

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A FOR  
GENERIC CLEARANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS**

**COMPREHENSIVE CLEARANCE FOR JUNE 2009 THROUGH JUNE 2012**

**OMB No. 0960-0526**

**A. Justification**

**1. Explain the Circumstances That Make The Information Collection Necessary and Any Supporting Legal/Administrative Requirements.**

As part of its efforts to offer the highest possible quality of service to the public, the Social Security Administration (SSA) conducts multiple customer satisfaction surveys each year. In accordance with the guidelines established by *Executive Order (E.O.) 12862*, the agency has prepared a plan detailing the customer satisfaction surveys it plans to conduct for the next 3 years.

This Supporting Statement and its attachments present SSA's plan of customer satisfaction assessment activities for June 2009 through June 2012. These assessments, also referred to in this document as "generic clearances," include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

**2. How, By Whom, And For What Purpose We Will Use the Information We Collect.**

SSA will conduct these customer satisfaction assessment with members of the public who 1) are recipients of Social Security benefits, 2) have used SSA products or services, or 3) are potential future users of SSA products, programs, or services. We will collect customer service information through various methods, including phone surveys, mail surveys, online surveys, focus groups, usability testing sessions, comment cards, hybrid forms of these methods.

We plan to use these methods to: 1) assess customer satisfaction with existing SSA services, programs, and products; 2) determine the types of services SSA beneficiaries, recipients, claimants, employers, and members of the general public might want from the agency; and 3) determine public satisfaction levels with proposed new programs or services. Ultimately, these generic clearance activities may lead to SSA policy changes that will enable us to offer the public better customer service.

For a comprehensive list of our planned generic clearances for the three-year period covered by this clearance request, please see the file entitled "Listing of Proposed GC Collections." This file is posted in the "Manage ICR Documents" page in ROCIS.

**3. Describe the Use of Information Technology In This Collection.**

In accordance with the spirit of the Government Paperwork Elimination Act program, SSA uses advanced information technology methods to conduct generic clearances whenever possible. These methods include using Internet surveys, conducting telephone surveys with

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computer-assisted interviewing software, and analyzing focus group results with software programs. Because we have not determined exactly which generic clearances will use advanced information technology, we cannot say what percentage of the total we will conduct electronically.

**4. Describe Efforts to Identify Duplication.**

The nature of the information we are collecting and the manner in which we are collecting it preclude duplication. SSA does not use another instrument to collect similar data.

**5. Describe the Impact of the Collection on Small Business/Entities.**

This collection does not affect small businesses or other small entities.

**6. Describe the Impact if SSA Did Not Conduct the Information Collection, and Any Obstacles to Burden Reduction.**

If SSA did not conduct the information collection, we would have no means of assessing customer satisfaction with existing and proposed programs, services, and products. Thus, the agency would lose a valuable means of obtaining information that can help us better serve the public. In addition, we would be in violation of *E.O. 12862*. Since we only conduct individual generic clearances to examine a specific issue, we cannot collect the information less frequently.

There are no technical or legal obstacles to burden reduction.

**7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Way the Collection is Conducted.**

There are no special circumstances that would cause us to collect this information in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5.

**8. Federal Register Notices/Public Comment.**

SSA published the 60-day advance Federal Register Notice on March 23, 2009 at 74 FR 12170, and we received no public comments. We published the 30-day Federal Register Notice on May 20, 2009, at 74 FR 23764. If we receive any public comments in response to the 30-day Notice, we will forward them to OMB.

We did not consult with the public in the development or maintenance of these collections.

**9. Payment or Gift to the Respondents.**

Respondents for activities conducted in the laboratory (that is, in-depth interviews, usability testing, and focus groups) under this clearance will receive a small stipend. This practice has proven necessary and effective in recruiting subjects to participate in this small-scale research, and is also employed by the other Federal cognitive laboratories. The incentive for participation in a one-on-one interview or usability session is \$40, and for participation in a focus group is \$50-\$75. SSA may provide smaller incentives than these amounts at its discretion; however, SSA will justify to OMB any requests for larger amounts. Respondents for satisfaction surveys will not receive payment for participation. We will provide specific information in each individual survey/focus group request.

**10. Assurances of Confidentiality.**

SSA protects and holds confidential the information it will be collecting in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 1306, 20 CFR 401 and 402, 5 U.S.C. 552 (Freedom of Information Act), 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), and OMB Circular No. A-130.

**11. Justification for Questions of a Sensitive Nature.**

None of our generic clearances will contain any questions of a sensitive nature.

**12. Estimates for Burden Hours for the Information Collection.**

Below is a chart listing the total number of respondents and the number of burden hours for each year in the collection.

<b>GC PLAN YEAR</b>	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>TOTAL HOURS (FOR ALL FIVE CATEGORIES)</b>
Year 1 (June 2009 through May 2010)	1,400,001	125,000
Year 2 (June 2010 through May 2011)	1,400,351	125,058
Year 3 (June 2011 through June 2012)	1,400,001	125,000
<b>3-YEAR TOTAL</b>	<b>4,200,353 respondents</b>	<b>375,058 hours</b>

The total burden of 375,058 hours represents burden hours, and we did not calculate a separate cost burden. For a complete listing of each proposed generic clearance activity and its projected burden, see the spreadsheet entitled “Categorization of GC activities w totals,” posted in the “Mange ICR Documents” page of ROCIS.

**NOTE:** Please note that due to a calculation error, we mistakenly reported the total yearly burden in both Federal Register Notices as 369,058 hours. The chart above reflects the correct yearly and total figures.

**13. Cost To Respondents.**

There is no known cost burden to the respondents.

**14. Cost To The Federal Government.**

Below are the annual and triennial costs to the Federal Government for these generic clearance activities.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Cost to the Federal Government</b>
Year 1	\$1,041,054
Year 2	\$1,041,410
Year 3	\$1,041,054
<b>3-YEAR TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,123,518</b>

The total cost to the Federal government for conducting these generic clearances is \$2,907,728, which represents the costs for conducting focus groups, payment to contractors, payment to respondents, and printing/distributing/ mailing survey materials. For a complete listing of the cost of each generic clearance activity, see the spreadsheet entitled “Categorization of GC activities w totals,” posted in the “Manage ICR Documents” page in ROCIS.

**15. Change To Public Reporting Burden From Date of Last Clearance.**

The number of respondents and burden hours increased for this collection because we are planning to conduct more generic clearance activities in the next three years.

**16. Publication of the Results.**

We may publish reports for some of the generic clearance activities we will conduct. However, these are internal-use reports; we will only disseminate them to SSA policy and management officials.

**17. Display of the OMB Expiration Date on the Collection Instruments.**

SSA will display the OMB expiration date on most of its generic clearance customer satisfaction surveys, which are primarily one-time surveys. However, some activities we conduct under the generic clearance authority are ongoing forms, which have no defined expiration date. Examples of these types of collections are the Comment Cards. For these types of collections, OMB exempted SSA from the requirement of printing the OMB expiration date on its forms/surveys.

**18. Certification Requirements.**

SSA is not requesting an exception to the certification requirements at 5 CFR 1320.9 and related provisions at 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3).