse's parents. Up to 3 inheritances are asked about, in variables, JQ490_1- JQ490_3. We created a JQRnnnn version which is recoded to be relative to "self."

For example, JQR490_1=1 if the inheritance is from the Financial Respondent's parents, =2 if it is from the

Financial Respondent's spouse's parents. For the Financial Respondent, JQR490_1 would be set to

JQ490_1 exactly as it is.

For the Financial Respondent's spouse, JQR490_1 would be set to JQ490_1 with the following recoding:

- Set JQR490_1 to 2 (spouse's parents), if JQ490_1=1 (Financial Respondent's parents)
- Set JQR490_1 to 1 (own parents), if JQ490_1=34 (Financial Respondent's spouse's parents)

The variables recoded in this way are:

Original	Self(FR)	Description
JQ490_1 - JQ490_4	JQR490_1 - JQR490_4	LUMP SUM - WHO FROM

3. Lining up the years

The table below summarizes the Fat Files, the first character of variable names, and RAND HRS waves associated with each interview year. References to "raw" data mean the data as publicly released by HRS.

Note that for years affected by overlap cases, there are two versions of the Fat Files, one with the original Respondent IDs from the raw public release data, and the other with the most recent IDs as found on the Tracker and RAND HRS Data file. For most cases the IDs are identical on both files, and if you drop all overlap cases they are essentially the same.

In the raw public release data for 1992 and 1993 most variable names begin with "V". In order to make unique variable names when merging 1992 and 1993 data together, the variables in the 1993 Fat File that have names like Vnnnn, e.g., V1234, have been renamed to begin with "B", e.g., B1234.

Fat File names follow the following naming convention: [A/H][D]yy[E/F][vers] A is

for Ahead and H is for HRS

"D" if present, indicates the version of IDs will merge best with RAND HRS data "yy" is the interview year

- E is for early release and F is for final release
- vers indicates the version of the HRS public release and of the RAND release

For example, h04fla is the Fat File for HRS 2004, HRS Final Release Version 1, RAND version A.

Interview Year	Fat File		Associated First Letter(s) of Variables (raw and Tracker)	RAND HRS Wave
	<i>IDs as in public release</i>	<i>IDs as on Tracker, RAND HRS</i>		
1992	h92flb	hd92flb	A (tracker) and V (raw, fat files)	Wave 1
1993	a93f2a	ad93f2a	B (tracker, fat files) V (raw)	Wave 2 (2A in codebook)
1994	h94fla		C (tracker) and W (raw, fat files)	Wave 2 (2H in codebook)
1995	a95f2b	ad95f2b	D	Wave 3 (3 A in codebook)
1996	h96f4a		E	Wave 3 (3H in codebook)
1998	h98f2c	hd98f2c	F	Wave 4
2000	h00flc		G	Wave 5
2002	h02f2c		H	Wave 6
2004	h04fla		J	Wave 7
2006	h06f2b		K	Wave 8
2008	h08f2a		L	Wave 9
2010	h10f5c		M	Wave 10
2012	h12f1a		N	Wave 11
2014	h14e1a		O	Wave 12

4. Overlap cases and merging with RAND HRS Data

There are two versions of the 1992, 1993, 1995, and 1998 files, to accommodate the HRS-AHEAD (1992) and AHEAD-AHEAD (1993, 1995, and 1998) overlap cases.

For all these years, one version has the original HHIDPN, as found in the HRS public release data, and the other has HHIDPN as assigned on the RAND HRS Data:

1992 Fat File variations

h92flb: with original HRS IDs

hd92flb: with IDs that merge best with RAND HRS

1993 Fat File variations

a93f2a: with original HRS IDs

ad93f2a: with IDs that merge best with RAND HRS

1995 Fat File variations

a95f2a: with original HRS IDs

ad95f2a: with IDs that merge best with RAND HRS

1998 Fat File variations

h98f2b: with original HRS IDs

hd98f2b: with IDs that merge best with RAND HRS

The "hd" and "ad" versions of the 1992, 1993, 1995, and 1998 data are available on the HRS website as they will easily merge with the RAND HRS data. Contact us at RANDHRSHelp@rand.org to request the versions with the original IDs.

Please see the RAND HRS codebook, Overlap Identifiers, in Section A for background information on overlap cases. HRS/AHEAD overlap cases are identified by their AHEAD IDs in the RAND HRS, and in the Tracker files. AHEAD-AHEAD overlap cases are identified by the most recent AHEAD ID in the RAND HRS and in the Tracker file.

5. Public Release Versions

- HRS 1992 = V1.01
 - AHEAD 1993= V2.1
 - HRS 1994 = V1.00
 - AHEAD 1995= V2.0
 - HRS 1996 = V4.0
 - HRS 1998 = V2.3
 - HRS 2000 = V1 .0 (with January and November 2005 HRS Data Alert applied)
 - HRS 2002 = V2.0 (dropped 2 cases based on Tracker Documentation)
 - HRS 2004 = V1.0
 - HRS 2006 = V2.0
 - HRS 2008 = V1.0
 - HRS 2010= V5.0
 - HRS 2012 = V1.0
 - HRS 2014= V1.0
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- Tracker 2.0 was used in developing the 1993 and 1994 fat files.
 - Tracker 3.1 was used in developing the 1995, 1996, 1998, and 2000 fat files.
 - Tracker 2004.v1 was used in developing the 2002 and 2004 fat files.
 - Tracker 2006.v1 (released October 2007) was used in developing the 2006 fat files.
 - Tracker 2008.v1 (released October 2010) was used in developing the 2008 fat files.
 - Tracker 2010.v1 (released April 2013) was used in developing the 2010 fat files.
 - Tracker 2012.v1 (released March 2015) was used in developing the 2012 fat files.
 - Tracker 2014.v1 (released December 2015) was used in developing the 2014 fat files.

6. Downloading the Files

To access the data:

- You must first [register with HRS](#), if you haven't already. Registration is free. You will receive a password from HRS within 24 hours, usually much sooner. When you receive your password, you can return here to continue.
- If you've already registered, login through the [HRS Public File Download Area](#)
- Once you have logged in, follow the "Datasets and Files" link.

Available files include 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 data. These can easily be used with the current release of the RAND HRS Data file.

Please contact RAND HRS Help (RANDHRShelp@rand.org) with any questions.