

Supporting Statement for Travel Expense Reimbursement
20 CFR 404.999(d) and 416.1499
OMB Control No. 0960-0434

1. Introduction/Authoring Laws and Regulations

Sections 201(j), 1631(h) and 1817(i) of the Social Security Act, establish travel reimbursement by Federal and state agencies for claimant travel incidental to medical examinations, and to parties, their representatives, and all reasonably necessary witnesses for travel exceeding 75 miles to attend medical examinations, reconsideration interviews, and proceedings before an administrative law judge. Regulations require claimants to submit proof of travel costs in order for SSA to reimburse them (20 CFR 404.999 (d) and 416.1499 of the Code of Federal Regulations).

2. Description of Collection

Reimbursement procedures require the claimant to provide (1) a list of expenses incurred, and (2) receipts of such expenses. Federal and state personnel review the listings and receipts to verify the reimbursable amount to the requestor. The respondents are claimants for Title II benefits and Title XVI payments, their representatives and witnesses.

3. Use of Information Technology to Collect the Information

SSA did not create an electronic version for Travel Expense Reimbursement under the agency's Government Paperwork Elimination Act plan because there is no form associated with the collection. Because the respondents are required to submit original receipts for the travel expenses, we are not able to make this collection available electronically at this time.

4. Why We Cannot Use Duplicate Information

The nature of the information SSA is collecting and the manner in which we are collecting it preclude duplication. While SSA collects similar information on the SSA-104 (OMB #0960-0752) through these regulations, we use the SSA-104 only in specific cases pertaining to Consultative Examinations. Use of the SSA-104 is voluntary (claimants may still submit their requests as stated in these regulations and not through use of a form). Also, the SSA-104 only covers travel reimbursement as stated in 20 CFR 404.999 and does not cover those regulations at 20 CFR 416.1499. Because we are not able to use the SSA-104 for those claimants who are traveling to a hearing, we still require the use of this collection.

5. Minimizing Burden on Small Respondents

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

6. Consequence of Not Collecting Information or Collecting it Less Frequently

If SSA were to collect this information less frequently, it could delay

reimbursement and result in financial hardship to the claimant. In advance payment cases, it would prevent the claimant from appearing at a medical examination or disability hearing, thus preventing adjudication of the claim. Since we are only collecting the information when necessary, we cannot collect it less frequently. There are no technical or legal obstacles that prevent burden reduction.

7. Special Circumstances

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

8. Solicitation of Public Comment and Other Consultations with the Public

SSA published the 60-day advance Federal Register Notice June 29, 2010 at 75 FR 37517 and we received no public comment. We published the 30-day Notice on August 26, 2010 at 75 FR 52578. If we receive any comments from the 30-day Notice, we will forward them to OMB. We have had no consultations with members of the public.

9. Payment or Gifts to Respondents

SSA provides no payment or gifts to the respondents

10. Assurances of Confidentiality

SSA protects and holds confidential the information we collect 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 A-130.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

This information collection does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimates of Public Reporting Burden

We estimate the average frequency of response as once per year. However, claimants may need to provide us with this information more than once in connection with a claim. We have considered this situation in estimating the total number of responses at 50,000 per year. Since each response takes approximately 10 minutes, we estimate the annual burden as 8,333 hours. The total burden reflects burden hours, and we did not calculate a separate cost burden.

13. Annual Cost to the Respondents (Other)

This collection does not impose a known cost burden to the respondents.

14. Annual Cost To Federal Government

The annual cost to the Federal Government is approximately \$302,000. We base this estimate on collecting and processing the information.

15. Program Changes or Adjustments to the Information Collection Request

There is no change to the public reporting burden.

16. Plans for Publication Information Collection Results

SSA will not publish the results of the information collection.

17. Displaying the OMB Approval Expiration Date

SSA is not requesting an exemption to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection since there is no form involved in this collection.

18. Exceptions to Certification Statement

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).

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

SSA does not use statistical methods for this information collection.