SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Client Asstance Program

INFORMATION COLLECTION SUBMISSION

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the Act), requires each state to have in effect a Client Assistance Program (CAP) in order to receive payments from its Section 110 allotments under the Act. Section 112 of the Act authorizes CAP grantees to provide information to individuals with disabilities regarding the services and benefits available under the Act and the rights afforded them under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, CAP grantees are authorized to provide advocacy and legal representation to individuals seeking or receiving services under the Act, in order to resolve disputes with programs providing such services, including the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program.

The current version of the Annual Client Assistance Program Report (Form RSA-227) is scheduled to expire on January 31, 2009. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) is requesting an extension of an existing form through January 31, 2012. RSA has made no substantive changes to the form. RSA is making this request for the following reasons.

In January of 2008, OMB granted approval for the current Form RSA-227 for a 12-month period only, requiring that RSA consider revisions to the reporting instrument based on the work of the Interagency Workgroup on Common Definitions for Protection and Advocacy Systems Reporting. Although RSA will not be required to utilize the common reporting system developed by the workgroup for the purpose of collecting data and information on the CAP program, OMB requested that RSA adopt those data elements applicable to the program. However, the work of the interagency workgroup is still ongoing and decisions regarding common data elements are not yet final. Because it is uncertain when the interagency workgroup will complete its work, RSA is requesting a three-year extension of this data collection instrument.

During the extension, RSA will complete substantive revisions to Form RSA-227 and submit the revised instrument for approval by OMB. RSA will require CAP grantees to submit data on the revised form beginning with the FY 2009 reporting period.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The Form RSA-227 provides RSA with a principal monitoring tool for the CAP program. Subsection 112(g) of the Act, and its implementing regulations at 34 CFR 370.44, require each CAP to submit an annual report, including "a summary of the work done and the uniform statistical tabulation of all cases handled by such programs." Form RSA-227 has enabled RSA to furnish the President and Congress with data on the provision of advocacy services and has helped to establish a sound basis for future funding requests. Data from the form have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of eligible systems within individual programs. These data also have been used to indicate trends in the provision of services from year-to-year.

Furthermore, Form RSA-227 is the instrument RSA uses to monitor and evaluate the program of each designated CAP agency to ensure compliance with all federal requirements. Subsection 112(b) requires the Secretary to ensure compliance with Subsections 112(a) and (c) before allocating funds under the Act, including funds under the Title I VR Program, to any state.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision of adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

Currently, each CAP system can electronically transmit Form RSA-227 data using electronic mail via the Internet. In addition, RSA has developed an electronic Management Information System (MIS), which CAPs can access and submit data online.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use of the purposes described in item 2 above.

Form RSA-227 provides information on the number of individuals with disabilities currently receiving advocacy services authorized by Section 112 of the Act. No similar information is available.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Part II item 8 of new OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

Several respondents are not-for-profit organizations. RSA included the respondents and the national organization that represents them in the initial development of this collection of information. This was done in an effort to ensure that the information requested could be provided with a minimal burden on the respondents

6. Describe the consequences to federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Because RSA uses the information obtained by this collection in preparing its annual report to the President and Congress, current data on the advocacy services provided by CAPs must be made available by eligible programs each year.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;

- requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;

- requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;

- requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;

- in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results than can be generalized to the universe of study;

- requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;

- that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or

- requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

There are no special circumstances that require this information collection to be conducted in any manner listed above.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in

response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

- Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instruction and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

- Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every three years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

Previously, RSA received recommendations on this collection of information from the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) formerly known as the National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems (NAPAS), RSA staff, CAPs, and others. Suggestions received from all sources were considered during the prior revision of this form and are reflected therein. In addittion, RSA will publish 60-day and 30-day Federal Register notices to allow public comment.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

RSA has made no decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

Confidentiality is assured because Form RSA-227 is an aggregate report.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. The justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This report contains no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

- Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.

- If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in item 16 of new OMB Form 83-I.

- Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents of the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should not be included in item 14.

	Annual Burden
Number of respondents	56
Frequency of response	1
Total annual responses	56
Hours per response	16.0
Total hours	896
Cost per hour	$33
Total cost	$29,568

RSA has estimated the time required for each respondent to complete the form, so that the estimate is consistent with that used in connection with similar reporting instruments used by RSA, in particular, the Annual Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) Performance Report. RSA conducted a field test of nine respondents to the Annual PAAT Performance Report during its development and found that on average respondents completed the form within 16 hours. RSA believes that the Form RSA-227 can be completed by CAP grantees in an equal amount of time. In addition, RSA now estimates the hourly cost to respondents to be $33 reflecting increases in wages caused by the increased cost in living.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

- The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.

- If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.

- Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

States and territories incur no additional cost burden when submitting the Form RSA-227.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

Annual cost to Federal Government	84 hours x $38/hour	$3,192
Annual Federal computer costs		500
Total cost to Federal Government		$3,692

RSA estimates that staff will require one and one-half hours to review each submission, totalling 84 hours of review time (56 x 1.5). RSA is now using an hourly cost of $38 for each hour of review, based on average hourly rate of staff responsible for the review.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in item 16 of the new OMB Form 83-I.

This submission requires no changes to the burden for hours and costs included in current OMB inventory.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

Reports are due to RSA within 90 days following the end of the fiscal year (approximately December 30th of each year). Data reported are evaluated and transmitted to the President and Congress in the Annual Report prepared by the Commissioner.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

RSA is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

This collection of information does not employ any statistical methods.