

Addendum for Applying for NHATS and NSOC Restricted Block Group Files

November 2023 (Version 3.0)

I. Introduction

NHATS makes Block Group Files available under limited circumstances to facilitate linkage to contextual data at that level. To minimize disclosure risks, these data require additional justification and there are strict limits on the use of these files in combination with other NHATS/NSOC data. This Addendum provides additional instructions for applying for restricted NHATS or NSOC Block Group Files.

Because these data are accessed through the NHATS Restricted Data Repository, complete and submit this Addendum with the application in “Obtaining National Health and Aging Trends Study Restricted Data From the NHATS Restricted Data Repository.”

Researchers interested in using block group level contextual data with Restricted NHATS-CMS data should refer to instructions on requesting to use geographic data with NHATS-CMS files available at www.nhats.org.

II. NHATS Restricted Data Repository Block Group Data Folders

Table 1. Block Group Folders Available in the NHATS Restricted Data Repository

File Folder	Description	Years available
NHATS Block Group Files (versions using 2010 and 2020 Census boundaries available)	Single digit block group identifier Users will need to concatenate the census tract and block group variables to create a 12-digit FIPS block group variable.	Annual SP files
NSOC Block Group Files (versions using 2010 and 2020 Census boundaries available)	Single digit block group identifier Users will need to concatenate the census tract and block group variables to create a 12-digit FIPS block group variable.	2011, 2015, 2017 Annual NSOC files beginning in 2021
NHATS COVID-19 Block Group Files (for Friends and Family) (versions using 2010 and 2020 Census boundaries available)	Single digit block group identifier Users will need to concatenate the census tract and block group variables to create a 12-digit FIPS block group variable.	2020

III. NHATS Restricted Block Group File Request Addendum

Investigator: _____

Project Name: _____

Access to Block Group Files: Check investigator box and/or provide name of user who will need access to the block group data. All persons listed here must submit all the paperwork for access to the NHATS restricted data repository. *If more than one user (in addition to the Investigator) needs access, please contact nhats-restricted-data@umich.edu regarding this request.*

- Investigator
- User _____

Check folders that are being requested:

- NHATS Block Group Files (includes NHATS Geographic Files)
- NSOC Block Group Files (includes NSOC Geographic Files)
- NHATS COVID-19 Block Group Files (includes NHATS COVID-19 Geographic Files (Friends and Family Files))

List the additional files that you plan to bring into the enclave (their purpose/contents should be described in your research plan). **Files must be non-identifiable.** For each file listed, provide the following:

- a) Source and brief description of contents in the file
- b) Level of geography you will use to link (e.g. Census block group)

An example is provided. Because of the sensitivity of block group, at this time we are approving only one linkage at the block group level per study.

Filename	Source and Brief Description of Contents	Level of Geography
Example: 2018 Area Deprivation Index	Index that includes 17 measures across four domains: income, education, employment and housing quality	Census block group

Submit this form with forms for your application in “Obtaining National Health and Aging Trends Study Restricted Data From the NHATS Restricted Data Repository.”

IV. Working with Block Group Data in the NHATS Restricted Data Repository

The Investigator and/or user listed on this form will be given a separate login/account to the enclave that will allow them to access only the Block Group files and external files listed on the form.

Once linkage between NHATS/NSOC IDs and the contextual variable have been made, the user should:

1. Create a categorical version of the contextual variable of interest.
2. Create a frequency table demonstrating that there are at least 11 **block groups** in each level of the categorical variable.
3. Create a frequency table demonstrating that there are at least 11 **individuals** in each level of the categorical variable.
4. Remove geographic indicators (block group, other geographic indicators) from the file. The only variables on the file should be the NHATS/NSOC IDs (i.e. spid, opid) and the categorical variable.
5. Request that the file and frequency tables be reviewed for disclosure risk.

Once the file has been approved, the Repository Director or designee will move the file securely to the main project shared work area in the NHATS Restricted Data Repository (or the appropriate area/account in the HaAD enclave).

These instructions may be updated periodically.