

## THE SUPPORTING STATEMENT

### Specific Instructions

#### A. Justification

##### 1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

This is a request for approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), under the Federal Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, for a generic clearance to assess and improve the quality of services the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) provides to our partners. ACF's partners are those entities that receive services or assistance directly from ACF programs such as State and local governments, the territories, service providers, Indian Tribes and tribal organizations, grantees, researchers, and significant other service providers serving target populations identified by and funded directly or indirectly by ACF.

The generic surveys of our partners will provide descriptive and statistical information on ACF programs across at-least twelve (12) major domains: welfare, child support enforcement, vulnerable youth, child care, employment training, Head Start, emergency assistance, family violence, foster care, adoption assistance, services to special populations, and refugee resettlement. For each domain, ACF intends to use information provided by our partners to determine the kind and quality of services they want and expect, their level of satisfaction with existing services and to implement improvements where feasible and practical.

ACF will conduct voluntary surveys of our partners for the purposes of determining "how well ACF is performing its functions with its partners." The Administration for Children and Families is fully committed to making the management of its programs responsive to the needs of our partners.

##### 2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The voluntary partnership surveys will focus only on issues of direct concern to our partners regarding their relationship and opinions on the level of efficiency and quality of services provided by ACF. These concerns may include: partnership arrangements in policy formulation and implementation of program strategies; considerations of Federal, State and local administrative/management practices in policy formulation; appropriateness and timeliness of decisions making; timeliness of funding allocations and grant awards; utility of information collection and design of instruments; online data collection (OLDC), the elimination of inoperable internal rules and guidelines; courtesy and cooperation of federal staffs with our partners; assessing the effectiveness of technical assistance provided and the need for additional technical assistance; adequacy of problem resolutions, efficacy of information sharing, multi-

cultural sensitivity in the decision-making process; and the attainment of goals and outcomes that can be used to measure the efficiency and cost effectiveness of ACF programs in meeting the needs of children, youth and families at the ACF level.

These surveys will be designed and administered in such a fashion as to yield valid representation of our partners' views by both types of grantee and in the aggregate. Focus groups, consisting of program experts and technical analysts will assist in developing the data collection and analysis plans as well as the data collection instruments. These data will be analyzed to provide a description of the level of satisfaction of our partners in the implementation of ACF programs.

### 3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

ACF will use a variety of approaches to gather information from our partners, including the possible use of telephone surveys, electronic networking, electronic bulletin boards and electronic means.

### 4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

The Department of Health and Human Services has established a customer service working group with representatives from all operating and staff components. This working group, which will be operating over several years, is part of the Department's ongoing efforts to implement both the National Performance Review recommendations and the Departmental Continuous Improvement Program. One function of the group is to coordinate implementation of Executive Order 12682. The group will approach the issue of duplication in two ways:

- o The group will require the sharing of survey plans, instruments and information across programs; and
- o When appropriate, the group will encourage pooling of questions into one survey for a shared population, e.g., the States.

### 5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

We do not plan to survey small businesses.

### 6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

Not applicable since these tasks will be onetime data collections.

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

This data collection effort will be conducted according to the guidelines specified in 5 CFR 1320.5(c). No special circumstances that would require inconsistency with these guidelines are known.

#### 8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

As required by 5 CFR 1320.8, a Federal Register notice appeared July 18, 2008 (Volume 73, Number 139), Pages 41358-41359.

As required by OMB, ACF will use focus groups, other qualitative consultations with partners and/or consultations with interest groups such as the Child Welfare League, National Association of Social Workers, National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, Children's Defense Fund, American Public Human Services Association, National Head Start Association, National Child Support Association, and many nonprofit organizations to identify areas of interest and concern to ACF's partners. We will make use of a variety of experts to help us design and carry out our survey work, including, but not limited to, ACF statistical, measurement, and survey staff, contract consultants, and expert headquarters and partners' staff.

#### 9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

Not applicable.

#### 10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

We will assure that the confidentiality and/or anonymity of respondent identity and information are safeguarded and the voluntary nature of partners participation in both oral and written presentations to prospective respondents. We may also use third parties to collect data in a way which assures confidentiality.

### 11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

Sensitive issues will not be raised at any time during the conduct of the survey. This generic survey applies to partnership opinions only.

### 12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

Estimates of annual response burden are outlined in the following tables:

Respondents	Number of Respondents	Average Annual Frequency	Average Burden per Response	Average Annual Hours
State Gov'ts	51	5	0.33	84

The above figures are based on an estimate of approximately 0.33 hour per response to respond and submit the information. The 51 respondents include the 50 States and the District of Columbia. The figure in the annual burden hours column takes into account State supervised, county administered, State programs where the county must submit data to the State prior to its aggregation and submission to the Administration for Children and Families multiplied by 5 responses per year.

Respondents	Number of Respondents	Average Annual Frequency	Average Burden per Response	Average Annual Hours
Head Start Grantees and Delegates	200	1	0.33	66

The above annual figure is based on an estimate of .33 hours to respond to a check list of open-ended and closed-ended questions posed to delegate agencies and center based programs.

Respondents	Number of Respondents	Average Annual Frequency	Average Burden per Response	Average Annual Hours
Other Grant Applications	200	0.5	0.33	33

The above annual burden hours are based on an estimate of .33 hour to respond to the survey. The 200 respondents include a portion of ACF's discretionary grant programs multiplied by 0.5 responses per year. Most applications are received on a one-time annual basis.

Respondents	Number of Respondents	Average Annual Frequency	Average Burden per Response	Average Annual Hours
Indian Tribes & Tribal Organizations	25	2	0.33	16.5

The above annual burden hours are based on an estimate of .33 hour to respond to the survey. The 25 respondents include a portion of ACF's discretionary grant programs multiplied by 2 responses per year. Most applications are received on a one-time annual basis.

————— Total Reporting Burden 199.5

The annualized costs to the respondents for hour burden will be a maximum of \$9,975 calculated at an average of \$50 per hour. This would only occur if all 199.5 were used.

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

The will be no direct, out-of-pocket costs to respondents.

### 14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

Costs of the partnership surveys would be borne by ACF within the current operating budget. There will be no direct, out-of-pocket costs to the Federal Government.

### 15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments

There are no changes in burden.

16. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

With assistance of both internal and external statistical experts, ACF intends to design both qualitative and quantitative data collection activities that will produce information that will include at minimum the relationship ACF has with its partners.

ACF will use information gathered from partner surveys in judging management alternatives and in making resource allocations.

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

Not applicable.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are requested.