

**Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission  
Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Projects (formerly  
known as Benefits Planning, Assistance, and Outreach (BPAO)  
Program)  
OMB No. 0960-0629**

**A. Justification**

1. Legislative authority for this cooperative agreement program is in section 1149 of the Social Security Act as established by section 121 of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, (TWWIIA) requires the Commissioner of Social Security to establish a community based work incentives planning and assistance program for the purpose of disseminating accurate information to beneficiaries with disabilities on work incentives programs to assist them in their employment efforts. In response to this, the Commissioner established a competitive program of cooperative agreements to provide work incentives planning, assistance and outreach. This SSA program is called the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program, formerly referred to as the Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPAO) Program.

On May 16, 2006, SSA announced the availability of cooperative agreement funds and request for applications to competitively award cooperative agreements to establish community-based WIPA projects in every State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This announcement was made in the Cooperative Agreements for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Projects Announcement (No. SSA-OESP-06-01).

2. In May of 2003, SSA initially announced its intention to award cooperative agreements to establish community-based benefits planning, assistance, and outreach (BPAO) projects in every State and U.S. Territory, as authorized under section 1149 of the Social Security Act. Potential awardees are State and local governments, public and private organizations, and nonprofit and for-profit organizations. SSA establishes as many projects as needed to ensure State wide coverage for all Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries nationally. The projects funded under the BPAO cooperative agreement program (now the WIPA cooperative agreement program) are part of SSA's strategy to increase the number of beneficiaries who return to work and achieve self-sufficiency as the result of delivering direct services to them.

The overall goal of the WIPA program is to disseminate accurate information concerning work incentives programs and issues related to youth programs, to beneficiaries with disabilities (including transition-to-work aged youth), in order to enable them to make informed choices about work. The WIPA project collects identifying information from the project sites and Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWICS). In addition, data are collected from the beneficiaries on background, employment, training, benefits, and work incentives. We use the information to manage the program, with particular emphasis on contract administration, budgeting, and training. SSA also uses the information to evaluate the efficacy of the program and to ensure that those dollars appropriated for WIPA services are being spent on SSA beneficiaries. The project data will be valuable to SSA in its analysis of and future planning for the SSDI and SSI programs. The respondents are SSA disability beneficiaries/claimants and Work Incentives planning and assistance organizations.

3. It is estimated that 100 percent of the data collection is done electronically, i.e., the information is obtained during a personal interview with the beneficiary and the interviewer inputs the information into the data base or is filled out over the Internet directly by the respondent. The data base is accessible via the Internet.
4. The nature of the information being collected and the manner in which it is collected preclude duplication. There is no other collection instrument used by SSA that collects data similar to that collected here.
5. This collection does not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small businesses because they are reimbursed.
6. The consequence to Federal or policy activities if the collection was not conducted would be that SSA would be unable to determine whether the projects increase income and self-sufficiency. Consequently, SSA could not gather the information needed to support policy development. Thus this information could not be collected less frequently.
7. There are no special circumstances that would cause this information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5.
8. The 60-day advance Federal Register Notice was published on January 17, 2007, at 72 FR 2081, and SSA has received no public comments. The second Notice was published on March 23 at 72 FR 13853, and there have been no outside consultations with members of the public.
9. SSA provides no payment or gifts to the respondents.

10. The information requested is protected and held confidential in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 1306, 20 CFR 401 and 402, 5 U.S.C. 552 (Freedom of Information Act), 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act of 1974) and OMB Circular No. A-130.
11. The information collection does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature.
12. Following is a table that outlines the public reporting burden of the WIPA projects:

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Number of Annual Responses</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>	<b>Average Burden per Response</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Burden Hours</b>
Site	147	1	2 minutes	5 hours
CWIC	422	1	2 minutes	14 hours
Beneficiary	60,000	1	5 minutes	5,000 hours
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60,569</b>			<b>5,019</b>

The total burden is reflected as burden hours, and no separate cost burden has been calculated.

13. There is no cost burden to cooperative agreement awardees because the Federal government will reimburse them.
14. The annual cost to the Federal Government is approximately \$69,000,000. The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 authorized up to \$23 million for BPAO cooperative agreements each year, up to 5 years, and now WIPA cooperative agreements each year, up to 3 years (\$23,000,000 X 3 = \$69,000,000).
15. The public burden has decreased for the BPAO due to rounding the average burden per response estimates to better reflect the actual time it takes to answer the questions.
16. The results of the information collection will not be published.
17. The WIPA project will utilize computer screens containing the OMB Number, the Privacy Statement, and the Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. Since this is a three-year project and we are requesting OMB approval for three years, SSA is not requesting an exemption from displaying the expiration date.

18. SSA is not requesting an exception to the certification requirements.

B. **Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

Statistical methods are not used for this information collection.