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Evaluation of the Administration for Children and
Families Responsible Fatherhood, Marriage and
Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and
Reentering Fathers and Their Partners

OMB Supporting Statement: Part A
Renewal for OMB No 0990-0331

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning & Evaluation (ASPE)
United States Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

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Renewal Application Supporting Statement Part A
Evaluation of the Administration for Children and Families Responsible
Fatherhood, Marriage and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and
Reentering Fathers and Their Partners

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Background

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is requesting OMB approval on a revision to a previously approved data collection submission. There have been no changes in the questionnaire nor in the estimate of the amount of time for completion of each interview. There has been an adjustment in the burden level estimate because data collections for the previously approved waves of the survey has only been partially completed and a new wave of data collection for individuals participating in the data collection was approved and funded in

The data collection is for the study of Responsible Fatherhood, Marriage and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers and Their Partners. The previously approved data collection instruments will be used throughout the remainder of the study. These instruments are:

- Male Follow-up Survey Instruments (Appendix A)
- Female Follow-up Survey Instruments (Appendix B)
- Male and Female Informed Consent Forms (Appendix C)
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The purpose of the study is to evaluate grants designed to enhance partner and parenting relationships among incarcerated and reentering fathers, their partners and children. These grants were administered by the HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Family Assistance (OFA) under the authority of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA) (P.L. 109-171) from September 2006 to September 2011. The DRA amended Title IV, Section 403(a) (2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(2)) to authorize competitive grants for states; territories; Indian tribes; tribal organizations; and public and non-profit community entities, including faith-based organizations, to develop and implement projects that support any of the three authorized activity areas: Healthy Marriage, Responsible Parenting, and Economic Stability. ASPE has contracted with RTI International (RTI), and its subcontractors, to conduct the study.

Changes Since Original Clearance Package Submission

This application is for renewal of an existing study that has largely remained the same in terms of methods, instrumentation, and timeline since the original submission. However, several changes to the study are being requested in this renewal application:

- An additional wave of follow-up data collection at 34 months (see A2, p. 7)
- Increased incentives for certain groups of respondents (see A9, p. 11)
- Updated sample sizes and burden estimates for all waves of interviewing (see A12, p. 16)

A. JUSTIFICATION

A1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

ASPE is requesting OMB approval on a revision to a previously approved data collection submission. The Marriage and Family Strengthening Grants for Incarcerated Fathers and Their Partners (MFS-IP) will determine whether well-designed interventions can help couples in which at least one partner is incarcerated fulfill their aspirations for a strong relationship, and thus enhance the well-being of the entire family unit. In addition to supporting child wellbeing, research has shown that healthy relationships and family support may also be related to desistance from crime and more successful reentry into the community (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Visser & Travis, 2003; Sampson, Laub & Wimer, 2006).

The majority of men released from prison expect to live with their families, and most depend on their families for economic assistance, social support, and employment connections (Visser, La Vigne, & Travis, 2004). However, incarceration places a great deal of stress on family and intimate relationships. Couples are unable to engage in the day-to-day interactions and experiences that are necessary to sustain marital and other intimate relationships (Hairston, 2001). The risk of divorce is also very high among men going to prison; they attain the 50% divorce rate experienced by the general population in about one-third of the time. Separation, lack of intimacy, shame, anger, social stigma, and little understanding of the criminal justice system contribute to a high rate of marital dissolution (Hairston, 2001). Results from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study support these findings. Ever-incarcerated men were 43% less likely to marry and 42% less likely to cohabit compared with men who have never been incarcerated. Additionally, ever-incarcerated men were more likely to have separated from the mother of their child than never-incarcerated men (Western, 2004). These findings highlight the need for programs that teach important relationship-building skills and promote healthy marriages.

Incarceration affects the entire family, not only the partnered couple. Because of the record-breaking number of adults in prison, more children than ever are touched by the criminal justice system. Research reveals that there are nearly 3 million children in the U.S. with incarcerated parents (CCIP, 2001). Often, neither the children's custodial or imprisoned parents are prepared to address the unique needs of these children (Hairston, 1995; Martin, 2001). Some children do not know their parent is incarcerated because relatives or incarcerated parents do not want the children to know, while some parents do not want their children to visit them in prison because such contact would be too emotionally painful (Hairston, 2001). Thus, many fathers in prison never see their children. Barriers such as lack of play space, long waits, body frisks and intrusive searches, and crowded and uncomfortable visiting rooms limit the quality and quantity of time incarcerated adults can spend with their children (Travis, McBride, & Solomon, 2005). Moreover, children face adjustment issues upon the parent's release. The smooth transition of the reentering parent into the family unit is very important. In the context of relationships disrupted by incarceration, and potentially weak relationship skills, interparental conflict seems likely.

In order to provide effective institutional support for incarcerated and reentering fathers and their families, it is crucial to identify successful strategies for improving partner and parenting relationship outcomes in this population. The continued information collection described in this statement will allow ASPE and ACF to complete its evaluation of the programs currently funded

by ACF in this priority area, so that information on the relative effectiveness of these programs or program components may be used to guide the design of future initiatives in this area. It is expected that such initiatives can play a key role in reducing the burden of incarceration on the families of incarcerated and reentering men.

Section 7103 of the DRA of 2005 provides that the Secretary of HHS may use the funds authorized under the amendment to Section 403 (A)(2) of title IV-A of the Social Security Act for the purpose of conducting and supporting research and demonstration projects. The legal authority for ASPE's conduct of this study may be found in Section 301 of the Public Health Service Act (42 §USC 241) (see **Appendix D**).

A2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

Renewing OMB approval in order to allow completion of the MFS-IP evaluation will accomplish several objectives. An implementation study of all 13 grantees has already been completed which described the variety of programs and their corresponding grantee organizations on a number of dimensions including program history and context, type of grantee organization, target population, intervention strategies, program design, implementation fidelity; and identified alterations from the original design, challenges, facilitators, and lessons learned. The implementation study entailed the documentation of start-up activities and ongoing implementation of the MFS-IP initiative through a combination of site visits, informal telephone interviews, and review of existing program administrative data. The implementation study was customized for each site, based on unique site characteristics and local staff roles and responsibilities.

Completion of the impact study, which has been ongoing in five of the sites since 2008, will allow ASPE and ACF to (1) determine the impact of these diverse programs on outcomes such as marital stability, positive family interactions, family financial well-being, recidivism, and community connectedness and (2) identify the mediation mechanisms (or primary pathways) through which these programs achieve success. In addition to the baseline and 9- and 18-month interviews originally budgeted and approved by OMB, ASPE has obtained funding from ACF for a 34-month interview in the two highest-enrolling sites, which will allow the assessment of longer-term effects of program participation on the same key outcomes listed above, as more of the study sample has been released from prison. The primary source of data for the impact evaluation is a longitudinal study of approximately 2,000 incarcerated men and their partners (in which the male member of the couple is incarcerated at the beginning of the study) across the five sites. Half of the couples enrolled have received or are receiving marriage strengthening services through the MFS-IP grants, and half have received either an alternate treatment or the standard set of services available in the correctional institutions. Both members of each couple are interviewed at baseline, 9 months post baseline, 18 months post baseline, and 34 months post baseline (IN and OH sites only).

During the 36-month renewal period, we plan to complete all remaining male (155) and female (460) 9-month interviews, as well as all remaining male (808) and female (1005) 18-month interviews. A 34-month interview will be attempted with the 1388 male study participants and their partners who completed baseline interviews at the two highest-enrolling sites, RIDGE Project (OH) and IN DOC. Due to the rolling enrollment period for the study (which spanned approximately 34 months), respondents' follow-up interviews are triggered from their baseline

interview date. Continuing clearance is being requested for all instruments that will be used for the study renewal period, including male follow-up survey, and female follow-up survey. The 9- and 18-month follow-up instruments are almost identical in content but contain skip patterns tailored to respondent's circumstances during the most recent 9-month reference period. The 34-month instruments are identical to the 18-month instruments. All study materials currently in use have been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at RTI and continuing approval has been obtained each year (**Appendix E**). Certification has also been received by the Office of Human Research Protection (**Appendix F**). Approval from these bodies for the 34-month data collection will be obtained before any activity related to that wave of data collection is undertaken.

The data collection undertaken in this study will help to determine what types of fatherhood, marriage/relationship, and family strengthening programs work best for those involved in the criminal justice system; what does not work; and what effects these programs may have on fostering healthy, stable marriages and other intimate relationships, positive family interactions, and community connectedness over the short term (9 months post baseline), mid term (18 months post baseline), and long term (34 months post baseline). A better understanding of intervention research in the reentering population has great potential to generate insights that might result in more successful reentry of incarcerated individuals into the community and disrupt the intergenerational cycle that disproportionately reduces the life chances of low-income youth. Without the proposed data collection, HHS will not have evidence-based findings that can be used to develop or refine effective program strategies serving this population, nor be able to assess whether these programs are effective and efficient.

A3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

The study requires ongoing collaboration with each of the program sites to streamline the collection of information required for the evaluation. The MFS-IP surveys are administered via computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) to approximately 2000 incarcerated men and their partners across the five MFS-IP impact sites. The use of CAPI eases interview administration, ensures consistent administration, and maximizes data quality through the provision of built-in editing. Anonymity and confidentiality are easier to protect using a computerized instrument compared with using a paper instrument. The data stored on the laptops is encrypted and password protected. Moreover, the need for subsequent data entry is eliminated, which reduces the potential for human error.

A web-based control system has been designed to track survey data. This system allows RTI staff to monitor and record information regarding eligibility and participation rates, case and event information, and receipt of incentives. The advantages of using a web-based system for the survey data collection include the ability to access information from various locations, increased security as a result of login and identification requirements, and flexibility in terms of processing and reporting on the data.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

Few studies to date have examined the effectiveness of interventions to improve partner and parenting relationships among incarcerated and reentering fathers and their partners. Several studies employing nonexperimental pre- and posttest designs have suggested the possible effectiveness of prison-based education programs to improve parenting and partner relationships

(Hairston & Lockett, 1987; Carlson & Cervera, 1991; Bayse et al., 1991; Accordino et al., 1998). For example, Bayse, Allgood and Van Wyk's (1991) single group pre- and posttest evaluation found improved perceived family functioning and decreased narcissism among incarcerated men who participated in a family life education program. Accordino and Guerney (1998) found that incarcerated men and their partners who participated in a Relationship Enhancement curriculum reported positive perceptions of the program based on a one-time post-intervention evaluation.

Document and literature reviews were conducted, which confirmed that no scientifically rigorous evaluations of marriage and family-strengthening interventions with incarcerated fathers and their partners have been or are currently being conducted. A recent HHS report, *Research and Practice Symposium on Marriage and Incarceration* (Bauer, 2007) notes that very little is known about the effectiveness of marriage and family-strengthening programs with men being released from prison. Published reviews of the marriage strengthening literature concur with this finding. Larson (2004) described substantial gaps in the marriage education literature generally, including a lack of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of marriage strengthening with racial and ethnic minorities and working-class couples, as well as a dearth of experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations of marriage strengthening programs and a lack of understanding about which components of marriage strengthening programs produce the most change in relationship quality and stability. Bowling et al. (2005) found that the impact of cultural factors on marriage education has not been adequately evaluated. Markman et al. (2005) noted that studies of the effectiveness of marriage education programs with several types of couples were lacking, including those with "(a) very low income and high economic stress, (b) lower education levels, (c) ambiguous commitment between partners, including about a future and exclusivity, (d) a child out of wedlock, and (e) a male partner with serious problems, such as substance abuse, domestic violence, poor job history/opportunities, or a criminal history" (p. 127). In sum, there is little available information about marriage and family-strengthening efforts for incarcerated individuals and their partners.

Attendance at professional conferences confirmed that there are no other systematic research efforts underway on the effects of marriage and family strengthening activities for incarcerated and reentering men and their families. Conference attended prior to initiation of this data collection include: Research and Practice Symposium on Marriage and Incarceration (Washington, DC, 2006), the National Institute of Justice Conference (Washington, DC, 2006, 2007), the American Society of Criminology Conference (Atlanta, GA, 2007; Los Angeles, CA, 2006), the International Family Violence and Child Victimization Conference (Portsmouth, NH, 2006, 2007), the African American Healthy Marriage Initiative "Connecting Marriage Research to Practice" Conference (Chapel Hill, NC, 2007), and the 2006 meeting of the American Correctional Health Services Association (Research Triangle Park, NC).

A5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

No small businesses or other small entities will be involved in the data collection.

A6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

This request is for continued follow-up data collection at 9, 18 months and a new round of data collection in the two highest-enrolling sites (IN and OH) at 34 months. Failure to collect follow-up survey data on study participants would have serious consequences for the study, because the study aims to assess the effects of MFS-IP participation over time. It is essential to determine

whether any impact achieved by the program extended for a reasonable period of time. Other current and well-regarded evaluations in both the corrections/reentry field and marriage/family field employ multiple follow-up periods and time points occurring well beyond program participation, in order to rigorously evaluate the impact of programming on outcomes. For example, the National Institute of Justice funded *Multi-Site Evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI)*, involves in-person data collection among study participants at approximately one month prior to release and then again at three, nine, and 15 months after release, and the collection of administrative data at 24 months after release.

In the marriage and family field, the evaluations of the *Community Healthy Marriage Initiative*, *Building Strong Families*, and *Supporting Healthy Marriage* all involve data collection for a three year follow-up period. In order to ensure the credibility of the results generated by the evaluation and provide scientifically-grounded guidance to the field on what type of marriage and family strengthening programming is most effective, longitudinal information collection at multiple time points (baseline and 9, 18 and 34 months post baseline) is necessary. By including multiple data collection periods in the impact study, the evaluation will be able to draw definitive conclusions about the sustainability of any positive effects achieved by the MFS-IP programs.

This request is for renewal of a one-time, serial information collection.

A7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR §1320.5

There are no special circumstances involved with this data collection.

A8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

A.8.1 Public Comment

A 60-day notice to solicit public comments was published in the Federal Register on August 19, 2011 (Volume 76, Number 161, page 51980). No comments were received during this period. A prior 60-day notice on December 3, 2007 (Volume 72, Number 231, page 67940) also yielded no comments.

A.8.2 Consultation with Experts

Consultations regarding the evaluation approach were held with several scholars in the areas of incarceration and reentry, marriage and family strengthening, and evaluation design: Christy Visser, PhD, at the University of Delaware; Jeff Smith, PhD, at the University of Michigan; Creasia Finney Hairston, PhD, at the University of Illinois at Chicago; Randal Day, PhD, at Brigham Young University; Felix Elwert, PhD, at the University of Wisconsin, Madison; David Cordray, PhD, at Vanderbilt University; John Laub, PhD, at the University of Maryland; and William Fals-Stewart, PhD, at the University of Rochester (see **Appendix G**). In addition to consultations via phone regarding study design, an in-person study design panel was held, at which experts provided feedback on the following aspects of the study approach:

- Site-specific study design, including strategies for measuring the counterfactual at each site
- Sample, enrollment, power and potential for pooling
- Strategies for handling partner instability over time
- Selection of a focal child for detailed parent report

- Analytic approach

Based on input from the experts who were consulted, ASPE 1) confirmed the proposed study designs at each site, 2) determined that the original male and female members of each couple would be followed throughout the study period regardless of changes in relationship status, and 3) determined the criteria to be used to select a focal child.

Consultations regarding instrumentation were held with seven scholars in the areas of incarceration and reentry and marriage and family strengthening: Christy Visser, PhD, at the University of Delaware; Kristin Moore, PhD, at Child Trends; Jacinta Bronte-Tinkew, PhD, at Child Trends; Creasia Finney Hairston, PhD, at the University of Illinois at Chicago; Randal Day, PhD, at Brigham Young University; Howard Markman, PhD, at the University of Denver; and John Laub, PhD, at the University of Maryland (see **Appendix G**). Based on their input, new measures of mental health, affect, learning ability, family history, relationship quality, parental approval of the relationship, communication skills, and child well-being were added; reference periods were simplified; and the instruments were restructured chronologically to aid in respondent recall.

A9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

Respondents will be paid for completing each survey. The OMB approved compensation schedule currently in use is as follows:

- Male interviews (all waves): \$35 (only available for non-incarcerated respondents or respondents incarcerated in a facility that allows compensation)
- Female interviews (all waves): \$40 (only available for non-incarcerated respondents or respondents incarcerated in a facility that allows compensation)
- Bonus for calling the 1-800 number upon receipt of the lead letter: \$5 (only available for non-incarcerated respondents)
- Bonus for completing the three originally planned interviews (baseline, 9 month, and 18 months): \$25 (only available for non-incarcerated respondents or respondents incarcerated in a facility that allows compensation)

The cash incentive for female respondents was set at \$40, \$5 higher than for male respondents. Given the different obstacles to participation faced by male and female respondents (for example, child care and other obligations of community-based respondents), and the fact that males receive a more intensive intervention than females, provision of a higher incentive for female respondents has been important in order to ensure comparable response rates for both members of study couples.

Based on response rate monitoring for the 18-month follow-up interviews, we are now seeking approval to increase compensation for all 18-month follow-up interviews to \$75. These proposed changes in compensation have been approved by RTI's Institutional Review Board, which holds a Federalwide assurance.

For the 34-month follow-up interviews, we are seeking approval to compensate respondents \$75 as well.

Compensation for respondents who are incarcerated in a state prison at the time that they complete a survey was negotiated with each state department of corrections at the inception of the study, and none of the state departments of corrections in any of the five impact sites approved provision of any incentive for respondents (although MN allowed the provision of an incentive payment to the incarcerated respondent's community designee). Compensation for respondents who are incarcerated in a county jail at the time that they complete a survey is negotiated with each facility administrator, with some facilities allowing a money order to be deposited in the inmate's account and others prohibiting compensation altogether. Respondents living in the community, including female partners and released male partners, are paid in cash. Payment is rendered to all respondents who make a good faith attempt to complete the interview, even if they do not finish the interview or refuse a significant number of questions.

Offering cash incentives to respondents provides significant advantages to the study, including increased response rates; reduced potential bias; and reduced data collection costs. The use of incentives for the MFS-IP survey is supported by the final report of the Symposium on Providing Incentives to Survey Respondents (1992) that was sponsored jointly by OMB and the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics. The report recommended that OMB "seriously consider the use of incentives" for surveys that:

- targeted difficult respondent populations, including surveys that have "small subpopulations of interest";
- surveys where response is affected by relatives who serve as gatekeepers to respondent access;
- surveys for which participation may incur out-of-pocket costs, such as babysitting, to the respondent; and
- surveys that are part of longitudinal panels.

The MFS-IP survey meets all of these guidelines: incarcerated individuals and their partners are a difficult population; the incarcerated individual serves as a gatekeeper for access to the partner; the partners are mostly custodial mothers who may incur out-of-pocket costs for care of children; and longitudinal data collection is planned.

The provision of a cash incentive for non-incarcerated respondents will make it convenient for a larger number of low-income sample members to make time for the interview during the defined data collection period, as opposed to using the time to take care of chores or generate income. This is confirmed by past research that showed that incentives are more effective for low-income households (Singer, 2002), although the evidence is mixed. Furthermore, incentives may counteract resistance among some respondents to participate in follow-up waves of the survey.

In addition to improving response rates, payment of incentives will reduce the cost of the survey to the government. The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), for example, attributed a net savings of \$9 per interview and an increase in the weighted overall response rate from 68% to 71% for the 2002 survey when the use of a \$30 incentive was approved by OMB. The cost of the MFS-IP study incorporates savings associated with reduced field travel costs and interviewer time required for repeated attempts at contact and refusal conversion due to the payment of incentive. As Warriner et al. (1996) noted, "At issue is not only the expense of the cash outlay for incentives but their effect on other fieldwork costs as well. The costs of follow-

ups...means that some of the costs of incentives may be underwritten if an early response negates the need for further reminders.”

In summary, the project’s payment schedule represents appropriate compensation for respondent burden associated with completing the interview during the data collection period. This payment schedule will also ensure the collection of useful, cost-effective, and policy-relevant data for the MFS-IP evaluation.

A10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

Before the interview, each respondent is asked to sign a consent form (**Appendix C**) that describes confidentiality protections at the beginning of the interview. As part of the informed consent process, each prospective study participant receives information on the purpose of the survey, the expected length of time to complete the survey, the confidentiality of the information provided, and a name and telephone number at the contractor managing the survey for respondents to contact with any questions or concerns (separate numbers are provided for questions about the study and for rights of study participants).

Additionally, at the beginning of each interview all respondents are told that: (1) their participation in the interview is voluntary; (2) there will be no penalties if they decide not to participate; (3) the information they provide will be combined with other participants’ answers and used only for the study; and (4) their names will never be used in reporting the results. The records produced in the study are not covered by the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), so participants are not promised complete confidentiality of their records. The consent forms describe the exceptions to the promise of confidentiality (“We may need to inform the appropriate authorities according to state and local law if you tell me that you are in immediate danger or that you intend to harm yourself or someone else or if I learn that a child is being abused or neglected or at risk for being abused or neglected.”) The consent forms also describe the use of a study identification number in place of a name.

Additionally, RTI, the contractor for this study, employs the following safeguards:

- Project staff responsible for the data collection are fully informed of policies and procedures regarding confidentiality of interview and records data. They have been trained to remind interview respondents of these procedures when they are administering these protocols.
- All employees have signed a confidentiality pledge that emphasizes the importance of confidentiality and describes their obligations. Releasing information that is confidential is considered a breach of trust and as such, employees may be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.
- Identifying information for the purpose of locating respondents is maintained on separate forms (called contact sheets), which are linked to respondents by a sample identification number. Physical safeguarding and shipping procedures for these paper forms, and protocols for training interviewers in the use of these procedures, have also been developed. Access to the file linking sample identification numbers with the respondents’ identification and contact information is limited to a small number of individuals who have a need to know this information. These identification numbers will not be released outside RTI.

- Access to sample selection data with personal identifying information is limited to those directly responsible for providing the sample and key staff who will be working with the sampling frame.
- Access to computer files and hard-copy documents (such as contact sheets and locating packets) is strictly limited. Physical precautions include the use of PCs with password protection, secure areas, locked files and cabinets, and shredding of discarded materials.

The survey data collection procedures also minimize the risk of unauthorized disclosure of confidential data. The survey data are collected via laptop. Respondents are identified in the laptop's case management system by the data collection case ID number and first and last name (in order to ensure that when field interviewers are pulling up the case identification number to conduct the interview, there is enough information to make sure they are pulling up the right case). Access to both the individual laptops and the case management system on the laptops is password protected at each level. Each laptop hard drive will be encrypted using PointSec software. If a laptop is lost or stolen, data exposure will not occur unless the strong PointSec password is also compromised. Files with survey data are identified only by the data collection case ID number (but contain other identifying information gathered in the interview, such as date of birth and locating information).

For the central collection and organization of survey data, a master Blaise database is maintained on the project share. Incoming data is stored on the public file transfer protocol (FTP) server in an encrypted format and then moved, several times a day, inside a firewall to a private database on the project share for permanent storage. Access to this data is limited to in-house project staff and controlled by Windows authentication and a security group (LAN manager group). Data files and information stored on file servers will be protected and maintained as long as the project needs access. Following termination of the project, or following the end of the useful life of the information, files will be compressed, encrypted and archived to permanent media such as compact disk (CD) or digital video disk (DVD) for storage. CD and DVD archives will be maintained and stored in locked filing cabinets in the offices of project staff as long as needed, with destruction at the end of the study at the request of ASPE. All data will be treated as confidential. All personally identifiable information will be stripped from the file if a public-use data file is prepared.

Data with personal identifiers may be released to HHS agencies for purposes of data matching to obtain additional outcomes measures for MFS-IP study participants. If such data is released, HHS will ensure that a System of Records is in place covering individually-identified data collected for this study. This data will be transmitted securely, and will not be used for any purposes other than the aims of this study. At the conclusion of the research, these data will be destroyed, and no identifying information will be made available in reports or other study publications.

Initial and ongoing approval for these data collection procedures has been obtained from an Institutional Review Board through RTI in Durham, NC (**Appendix E**), and by the HHS Office for Human Research Protections (**Appendix F**).

A11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The aims of this study necessitate collecting data regarding mental health, substance abuse, and involvement with the criminal justice system, as well as domestic violence and other sensitive relationship experiences. This collection requires the inclusion of potentially sensitive questions regarding these topics in the male and female survey instruments (**Appendices A, B**). Such information is critical in order to assess the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve partner and parenting relationships and the mechanisms by which those effects, if any, occur. The following question areas, which are included in all four instruments, may be considered sensitive (page numbers given are from the male follow-up instrument, **Appendix A**):

- Intimate Partner Violence. The questions about domestic violence (see Intimate Partner Violence Domain, p. 155) and infidelity (see Partner Relationship Quality Domain, p. 142, p. 157, p. 170) are indicators of marriage quality and stability, which are key outcome variables for the evaluation.
- Substance Use and Mental Health. The questions about substance use (see Substance Abuse Domain, p. 137, p. 152) and mental health (see Physical and Mental Health Domain, p. 95) will provide contextual and explanatory information about MFS-IP impacts.
- Criminal Activity and Criminal Justice Involvement. The questions about criminal activity and involvement with the criminal justice system (see Criminal Behavior Domain, p. 130, p. 179) will also provide contextual and explanatory information about MFS-IP impacts.
- Quality of Couple Relationship. Many of the relationship measures (see Partner Relationship Quality Domain, p. 142, p. 157, p. 170) were used in the baseline survey for the Evaluation of the Community Healthy Marriage Initiative (OMB #0970-0322).
- SSN and Other Identifying Information. Respondent locating information, including social security numbers (SSNs) (see Locator Information Domain, p. 187), will be collected at follow-up. Because respondents will be followed up longitudinally, it is imperative that respondents can be found at a later date. SSNs will be necessary for searching electronic databases to learn the respondents' locations, as well as to match to existing site-generated administrative data. Birth dates (collected at baseline only) will confirm that the correct respondent has been located.

During the consent process, potential respondents are informed of the topic areas of the interview and that some of the questions may make them feel uncomfortable or distressed. They are also told that they can refuse to answer any of the questions by asking the interviewer to skip an item or items. The interviewers will be trained to identify signs of distress by listening to verbal and non-verbal indicators (e.g., shakiness in the voice, changes in volume, crying, etc.). If interviewers suspect that the respondent may be in distress or that the respondent's safety will be compromised, interviewers will give the respondent the option to stop the interview or continue it at a later date. If the respondent's level of distress persists or escalates, the interviewer will be prepared to follow the distressed respondent protocols developed for the study.

Several procedures are in place to minimize the risk of a breach of confidentiality during the interview. First, all interviews will be conducted in a private setting so that answers will not be overheard. For all interviews, privacy will be established (and documented via a series of questions built into the instrument) to ensure the confidentiality of the interview. The interviewers will be trained on what constitutes an acceptable setting for the interview and how to handle any disruptions or violations of the privacy that has been established. Community-

based interviews may be conducted in the respondent’s home or another private setting such as a study room in a local library. An interview with one member of the couple will not be conducted with the other member of the couple present in the home. No interviews will be allowed in any criminal justice settings except jails or prisons. Whether interviewing in a community or facility setting, before beginning the interview, the instrument will prompt the interviewer to check if they are out of earshot of other people including people who may be in an adjacent room or outside. The interviewer must be seated in such a way that no one can walk behind him or her to view the computer screen and must be completely confident that the respondent’s answers cannot be overheard or ascertained by someone looking through a window.

Second, for all interviews other than those conducted inside New York State Department of Correctional Services correctional facilities (which have to be conducted using a paper and pencil instrument as mandated by the Department), Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (ACASI) is used for the particularly sensitive portions of the interview including questions pertaining to domestic violence, substance use, and other illegal behaviors. Respondents use headphones to hear a voice recording of the questions while reading along on the screen and will enter their own answers into the computer. This methodology has proven to be a highly successful means of gathering sensitive information.

Finally, interviewer training has strongly emphasized the privacy and confidentiality aspects of the study and all project staff (including interviewers) have been required to sign a pledge of confidentiality.

A12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

Nine- and eighteen-month follow-up interviews will be attempted with all remaining participants who completed a baseline interview in any of the five sites, including 1465 men and 963 women. The burden associated with completing these has been annualized over the 36-month renewal period in the table below. A 34-month interview will be attempted with the 1388 male study participants and their partners who completed baseline interviews at the two highest-enrolling sites, RIDGE Project (OH) and IN DOC. We assume that female study participants will be primarily low income. Therefore, the wage estimate for female participants is based on an annual income of \$34,340, which is 200% of the 2008 federal poverty level for a three-person household; this translates to an hourly rate of \$17.17. The wage estimate for male participants at follow-up assumes that participants will have been released from prison and earning, on average, the federal minimum wage of \$5.85 per hour. *Exhibit 1* shows data collection burden annualized across the 36-month renewal period.

Exhibit 1. Annual Burden Estimates

Forms	Annualized Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden (in hours) per Response	Total Annualized Burden	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annualized Hourly Cost
MFS-IP Follow-up Survey—Male	321	1	1.5	481.5	\$5.85	\$2816.78

(9/18 month) Attachment A						
MFS-IP Follow-up Survey— Female (9/18 month) Attachment B	489	1	1.5	733.5	\$17.17	\$12594.20
MFS-IP Follow-up Survey-Male (34 month) Attachment A	463	1	1.5	694.5	\$5.85	\$4062.83
MFS-IP Follow-up Survey— Female (34 month) Attachment B	463	1	1.5	694.5	\$17.17	\$11924.57
Totals				2604		\$31398.38

A13. Estimates of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no other costs to respondents.

A14. Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

The total cost to the federal government for the impact study is estimated to be \$3,123,950.50 (*Exhibit 2*) over the 3-year renewal period, or \$1,041,316.83 annualized. Of the total costs, \$2,997,388.00 is for developing and administering the follow-up surveys, including survey design, data collection, analysis, reporting and necessary meetings. Approximately \$126,562.50 is for federal oversight provided by ASPE. Costs below are annualized over 3 years, which includes the entire renewal period.

Exhibit 2. Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

Costs Directly Related to Conducting Project	\$2,997,388.00
Project Oversight by Federal Government	\$126,562.50
Total Costs	\$3,123,950.50
Total Annualized Costs	\$1,041,316.83

A15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments

There have been no changes in the questionnaire nor in the estimate of the amount of time for completion of each interview. There has been an adjustment in the burden level estimate because we are in a different stage of the data collection process. Data collection is completed for the baseline survey, almost completed for the nine month survey, and is about halfway completed for the 18 month survey. The 34 month survey, using the same instrument, had been added. At the time of the original submission in 2008, the 34 month wave of data collection was planned but not yet funded. The slight change in the number of respondents reflects the current

stage of data collection based on the number of baseline interviews collected, which could only be estimated in the 2008 submission.

A16. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

A.16.1 Plans for Tabulation

The study will employ analytic approaches that combine data gathered from individuals and their partners in the longitudinal impact study with existing administrative data (e.g., child support, employment, and recidivism data) to determine program effectiveness. This integrated analysis will facilitate the understanding of what specific programmatic components or models appear to be more successful than others at affecting key outcomes. The study will present simple comparisons between treatment and control/comparison groups, adjust the comparisons using multivariate models, and use hierarchical models to address the multiple levels of interest, including the nesting of observations on one person within the couple, in each time period. Analysis of baseline, 9-month, and 18-month follow-up data and completion of a comprehensive impact report is expected to occur by April 2014, with analysis and reporting of the additional follow-up wave to be completed by August 2015. The same analyses will be conducted with the 34-month data as with the earlier follow-up data.

Multiple measures of certain constructs will be collected, self-reported data will be compared with administrative data, reports from couple members will be compared, and the self-reported sequencing of behavior will be explored. Comparisons between sites and with the control groups from other Healthy Marriage Evaluations may also be useful for understanding the context of any treatment effects that are found.

Analysis of the various data collected for treatment and control/comparison groups in each site will include a progression from simple to more sophisticated methods. The first step of the analysis will be to present tabular differences between groups. Second, the mean differences will be adjusted in a regression context. Third, individual fixed effects to isolate within individual changes over time will be added. Lastly, strategies to isolate treatment effects relative to changes in the control group over time will be used. These analyses will also be performed by subgroup if power allows. Hierarchical data methods and survival analyses illustrating differential time to re-incarceration and propensity score methods for adjusting on observables within these methods may also be of interest. The analytical approach will incorporate several strategies to manage possible selection bias (see **B3**, below).

The analysis may allow for pooling data in two separate ways. First, pooling across all five sites may be possible to test the average treatment effect related to participation in any fatherhood, marriage and family strengthening program, to get information on relative dose and intensity of programs in different sites, and for the assessment of the relative effectiveness of holistic programs that embed marriage education within a broader service menu, as opposed to those that focus only on marriage education services. The decision as to the feasibility of pooling to test for average treatment effect will be made after closer examination of variation in intervention design and target population, which may limit the cross-site data pooling.

Second, pooling may be possible across two of the impact grantees whose programs are similar in mode and content:

- Osborne Association and Indiana Department of Correction, where couple-based services consist of an eight hour couples-based marriage education course delivered in a single weekend, and where post-release services are not provided; and
- Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice and New Jersey Department of Corrections, where couple-based services include intensive case management along with marriage education and other ancillary services, and where couples are provided with services in the community for at least six months after the male partner's release.

A final decision regarding the usefulness of, and best approach to, pooling data from the sites will be made on the basis of a detailed analysis of implementation and program design features.

A.16.2 Plans for Publication

The evaluation approach and findings have been and will continue to be communicated to a diverse audience, including interested practitioners and researchers in the fields of criminal justice and marriage and family strengthening. Evaluation products generated to date include a comprehensive review of the research literature on incarceration and family relationships, a journal article on family strengthening programs among correctional populations, and five practice briefs. Practice briefs provide research-based, yet accessible information geared at states and communities that are conducting or considering implementing initiatives that target healthy relationships among incarcerated or formerly incarcerated fathers. The briefs produced to date included an overview of the national evaluation strategy and synopsis of grantee programs, a description of program approaches and proposed typology of program models, a review of challenges associated with delivering family-focused programming in correctional settings, a discussion of approaches to engage partners in family strengthening programs, and a discussion of services to support parent-child relationships among incarcerated fathers. For a complete list of evaluation products generated to date, see the evaluation website, <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/08/MFS-IP/>. Major future products to be written and disseminated during the remainder of the study period include a final implementation report and an impact study report. The impact study report will include detailed information on the data collection methods, survey results, and recommendations regarding the effectiveness of fatherhood, family and marriage strengthening programs for incarcerated parents. The report will be published on the ASPE website, and hard copies will be distributed at conferences and upon request.

Five additional practice briefs, four special topics reports and one journal article related to the evaluation will be produced. Three remaining briefs will be produced on work conducted under the original study scope, and two briefs will specifically focus on the data obtained from 34-month follow-up. Approximately two briefs or special reports each year will be issued in order to maintain a consistent flow of information from the project.

Presentations will also continue to be made at conferences and meetings. Presentations on the evaluation were made to the MFS-IP grantees at the initial grantee meeting (December 2006) and at the Training and Technical Assistance meeting (July 2007). Presentations have been made at subsequent yearly grantee meetings (August 2008, August 2009, August 2010, May 2011). Other venues for presentations about the evaluation have included the annual ACF Welfare Research Conference, the African American Healthy Marriage Research and Practice Conference, the Association for Public Policy and Management Conference, the Defendant-Offender Workforce

Development Conference, the National Institute of Justice Conference, the American Correctional Association meeting, and the American Society of Criminology meeting.

A.16.3 Project Timeline

All remaining milestones in this 8-year study will be completed during the 3-year renewal period. The following schedule highlights key study milestones.

Began Administering Baseline Survey	December 2008
Began Administering 9-Month Survey	September 2009
Began Administering 18-Month Survey	June 2010
Begin Administering 34-Month Survey	February 1, 2012
Submit Final Implementation Report	July 2011
Submit Final Impact Report	May 2014
Submit Final 34-Month Impact Report	April 2015
Submit Products on Final Follow-up Wave	August 2015

A17. Reason(s) Display of OMB Expiration is Inappropriate

This information collection effort does not ask to be exempted from displaying the OMB expiration date.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions to the certification statement are requested.

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