

## **Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 0960-0788)**

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Focus groups – to determine public satisfaction with the Office of Communication’s current communication strategies.

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:**

**Background:** The Social Security Administration’s (SSA) Office of Communications (DCCOMM) wants to take an in-depth look at customer satisfaction and the effectiveness of its current communication strategies. Its sub entity, the Office of External Affairs (OEA) is interested in obtaining strategies that can effectively foster its ability to communicate with external entities more efficiently and effectively. This customer satisfaction activity will serve to supply OEA with a detailed analysis of its current level of functioning, and provide strategies for increasing its effectiveness.

**Objectives:** DCCOMM is responsible for the agency’s public information and public affairs messages, products, and activities. Through effective relationships with external groups and organizations, OEA provides vital information, i.e., the voice of the customer, for integration into agency policies and decisions. From inception to final evaluation, OEA is involved with Social Security’s internal and external communications, materials and activities.

OEA is seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of its external communications in conjunction with professional relationships with consumers and stakeholders. OEA seeks assessments and recommendations concerning ways to harness and build business relationships with advocacy and other third party organizations. The ultimate goal is the development of an overall strategy that strengthens communications and external partnerships.

**Methodology:** We will recruit the participants for the focus groups via our internal advocates list and through an SSA-approved contractor. We will conduct a series of 3 focus groups with 30 participants. The contractor will moderate the focus group discussions.

**TYPE OF COLLECTION:** (Check one)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form          | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Satisfaction Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software) | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Discussion Group       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus Group                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Intercepts            |

**CERTIFICATION:**

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.

3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other Federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

Name: **Naomi Sipple, Reports Clearance Team Leader, Social Security Administration**

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

**Personally Identifiable Information:**

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? [ ] Yes [X] No
2. If Yes, is the information that will be collected included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? [ ] Yes [ ] No
3. If Applicable, has a System or Records Notice been published? [ ] Yes [X] No

**Gifts or Payments:**

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? [X] Yes, online focus group participants will be paid a \$75 incentive.

**BURDEN HOURS**

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time (minutes)	Burden (hours)
Individuals	30	90 min	45

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

**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated cost to the Federal Government is \$22,912.68.

**If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:**

**The selection of your targeted respondents**

1. Do you have a customer list, or something similar, that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?  
     [X] Yes  
     [ ] No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan). If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

The participant selection criterion for this research is as follows:

This **Advocate feedback session** will evaluate SSA's relationships with a sampling of its major organizational partners. Participants will consist of representatives from key stakeholder organizations that can effectively represent SSA's diverse consumer base. Examples of these organizations are:

- AARP – Aging community
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or National Urban League- African American community
- PFLAG - LGBT community
- Society of Human Resource Managers - Professional community
- National Council of LaRaza - Hispanic community
- The National Organization on Disability - Disability community

The **general public feedback sessions** will be a mix of race, age, gender, etc.

#### **Administration of the Instrument**

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)

- Web-based or other forms of Social Media
- Telephone
- In-person
- Mail
- Other, Explain - Survey Sheet/Questionnaire

2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used?  Yes  No

**Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.**

#### **USE OF RESULTS:**

SSA seeks assessments and recommendations concerning ways to harness and build business relationships with the general public, advocacy and other third party organizations. The ultimate goal is the development of an overall strategy that strengthens communications and external partnerships.

**Attached are copies of the focus group questions for each group.**

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