

**OMB Statement for
Injured Spouse Customer Satisfaction Focus Groups 10-1-09/12-31-10
Wage & Investment Division
BPA TIRNO-05-Z-00014, Task Request # 0074
Requisition W9W00USAA26**

Introduction

IRS employs a balanced measurement to assess how well it is achieving its mission and objectives to assess business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. This system is consistent with the requirements of the Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998 and Executive Order 12862. The Adjustments operation within the Customer Accounts Services Operating Unit of the Wage and Investment (W&I) Business Operating Division is responsible for responding to customer technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account inquiries, resolving customer account issues, and working issues related to Injured Spouse Allocations. W&I desires feedback from customers to continually improve the Injured Spouse Allocation Process. W&I solicit this feedback through customer satisfaction research.

The objective of this task order is to administer the Injured Spouse Allocation customer satisfaction research process for 2009-10 (Option Year 1).

As an important customer interface for Wage & Investment, Injured Spouse will need feedback from customers (i.e., taxpayers) to continuously improve its operations. Focus Groups provide input and feedback on satisfaction with how W&I is achieving its objectives and provide feedback in the development of the customer satisfaction questionnaire.

This project has three primary goals: 1) to survey and track customer satisfaction at all W&I Injured Spouse (Adjustments) sites; 2) to investigate actions IRS can take to improve customer satisfaction with the W&I Injured Spouse (Adjustments) service; and 3) to gauge the effectiveness of changes to the W&I Injured Spouse (Adjustments) service.

Customer Satisfaction Telephone Focus Groups

The Injured Spouse Customer Satisfaction Focus Groups will be conducted at three locations by teleconference. The moderator's guide and screener script are attached.

The objective of the focus groups is to validate the current questionnaire for flow and ease of comprehension and to gain insight from the respondent perspective as to the appropriate questions for the survey instrument. The focus group moderator's guide is based on Pacific Consulting Group's methodology, which asks respondents to evaluate various aspects of their experience and to provide an overall summary evaluation. Respondents will be recruited by telephone and participants will be offered an honorarium of \$50 each. The stipend has been used in previous IRS W&I Focus Groups as an incentive for participation. The stipend is customary in the Market Research industry and current stipends currently range from \$50 to \$75 for participants in the telephone focus groups. We will recruit 21 people to participate. The screening guide is attached, as is the moderator's discussion guide for the three one-hour teleconference discussions.

Disclosure, Security & Privacy

Privacy will be safeguarded to the extent permitted by law. In the data collection process, participants will be identified to IRS personnel by their first names only. In addition, no participant's names will be mentioned in the focus group report. Participants will be advised that observers from the IRS may be behind the one-way mirror and that their comments will be audio and videotapes.

The focus group sessions will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. Participants will not be identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. We will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized as well as the privacy of the participants to the extent allowed by law. We will apply the fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all survey respondents. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the protection of information as well as its releases to authorized recipients. We will apply fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all taxpayers.

Methodology

The vendor, Pacific Consulting Group (PCG), will conduct three one-hour focus groups of previous Injured Spouse survey respondents by telephone. The goal is to have a representative cross section of Injured W&I Accounts Management (Adjustments) sites. The data collection is planned begin October 21, 2009.

Estimates of the Burden of Focus Groups

Expected burden hour estimates as follows. Recruiting of non-participants estimate of 220 at 2 minutes each and recruiting of participants estimate of 30 at 10minutes each for a total estimated burden for recruitment of 12 hours. The three Focus Group

OMB Supporting Statement

W&I Accounts Management

Injured Spouse – Focus Groups

OMB # 1545-1349

sessions estimate 21 participants who dial in at 60 minutes each for an estimated burden of 21 hours for the Focus Group sessions. The total estimated burden is 33 hours.

Other Information

The following information will be provided to the Organizational Performance Division within 60 days after the close of the survey data collection operations:

- Findings: A brief summary of significant findings that were evidenced in the results.
- Actions taken or lessons learned: A brief summary of any action taken or lessons learned as a result of the findings.
- Number of participants per focus group.
- Number of requests made for taxpayer participation
- Focus group dates.

The estimated cost for the focus is \$162,257.

The period of performance is July 22, 2009 through March 1, 2011.

Statistical Contact

For questions regarding the Focus Groups and methodology, contact:

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