

Supporting Statement for Electronic Records Express (ERE)
20 CFR 404.1512 and 416.912
OMB No. 0960-0753

A. Justification

1. Introduction/Authoring Laws and Regulations

Electronic Records Express (ERE) allows medical and educational providers to request payments and electronically submit disability claimant data to the Social Security Administration (SSA). Both medical providers and other third parties with connections to disability applicants or recipients (e.g., teachers and school administrators for child disability applicants) can use this system. The agency collects this information in accordance with Sections *20 CFR 404.1512* and *416.912* of the *Code of Federal Regulations*.

2. Description of Collection

When a new source registers to use the website, the SSA or State agency employee conducts the registration by phone or in person and then keys the information into ERE. After completing the registration process, the registered user can provide evidence to the agency, and may request payment for providing evidence through the ERE website.

SSA employees and State agency employees request the medical and educational records collected through the ERE website. The agency uses the information collected through ERE to make a determination on an Application for Benefits. We also use the ERE website to order and receive consultative examinations when we are unable to collect enough medical records to determine disability findings. The respondents are medical providers who evaluate or treat disability claimants or recipients, and other third parties with connections to disability applicants or recipients (ex: teachers and school administrators for child disability applicants), who voluntarily choose to use ERE for submitting information.

NOTE: The actual burden for uploading medical evidence is covered under a separate ICR, OMB No. 0960-0555 (Clearance of Information Collections Conducted by State Disability Determination Services on Behalf of SSA).

3. Use of Information Technology to Collect the Information

ERE is a web-based program originally developed by SSA under the aegis of, and in accordance with, the Government Paperwork Elimination Act. We collect all information electronically online or by phone. Based on our data, we estimate approximately 100% of respondents under this OMB number use the electronic version.

4. Why We Cannot Use Duplicate Information

The nature of the information we are collecting and the manner in which we are collecting it preclude duplication. SSA does not use another collection instrument

to obtain similar data.

5. Minimizing Burden on Small Respondents

This collection may affect small businesses or other small entities if they are medical practices seeking to register for ERE, or electronically request reimbursement. However, this impact is a positive one, since it will save these small business and entities the longer completion times required by paper mail processes. We minimized the burden by using the information we collected during registration to simplify the steps for providing evidence.

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

If we did not conduct this information collection, we would have no means of (1) registering medical providers and other users for ERE or (2) allowing medical providers to electronically request reimbursement. Since we only collect the information on an as-needed basis, we cannot collect it less frequently. There are no technical or legal obstacles to burden reduction.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances that would cause SSA to conduct this information collection 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 on June 23, 2014, at 79 FR 35628, and we received no public comments. We published the 30-day Federal Register Notice on September 19, 2014, at 79 FR 56428. If we receive any public comments in response to the 30-day Notice, we will forward them to OMB. We did not consult with the public in the revision of this website.

9. Payment or Gifts to Respondents

SSA provides no payment or gifts to the respondents, except for the payments due to medical providers for services rendered.

10. Assurances of Confidentiality

SSA protects and holds confidential the information it collects 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 No. A-130.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

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

12. Estimates of Public Reporting Burden

Approximately 4,508,968 respondents take 10 minutes each to complete the ERE registration, submit evidence, and request payment each year. Accordingly, the burden is 751,495 hours. This figure represents 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 estimated cost to the Federal Government to collect the information is negligible. Because the cost of maintaining the system which collects this information is accounted for within the cost of maintaining all of SSA's automated systems, it is not possible to calculate the cost associated with just one Internet application.

15. Program Changes or Adjustments to the Information Collection Request

The increase in the burden hours is due to an increase in the number of yearly responses for ERE. We anticipate further increases as more respondents choose to submit evidence and request payment electronically through ERE.

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 exception to the requirement to display the OMB approval expiration date.

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.