

**ADDENDUM TO SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ELECTRONIC RECORDS EXPRESS (ERE) THIRD-PARTIES
OMB No. 0960-0767**

Terms of Clearance

On the Notice of Action dated 2/22/2008, OMB asked SSA to investigate the possibility of creating an electronic, rather than a paper, ERE process. One of the new features we are introducing in this ICR is an electronic registration process. This ERE access registration process will be completely electronic beginning in October 2009. Respondents will be able to register for ERE electronically through the agency's IRES authentication system (cleared under OMB No. 0960-0626).

Revisions to the Collection Instrument

Appointed representatives have the right to see a copy of SSA's file for the disability claimants they represent. Initially, SSA kept a paper disability file for each application to obtain disability benefits. When a representative wanted to see a copy, the representative could either visit an SSA field office and see it or request a paper copy. SSA now has electronic disability files and the process has changed somewhat. Instead of printing out a paper copy, the electronic file can be burned to a CD and provided to the representative upon request. In addition, the Hearing Office (HO) sends out CDs without a specific request at certain points because the HO feels changes occurred which the representative should see.

The CD burning process is both time-consuming and labor-intensive for HOs, since the majority of appeals involve representatives. The wait time for appointed representatives between the request for a copy and the receipt of the copy can be lengthy. To reduce this workload impact, SSA will allow third-party representatives to access and view their disability clients' electronic folders. This will manifest itself through the following technical changes:

- There will be Read-only views of documents contained in the Case Documents and the Exhibit List tabs. Users will have the ability to sort listed documents in the Case Document and Exhibit List tabs by various criteria;
- Page counts will be on display on the view of the Case Documents and Exhibit List tabs;
- Users can download all or selected documents from either the Case Documents or Exhibit List tabs;
- The Download format allows for storage to CDs, flash drives, hard drives, etc.;

- A notification/acknowledgement statement regarding Personally Identifiable Information is displayed to Appointed Representatives when requesting access;

After users request the ability to download documents from their clients' folders, the following occurs:

- The system sends an email notification to the user when the download is available. The download will be available within 48 hours. The email will provide instructions on downloading the documents.
- The user has the ability to download a requested document up to seven days after receiving the email notification or up to 24 hours after initiating the document download, whichever comes first.

During the test period, we discovered the presentation of these documents online makes them available to the representatives much faster when compared to the current process of request and response that relies on the mail. It eliminates the burden on the HO's of responding to the requests and greatly reduces the request and wait time for the appointed representatives.

We expect to implement this initiative beginning in October 2009, when the appropriate electronic authentication, authorization, and security processes should be available.

The 2006/2007 supporting for this Information Clearance Request indicated that ERE would provide a means for not only the representative, but for other third parties, such as vocational or medical experts, to view the claimant's file as well. We were anticipating that this functionality would be included in ERE, but it has not. During the planning and analysis stage, we realized that it was too complex to provide access for both groups at the same time and SSA decided to start with appointed representatives. When we implement the new software, this will be the first time that anyone other than the nine pilot-appointed representatives, are using ERE to access electronic files. The software is for appointed representatives only, and we will check to make sure that the representative requesting access is the appointed representative. SSA still plans to provide access to vocational and medical experts at some point in the future. The earliest timeframe to implement vocational and medical expert access is possibly sometime in 2011.

We posted the screen shots for this collection in ROCIS ("IC" section). Note that initial login is accomplished through an authentication method cleared in a separate OMB collection (IRES; OMB No. 0960-0626), and the link to the Paperwork Reduction Act and Privacy Act statements is on those screens. Copies of those screens are also in the IC section.