

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Refugee Resettlement Program Estimates

ORR-1

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

A major portion of ACF funds for refugee resettlement are distributed to the 47 States and the District of Columbia that provide cash and medical assistance to refugees under the Refugee Resettlement Program. Section 412 (a)(4) of the Immigration and Nationality Act provides that "no grant or contract may be awarded under this section unless an appropriate proposal and application . . . are submitted to, and approved by, the appropriate administering official."

In order to provide accurate budgetary information and establish a fiscal and programmatic baseline for effective monitoring of the use of these funds, current regulations at 45 CFR 400.11(b) require States participating in the Refugee Resettlement Program to submit yearly estimates for reimbursable costs identified by type of expense. The estimates must be submitted to ORR no later than 45 days prior to the beginning of the Federal fiscal year.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

ORR reimburses, to the extent of available appropriations, one hundred percent of the costs for the provision of cash and medical assistance to refugees, along with allowable expenses in the administration of the Refugee Resettlement Program. ORR needs sound State estimates of likely expenditures for refugee cash and medical assistance expenditures so that it can anticipate Federal costs in upcoming quarters, a process greatly complicated by the need to separately estimate costs by type of assistance (e.g., Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA), State administrative costs, and Unaccompanied Refugee Minors). If Federal costs are anticipated to exceed budget allocations, ORR must take emergency steps to reduce Federal expenses, such as limiting the number of months of eligibility for RCA and RMA.

To meet the need for reliable State estimates of anticipated expenses, ORR has developed a single page form in which

States estimate the average number of recipients for each category of assistance, the average unit cost over the next 12 months, and the expense for the overall administration of the program. This form, the ORR-1 must be submitted prior to the beginning of each Federal fiscal year. Without this information, ORR would be out of compliance with the intent of its legislation and otherwise unable to estimate program costs adequately.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

Electronic collection techniques are seldom cost-effective for small collection requests. To collect these data electronically, ORR would need to spend many hours constructing new data links and formulating precise instructions for connecting with these links. State staff would need time to review the instructions each year. Since the data are collected only once a year, staff would need to review instructions again each year. In addition, Federal staff would need to review erroneous input annually. The current, paper-based system is easy to use for both government agencies.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

Program staff, through extensive contacts with States, know that no such similar data exist.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

Not applicable; all grantees are States.

6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

ORR needs annual estimates in order to plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Less frequent reporting would diminish the utility of the estimates.

7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5

No special circumstances are involved; this information collection is consistent with OMB guidelines specified at 5 CFR 1320.6.

8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and

Efforts to consult Outside the Agency

The ORR budget analyst consults daily with participating States regarding their latest estimates of refugee arrivals, welfare utilization, and program estimates. State officials are questioned about the basis for their estimates and whether the estimates made at the beginning of the year need to be updated. During the past three years, no State official requested ORR to make any change in the format or scope of the ORR-1. In addition, a notice was published in the Federal Register on March 23, 2001 (66 Vol 57 No. 16249) soliciting comments. No comments were received. (See Appendix C for the text of this notice.) Accordingly, ORR is requesting reinstatement of the reporting instrument without changes.

9. Explanation of any Payment or Gift to Respondents

None

10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

None

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

None

12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

Forty-seven States and the District of Columbia currently participate in the Refugee Resettlement Program. ORR estimates that thirty minutes is required for each respondent to complete the form, resulting in a total annual burden of 24 hours (48 X 1/2 hour.)

13. Estimates of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents and Record Keepers

None

14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

ORR staff spend approximately 10 hours reviewing the forms of the 48 respondents. At an estimated hourly cost of \$25, the total annual cost is \$250.

15. Explanation of Program Changes or Adjustments

Explanation of change in Item # 13: there was an error in the previous submission for # 13 caused by an error in the approach toward estimation. The current figure for # 13 reflects a correct approach toward estimation.

16. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

ORR does not publish or disseminate these data.

17. Reason(s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate

Not applicable.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

None