

## **DOCUMENTATION FOR THE GENERIC CLEARANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS**

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Service Channeling Guide Individual Interviews, Online Focus Groups and In-Person Focus Groups

**SSA SUB-NUMBER:** B-02

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:**

**Background:**

In April 2009, President Obama announced the SAVE award initiative inviting Federal employees nationwide to submit suggestions to the White House on ways Federal agencies could save money. An SSA employee from Alabama, Christie Dickson, was one of the finalists for the President's SAVE Award. Ms. Dixon's suggestion was to increase efficiency by adding an appointment-scheduling tool to the agency website so that members of the public can schedule appointments online.

In December, the White House Chief Information Officer, Vivek Kundra, charged SSA with implementing a more comprehensive version of Ms. Dickson's suggestion focusing on online service delivery. The following is an excerpt from that charge:

"I am asking the agency to develop an online process that will guide the user through a series of questions, soliciting the necessary information only once, and directing the person to the most appropriate service delivery method for his or her situation. That could be a telephone call or an online response. But if the agency determines that your inquiry requires an appointment with a field office, you will be able to schedule that appointment online. I have asked the Social Security Administration to provide a detailed plan for this citizen-centric online process within 90 days and to deliver on this promise by the end of 2010."

Additionally, OMB issued a memorandum on December 21, 2009, requiring all agencies to submit a written plan for implementing initiatives that expand citizens' access to services through the Internet. The suggestion from Ms. Dickson will be the first of those required initiatives.

Before designing the online process mandated by the White House, we would like to conduct a series of interviews and focus groups, both on-line and in person, with the target audience – beneficiaries, citizens and end users. We are clearing these activities in this generic clearance customer satisfaction survey submission. To meet the timeframe required by the White House and to fulfill the spirit of President Obama's Open Government initiative, we will need to begin conducting these surveys as soon as possible.

## **Description:**

To better understand how to offer a range of online services and ultimately increase SSA web service usage, SSA would like to obtain the public's opinion of our Service Channeling Guide. This Guide is an online navigational tool designed to help users locate online services and information quickly and easily. SSA will use the knowledge gained in this research to analyze the service we provide online, how people approach our online services, and to help us ensure our online services meet the public's needs as effectively or better than our in-office and telephone services.

In particular, we wish to:

- Determine if potential users understand the purpose of the Service Channeling Guide;
- Determine the usefulness and efficiency of this service;
- Evaluate how user-friendly the proposed Service Channeling Guide is for the SSA website visitors. What features are desirable? What features are not?
- Determine the range of website visitors that would likely use this service (i.e. younger, near retirement age, beneficiaries); Will persons visiting the Social Security website use the Service Channeling Guide? Will they use the Guide rather than call or visit the Social Security office?
- Obtain recommendations on how to present and format the Service Channeling Guide; and,
- Obtain recommendations on any alternative/additional designs.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:**

We have designed the research to obtain the public's reaction to the prototype screens of the Service Channeling Guide. Our contractors will conduct individual interviews, online focus groups and in-person focus groups in two locations—Atlanta, Georgia and Columbus, Ohio. Participants will be members of the public and SSA beneficiaries, ages 25-65+.

- Six In-Person Focus Groups (3 at each location with up to 10 participants in each group (by age segmentation).
- Three Online Focus Groups with up to 6-8 participants in each group conducted from the contractor's headquarters with participants nationwide; one group from each age segment.
- 16 Individual Interviews (IDIs) in Atlanta, Georgia, and Baltimore/Washington. Two IDIs for each age segment (i.e., (2) 25-49, (2) 50-64, (2) 65+), and ten IDIs with targeted users (i.e., (2) 18-24 year olds, (2) representative payees, (2) Supplemental Security Income recipients, (2) disability insurance recipients, (2) appointed representatives)

**IF FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE A PAYMENT, INDICATE AMOUNT:**

We will not compensate respondents.

**USE OF SURVEY RESULTS:** SSA will use the results of this study to evaluate and modify the Service Channeling Guide. Ultimately, these results will assist SSA in obtaining feedback from potential and past website visitors, SSA beneficiaries, and the public on the Service Channeling Guide and provide insight in helping agency decision-makers build and increase Internet usage.

**BURDEN HOUR COMPUTATION** (*Number of responses (X) estimated response time (/60) = annual burden hours*):

Number of Responses: 100

Estimated Response Time: 60 minutes

Annual Burden Hours: 100

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