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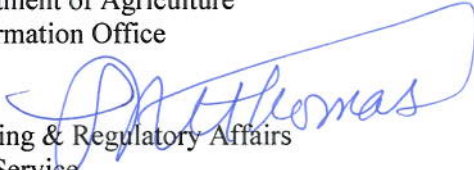
Food and
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Service

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TO: Julie Wise, OMB Desk Officer
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THROUGH: Ruth Brown, Desk Officer
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Office of Chief Information Office

FROM: Lynnette Thomas 
Branch Chief, Planning & Regulatory Affairs
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SUBJECT: Justification for decreased Burden Hours to OMB Control No: 0584-0582
Assessment of the Contribution of an Interview to SNAP Program eligibility
and Benefit Determination Study

Through this memorandum, we are requesting a non-substantive change to the burden estimates for the Assessment of the Contribution of an Interview to SNAP Program eligibility and Benefit Determination Study, under the Information Collection Request (ICR), OMB Control No. 0584-0582, which expires on July 31, 2016.

This study is examining the impact of waiving the face-to-face interview and the regular mode of eligibility screening for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, at certification and recertification, in Utah and Oregon. The study was also to have included North Carolina but the State was unable to participate and provide the data required for this evaluation. Impacts on customer service, program access, payment accuracy, as well as client satisfaction and administrative costs are being assessed.

In order to better understand experiences of clients who were denied benefits for not completing the application process, and to inform the study findings, the data collection plan included eight client focus groups across the two study States (four with clients in the demonstration and four with clients in the comparison group). However, after multiple efforts to recruit focus group participants, we were unable to seat more than 2 to 3 participants per focus group for a total of 18 participants across the eight focus groups. The desired number of participants for focus groups is typically 8 to 10 people. Because the eight focus groups did not meet the required participation levels and targeting these types of individuals through focus groups was not effective, we are proposing to conduct short one-on-one telephone interviews with these types of clients to augment the focus group data.

FNS is requesting OMB approval to use a subset of the questions from the focus group protocols to conduct phone interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes (the total time includes initial recruiting questions and consent language if eligible). We will attempt to contact a total of 160 clients across 4 groups, yielding 32-40 completed interviews. We will target completed interviews with 8-10 clients in the following 4 groups:

1. Oregon clients who applied for benefits in a demonstration areas but were denied benefits for not completing the process.
2. Oregon clients who applied for benefits in a comparison areas but were denied benefits for not completing the process.
3. Utah clients who applied for benefits and were not assigned an interview but were denied benefits for not completing the process.
4. Utah clients who applied for benefits and were assigned an interview but were denied

benefits for not completing the process.

For the telephone calls, we streamlined the approved focus group protocol to create a telephone interview guide (attached).

The additional burden for conducting the phone interviews is 30 hours; however, this does not increase the total level of burden for the project nor the number of responses. Overall, the current approved burden hours for the study will be reduced from 986 to 936. This includes an adjustment for North Carolina no longer participating in the study. The approved burden hours for focus groups is 240 hours for 3 states (80 hours per state). Without North Carolina, the actual burden for focus groups is 160 hours, a reduction of 80 hours. The current approved burden of 986 hours, less 80 hours from North Carolina not participating, plus 30 hours for phone interviews is a net burden of 936 (reduction of 50 hours). The number of responses decreases by 40 responses (-200 North Carolina + 160 for telephone interview = 40 response reduction).

Burden	Responses	Hours
Previous	4359	986
New	4319	936

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Lynnette Thomas, Branch Chief for the Food and Nutrition Service, Planning & Regulatory Affairs Office at (703) 605-4782.