

DOCUMENTATION FOR THE GENERIC CLEARANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Frequently Asked Questions Web Pages and Alternative Designs Focus Group

SSA SUB-NUMBER: B-02

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY (*give purpose of activity, provide specific information; i.e., date(s) of survey, number of focus groups, locations, etc.*):

The Social Security Administration's (SSA) online Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) are a mission-critical online service. The FAQs help SSA constituents accomplish the task for which they are contacting SSA by providing information and instructions in the form of online answers. In fiscal year (FY) 2010, the public viewed or visited our FAQs Internet site more than 27 million times.

Our objective is to provide the public with an FAQ site that is easy to understand, navigate, and helps users quickly and efficiently find the information and services they are seeking. For this particular research project, we will elicit input from the public via focus groups. In particular, we wish to:

- Determine if a redesigned FAQ site improves the ease with which users are able to find information and services; and,
- Obtain recommendations for making the FAQ site easier to navigate and understand.

We are proposing to conduct three focus group sessions consisting of 20 individuals (per session), representative of a given population.

We will recruit the participants for the focus groups via an SSA-approved contractor. The participant selection criterion for this research is as follows:

- Ages 45-64 (this is, based on current SSA data) the age range for most of our online visitors;
- Individuals who are comfortable with using the Internet;
- Approximately one-half who have visited SSA's website; and one-half who have not.
- Non SSA-employees or others with some official connection to SSA (e.g., state Disability Determination Service employees, contractors, family members of such individuals, etc.); and,
- A representative mix in terms of race, gender, income and education.

We will conduct a series of usability sessions to evaluate the current design of the FAQ home page and the content and structure of the answers pages. The initial session will provide feedback on the current FAQ pages. Those sessions will consist of twenty participants (ten current SSA customers and ten non-SSA users). The initial usability session will seek to identify improvement opportunities in the current FAQ home and answer pages.

The usability sessions will be iterative in that we will use the initial qualitative feedback to create alternative designs (e.g., location of search option, topics or questions displayed, navigation stream, clarity of answers, etc.). We will use the alternative designs in the second and third rounds of usability testing (each round will consist of twenty participants, divided as indicated for the first session). The goal of the sessions will be to test alternative designs and make decisions regarding improvement of the FAQ pages and user experience.

The contractor will conduct the usability sessions in the Baltimore-

Washington DC vicinity to ensure that SSA observers can take part.

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

The contractor will pay each usability participant \$25.

USE OF SURVEY RESULTS:

As indicated above, the usability sessions will be iterative in nature. We will use the feedback used to create alternative designs (e.g., location of search option, topics or questions displayed, navigation stream, clarity of answers, etc.), which we will evaluate in the second and third rounds of user testing. The goal for the three sessions will be to test alternative designs and make decisions regarding improvement of the FAQ pages and user experience.

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

Number of Responses: 60.

Estimated Response Time: 90 minutes.

Annual Burden hours: 90 hours.

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON:

Debbie Larwood, 410-966-6135