

**The American Job Quality Study (AJQS)**  
**2025 Questionnaire and Constructed Variables**

The AJQS is a multiyear collaboration between Jobs for the Future, The Families & Workers Fund, the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, and Gallup.

The survey results are based on self-administered web and mail surveys conducted January 13 -February 25, 2025 to 18,429 U.S. adults aged 18 to 75 who worked for pay in the prior seven days. The survey is designed to provide a comprehensive, multidimensional picture of job quality.

Details of survey methodology are available at <https://www.gallup.com/analytics/691241/american-job-quality-study.aspx>.

For more information on the AJQS and data, see [www.upjohn.org/ajqs](http://www.upjohn.org/ajqs).

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## Variable Names and Constructed Variables

### Variable Names

In the corresponding dataset, variable names beginning with the letter “Q” refer to the question number in the survey instrument below. Q1, for example, provides answers to question 1.

### Recoded Variables

The dataset also includes four recoded variables:

- Q5\_rc recodes 10 observations in Q5 from “having more than one job” to “having just one job” based on text responses to Q46\_TXT. In these cases, the respondent indicated that they did not, in fact, have a second job for pay.
- Q6\_rc codes those who provided text answers in Q6\_TEXT for their occupation on their main job into a category, where possible. Gallup used a natural language processing model to code the text into an occupation category.
- Q7\_rc codes those who provided text answers for the industry of their main job into a category, where possible. Gallup used a natural language processing model to code the text into an industry category.
- Q46\_rc codes those who provided text answers in Q46\_TEXT for the main reason they worked a second job into a category, where possible.

### Worker Class Variables

The constructed variable *worker\_class* uses questions 9, 10 and 12 to classify workers on their main job into five mutually exclusive and exhaustive classes or work arrangements: employees and four types of self-employment. Modeled on the worker class question in the Current Population Survey, Q9 asks workers if they are employed by government, employed by a private company or organization, employed by a private individual or household, self-employed, or working in their family’s business. To code worker class,

- Those who indicated that they were employed by an organization or private household or individual were asked a follow-up question (Q12) to determine if they worked as an employee; as an independent contractor, independent consultant or freelance worker; or on an informal or cash basis for the employer.

- Those who indicated that they were self-employed or worked in a family business were asked a follow-up question (Q10) about whether they were an independent contractor, independent consultant or freelance worker (yes/no).

Using these two sets of questions, workers were coded into one of five worker classes or types, as shown in Figure 1; further detail on the coding of workers into worker classes is provided in two policy papers by Abraham, Houseman, and Truesdale.<sup>1</sup>

Respondents had the option to fill out a mail-in print version or online version of the survey. Some respondents who used the mail-in print version and who indicated that they were employed by an organization, household, or individual did not follow the skip pattern correctly, answering Q10 instead of Q12. In these cases, we coded them as independent contractors if they replied “yes” to question 10 and as employees if they replied “no.” Only 15 respondents answered neither Q10 nor Q12. In these cases, we coded the individual as an employee if they indicated that they were employed by an organization, household or individual in Q9 (13 observations), and as self-employed, not an independent contractor if they indicated they were self-employed or working in a family business in Q9.

For those with second jobs, the *worker\_class2* variable uses Q48, Q49, and Q50 to classify the second job into job type. The process for coding these jobs into five mutually exclusive categories follows that used in coding worker class for the primary job.

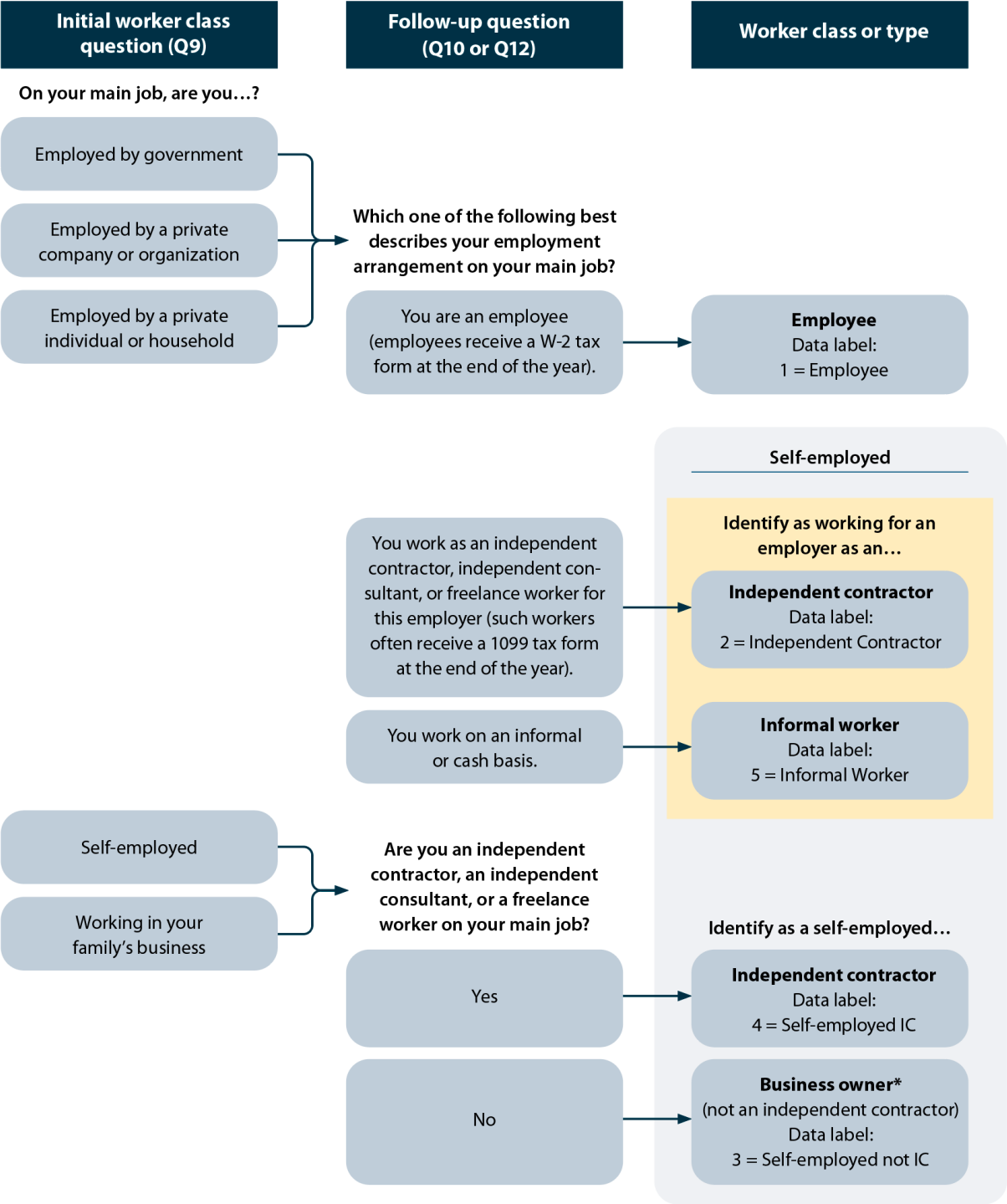
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<sup>1</sup> Abraham, Katharine G., Susan N. Houseman, and Beth C. Truesdale. 2026. “The ‘Missing Self-Employed’: How Better Data Change the Picture of Self-Employment in the United States.” Policy Paper No. 2026-039. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. <https://doi.org/10.17848/pol2026-039>.

Abraham, Katharine G., Susan N. Houseman, and Beth C. Truesdale. 2026. “Are the Self-Employed Really Their Own Boss? Evidence on the Degree of Autonomy and Control the Self-Employed Have Over Their Work.” Policy Paper No. 2026-038. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. <https://doi.org/10.17848/pol2026-038>.

**Figure 1. How the 2025 AJQS Identifies Worker Classes or Types**

Workers in groups shaded in yellow are likely to be misidentified as employees in surveys that lack follow-up (probing) questions



\* Those who identify as self-employed but not independent contractors likely include business owners, so we term them as such.

## AJQS 2025 Questionnaire

*Screening Question. Respondents were asked: “Did you work for pay in the past seven days (even for as little as an hour)?” Only those who answered “Yes” were eligible to continue with the survey.*

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?

Not at all satisfied Completely satisfied  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. In general, how happy or unhappy do you usually feel?

Extremely unhappy Extremely happy  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. In general, would you say your health is ...?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

4. Overall, how satisfied are you with your job? If you have more than one job, please answer in terms of the job on which you work the most hours.

Not at all satisfied Completely satisfied  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**The next questions are about your work situation.**

5. How many different jobs for pay did you have in the last seven days?

*Please think about all sources of income, including self-employment and jobs where you may only work for an hour or two per week.*

*Do not count work for different clients or customers as different jobs if the line of work is the same. For example, if you work as a painter and painted two homes in the last seven days, count house painting as one job, not two.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Job(s)

**Q5\_rc:** Recode of Q5. Text answers for Q46 used to recode 10 respondents from being a multiple job holder to having a single job.

**For the following questions, please think only about your main job -- the job on which you work the most hours.**

6. What kind of work do YOU do in this main job? That is, what is your occupation?

- Management
- Business and financial operations
- Computer and mathematical
- Architecture and engineering
- Life, physical, and social science
- Community and social service
- Legal
- Educational instruction and library
- Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media
- Healthcare practitioners
- Healthcare technicians
- Healthcare support
- Protective service
- Food preparation and service
- Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance
- Personal care and service
- Sales and related
- Office and administrative support
- Farming, fishing, and forestry
- Construction and extraction
- Installation, maintenance, and repair
- Production
- Transportation and material moving
- Something else (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Q6\_rc:** Recode of Q6. Natural language model used to code text for those who answered “something else” into one of the occupation categories.

7. Please choose the best description of what your organization/employer on your main job makes or does.

- Farming, agriculture, and mining/extraction (e.g., coal, oil, gas)
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Transportation
- Warehousing
- Utilities
- Information (e.g., publishing, news media, motion pictures)
- Financial activities
- Professional and business services
- Education
- Health/medical
- Social services
- Leisure and hospitality
- Other services
- Government
- You work for a private individual or household
- Something else (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Q7\_rc.** Recode of Q7. Natural language model used to code text for those who answered “something else” into one of the industry categories.

8. Counting all locations where your employer operates, what is the total number of employees working for the employer?
- Under 10
  - 10–99
  - 100–499
  - 500–999
  - 1000+
  - Not applicable
9. On your main job, are you ...?
- Employed by government (*Skip to Question 12*)
  - Employed by a private company or organization (*Skip to Question 12*)
  - Employed by a private individual or household (*Skip to Question 12*)
  - Self-employed (*Continue to Question 10*)
  - Working in your family's business (*Continue to Question 10*)
10. Are you an independent contractor, an independent consultant, or a freelance worker on your main job?
- Yes
  - No (*Skip to Question 14*)
11. How many customers do you normally work for over the course of a month on your main job?
- One (*Skip to Question 14*)
  - Two (*Skip to Question 14*)
  - Three or more (*Skip to Question 14*)

12. Which one of the following best describes your employment arrangement on your main job?
- You are an employee (employees receive a W-2 tax form at the end of the year). *(Skip to Question 14)*
  - You work as an independent contractor, independent consultant, or freelance worker for this employer (such workers often receive a 1099 tax form at the end of the year).
  - You work on an informal or cash basis.
  - Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_ *(Skip to Question 14)*
13. How many organizations/customers do you normally work for over the course of a month in this job?
- One
  - Two
  - Three or more
14. How long have you worked at your main job?
- Less than 6 months
  - 6 months to less than 12 months
  - 1 year to less than 3 years
  - 3 years to less than 6 years
  - 6 years to less than 10 years
  - 10 years or more
15. In your main job, are you ...?
- Paid a salary
  - Paid by the hour
  - Paid only on commission
  - Paid in some other way (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please continue to think about your main job on which you work the most hours.**

16. Which of the following best describes your work schedule in your main job?

- Days
- Evenings
- Nights
- A mix of times or shifts (includes split shifts)
- Rotating shift
- Something else (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

17. At your main job, how many days did you work last week (at any location -- e.g., employer worksite, client worksite, your home)?

- 0 days
- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- 7 days

18. On how many of these days did you work exclusively from home?

- 0 days
- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- 7 days

19. On how many days per week would you like to work exclusively from home for your main job?

- 0 days
- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- 7 days
- Not possible for your job

20. How many hours do you usually work PER WEEK on your main job?

*If you are self-employed, think about all of the time you spend working in this job, including operating your business and working with customers/clients.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours

21. In the **last month**, what is the *greatest* number of hours you worked in a week on your main job?

*Please consider all hours, including any extra hours, overtime, work you did at home for your job, and time you spent on work that may not have been directly billable or compensated.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours

22. In the **last month**, what is the fewest number of hours you worked in a week on your main job?

*Please do not include weeks in which you missed some or all hours because of illness, vacation, or other personal obligations.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours

23. Thinking of your main job, how often do you have to work longer than originally scheduled or planned?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

24. How far in advance do you usually know what days and hours you will need to work on your main job?

- 24 hours or less
- More than 1 day, but less than 7 days
- At least 1 week, but less than 2 weeks
- At least 2 weeks, but less than 3 weeks
- 3 weeks or more
- Always work the same schedule

25. In general, how much input do you have into the following at your main job?

	A lot of input	A little input	Some input	No input
a. The number of hours you work each week				
b. The days you work each week				
c. When you work each day				
d. Whether you can take off a few hours (for personal reasons)				

**As a reminder, please answer about your main job, the job on which you work the most hours.**

26. Which of the following, if any, can you take paid time off for? *Mark all that apply.*

- Vacation
- Holidays
- Own sickness
- Family member's sickness
- Childbirth or adoption
- Personal reasons
- None of these/No paid time off

27. How often do the demands of your main job interfere with your family or personal life?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

28. Please think of the number of hours you work and the money you earn in your main job, including any regular overtime. If you had to choose among the following work situations, which of the following would you prefer?

- Work more hours and earn more money
- Work the same number of hours and earn the same money
- Work fewer hours and earn less money

29. In the **last 12 months, on your current main job**, did you experience any work-related injuries or illnesses that required medical treatment, change in job activities, or lost time from work?

- Yes
- No

30. Is your main job covered by a union contract?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

31. How much influence do you, or you and your coworkers collectively, have on the following issues?

	A lot	Some	A little	None	Not Applicable
a. Compensation (pay and benefits)					
b. Working conditions (e.g., physical safety, ability to take breaks)					
c. New technologies used in your job (e.g., new software, artificial intelligence tools, robotics)					

32. And how much influence **should** you or your coworkers collectively have on the following issues?

	A lot	Some	A little	None	Not Applicable
a. Compensation (pay and benefits)					
b. Working conditions (e.g., physical safety, ability to take breaks)					
c. New technologies used in your job (e.g., new software, artificial intelligence tools, robotics)					

**As a reminder, please answer the following questions about your main job.**

33. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Not applicable
a. You have freedom to decide how you do your work.							
b. You get to do a lot of different things on your job.							
c. Your job allows you to learn new things.							
d. Your job requires that you work very fast.							
e. You have enough time to get everything done at work.							
f. You feel supported at work.							
g. You feel like you belong at work.							
h. You are interested in promotion/advancement opportunities on this job.							
i. You are paid fairly for the work you do.							
j. You feel physically safe at work.							

34. Does your organization provide you with opportunities for promotion and career advancement?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

35. Over **the last 12 months**, have you participated in any of the following types of work-related training or education?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
a. On-the-job training on how to perform job tasks			
b. Mentorship on career advancement strategies/ opportunities/business growth			
c. Training or education to develop new skills that you paid for yourself			

**Please think about all of the people you interact with in your main job, including coworkers and customers.**

36. You are treated with respect in this main job.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure

37. Do you feel in any way discriminated against or treated unfairly on your main job because of any of the following?

	Yes	No
a. Race or ethnic origin		
b. Gender or gender identity		
c. Sexual orientation		
d. Age		
e. Some aspect of your physical appearance		
f. Physical disability		
g. Autism or neurodiversity		
h. Religious identity		
i. Political views		

38. In the past **12 months on your main job**, were you bullied, threatened, or harassed in any way by any of the following people?

	Yes	No	Not applicable
a. A supervisor			
b. A coworker			
c. A customer			

39. Some organizations monitor their workers’ performance using technology like cameras, handheld devices, or software that monitors how quickly they type, how often they are using their computer mouse, or how quickly they carry out tasks.

How much, if at all, does your employer or clients use these or similar types of tools to monitor your performance?

- A lot
- Some
- A little
- Not at all
- Not sure

40. What are your usual monthly earnings from your main job?

*Please include tips, bonuses, and regular overtime hourly pay.*

*Please report earnings **before** taxes are taken out.*

- \$1,000 or less
- \$1,001-\$2,000
- \$2,001-\$3,000
- \$3,001-\$4,000
- \$4,001-\$5,000
- \$5,001-\$6,000
- \$6,001-\$8,000
- \$8,001-\$10,000
- \$10,001-\$15,000
- \$15,001-\$20,000
- More than \$20,000

41. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement about your main job:

Provided the economy does not change and your job performance is adequate, you could continue to work for your current employer as long as you like.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure
- Not applicable

**Now, thinking about your life more generally...**

42. Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

Not at all worthwhile

Completely worthwhile

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

43. In general, how anxious or at ease do you usually feel?

Extremely anxious

Extremely at ease

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**If you worked more than one job for pay in the past seven days, please continue with Question 44.**

**If you worked only one job, please skip the next section and continue with Question 51.**

44. How many hours do you usually work on your secondary job or jobs?

*If you work more than one secondary job, please report the usual weekly hours you work on all **secondary** jobs combined.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours

45. What are your usual monthly earnings from your secondary job or jobs?

*Please include tips, bonuses, and regular overtime hourly pay. Please report earnings before taxes are taken out.*

*If you have more than one secondary job, please include earnings from all of these jobs.*

- \$1,000 or less
- \$1,001-\$2,000
- \$2,001-\$3,000
- \$3,001-\$4,000
- \$4,001-\$5,000
- \$5,001-\$6,000
- \$6,001-\$8,000
- \$8,001-\$10,000
- \$10,001-\$15,000
- \$15,001-\$20,000
- More than \$20,000

46. Please indicate the MAIN reason that you work a second job or jobs.

- To meet your living expenses
- To earn some money to save or spend on extras
- To pursue a hobby or interest
- To advance a career goal
- Other reason (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Q46\_rc:** Text answers for “other reason” used in recode



52. What is your current marital status?

- Single/never been married
- Married
- Separated/divorced
- Widowed
- Domestic partnership/Living with partner (not legally married)

53. Including yourself, how many adults aged 18 to 75 currently live in this household who are working either full time or part time for pay?

\_\_\_\_\_ Working adult(s)

54. How many children, in the following age ranges, live in your household full time or part time?

	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
a. Ages 6 and under						
b. Ages 7 to 12						
c. Ages 13 to 18						

55. How do you get health insurance?

- Through a current or former employer
- Through a family member's current or former employer
- Through a union
- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Military or veteran's plan
- Plan fully paid for by you or a family member
- Something else (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- You do not have health insurance

56. Which of the following best describes your pension or retirement plan(s)? *Mark all that apply.*

- A retirement plan through your current main employer (e.g., 401(k), pension)
- A retirement plan through a prior or other employer (e.g., 401(k), pension)
- A retirement plan that you purchased and fund on your own (e.g., IRA, SEP-IRA, Keogh, annuity)
- None of these/No retirement plan

57. What is the highest level of school you have completed, or the highest degree you have received?

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate degree
- Four-year Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, AB, BS)
- Advanced degree (Master's, professional, doctoral degree)

58. Do you have a *currently active* professional certification or a state or industry license? Do not include business licenses, such as a liquor license or vending license.

- Yes
- No

59. Overall, which one of the following best describes how well you are managing financially these days?

- Living comfortably
- Doing okay
- Just getting by
- Finding it difficult to get by

60. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

- Yes
- No

61. What is your race? *Mark all that apply.*
- American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian
  - Black or African American
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - White

62. Are you of Middle Eastern or North African origin?
- Yes
  - No

63. Were you born in the U.S. or another country?
- Born in the U.S.
  - Born in another country

**As a reminder, you can choose to skip a question if you prefer not to answer.**

64. Do you have any of the following conditions or diagnoses? *Mark all that apply.*
- Serious physical limitations (e.g., hearing or vision loss, mobility problems)
  - Serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
  - Anxiety, depression or bipolar disorder
  - ADHD or ADD
  - Autism or other form of neurodiversity
  - None of these conditions or diagnoses

65. What is your gender?
- Male
  - Female
  - Nonbinary

66. Which of the following represents how you think of yourself? *Mark all that apply.*

- Lesbian or gay
- Straight, that is, not gay or lesbian
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- You use a different term (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

67. Have you ever been arrested or charged with a misdemeanor or felony?

- Yes
- No (*Skip to Question 69*)

68. Have you ever been incarcerated in a jail or a prison? *Please include any time spent in a juvenile detention facility.*

- Yes
- No