

## DIR Objective Peer Review Assessment Survey

### SUPPORTING STATEMENT

**Terms of Clearance:** NONE

#### **A. Justification**

##### **1. Circumstances of Information Collection**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) currently has approval under the generic clearance, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control No. 0915-0212, to conduct customer satisfaction surveys and focus groups. This collection of information helps fulfill the requirements of:

- a. Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," which directs Agencies to continually reform their management practices and operations to provide service to the public that matches or exceeds the best service available in the private sector.

This is a request for approval by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Office of Federal Assistance Management's (OFAM), Division of Independent Review (DIR) to continue using the Grant Review Assessment Survey. This Survey Assessment is used to evaluate the HRSA objective review process for competing opportunities. The purpose of the Survey Assessment is to optimize the review process and administrative functions associated with managing annual competitive grant application reviews.

DIR is responsible for carrying out independent and objective reviews of eligible applications and cooperative agreements submitted to HRSA. DIR ensures that the independent peer review process is objective, effective, economical, and complies with applicable statutes, regulations and policies. The review of applications is performed by review participants that are experts knowledgeable in the field for which funding support is requested.

The DIR process is in accordance with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Grants Policy Administration Manual, Part G Chapter 1 "Pre-Award", and the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, Sections 799(f) and 806(e).

Executive Order 12862 directs agencies that "provide significant services directly to the public" to "survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services". The objective of surveying HRSA grant review participants is to provide insight to management regarding their opinions, experiences and perceptions of the notice of funding opportunities and the conduct of the overall HRSA objective review process.

## **2. Purpose and Use of the Information**

DIR is requesting approval to continue using the Survey Assessment of two (2) similar electronic forms, where each survey is slightly tailored to the review duties, expectations, and experience of the:

- Reviewer as a panel member, and
- The panel Chair

Reviewers and Chairs are selected from the HRSA *Reviewer Recruitment Module* (RRM) using self-reported professional expertise. Reviewers evaluate the merits of competitive and discretionary grant applications and cooperative agreements for possible Agency funding.

## **3. Use of Improved Information Technology**

DIR has operated as the HRSA central review clearinghouse since 2003, coordinating objective peer review activities between participants (Reviewers and Chairs), Program staff, and the review contractor. DIR routinely uses various web-based tools, including the Survey Monkey electronic platform specifically for data collection of review participant experiences. Use of an electronic format (like Survey Monkey) will greatly enhance the rapid collection, analysis, and long term archival of review related comments in a highly reproducible and standardized format for trend analyses.

Where possible, the DIR Review Assessment form(s) use simple drop-down menus, checkboxes and radio buttons to simplify the data collection process, reduce the respondent time, and burden. Attached are screen shots of the proposed Survey Monkey forms for Chairs (Attachment 1), and Reviewers (Attachment 2).

Sensitive information such as birthdates and social security numbers are not collected.

## **4. Efforts to Avoid Duplication**

HRSA DIR does not utilize any other web-based vehicle or electronic format for objective review participants to submit review assessment information in a standardized fashion. DIR deems it necessary to collect review participant comments and experience to implement a measurable quality assurance program to assess peer review effectiveness. The web-based review assessment form mirrors DIR's review operational changes and enhances the on-line review process and participant database. Consistency in the use of, web-based systems and access, data capture, analysis tools, and ease of use were all taken into consideration for use of this particular assessment system. The assessment survey set is unique to this activity and the information is not found elsewhere.

**5. Involvement of Small Entities**

This assessment survey does not have an impact on small businesses or other small entities. Individuals who serve as HRSA grant review participants may be affiliated with small entities, however, the information requested is the very minimum needed to assess objective review functions and is less burdensome to applicants than the paper model.

**6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Frequently**

Each review session is unique to the program grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), and could include one to 18 panels depending on the number of eligible applications received by HRSA. Each review panel has a slightly different experience based on the review participant professional qualifications, prior review experience, and type of grants assigned to the panel. Survey data collected from each panel within a review session will be compared as a review “group”, and review-to-review comparisons will be made for overall trends.

HRSA hosts on average 85 objective review sessions per year, with an average of 5 panels per review, and up to 10 panel members (reviewers and chairs). This calculates to a possible 4,250 survey encounters per year. Sustained use of an electronic platform with this inherent analysis capability will continue to enhance timely reporting and reduce assessment time.

**There are no legal obstacles to reduce the burden.**

**7. Consistency With the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5**

This survey set will be implemented in a manner fully consistent with 5 CFR 1320.5.

**8. Consultation Outside the Agency**

No Federal Register announcement has yet been issued.

**9. Remuneration of Respondents**

There will be no payment to respondents for submitting an assessment form. Review performance is paid as honoraria to reviewers and chairs.

**10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

This HRSA assessment review participant survey does not collect personally identifiable information (PII) from review participants. Participation is voluntary and responses are anonymous. Participation or non-participation does not affect their selection for future reviews.

Information and data are maintained securely through the Survey Monkey Platform using a user name and password under a “locked” HRSA account. Survey downloads are stored in a HRSA database, and analyses are conducted using HRSA internal programs behind firewalls. Review specific

assessment forms are identified by the unique HRSA review and panel number distributed to only the review participants, not publically accessible, and does not capture any PII from its users.

11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

The surveys do not contain questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimates of Annualized Hours

<b>Grant Recruitment Form</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Responses per Participant</b>	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Hours per response</b>	<b>Total burden hours</b>
Reviewer	2000	1	2000	0.25	500 hrs
Chair	300	1	300	0.25	75 hrs
Total	2300		2300	0.25	575 hrs

13. Estimates of Annualized Cost Burden to Respondents

There are no capital or startup costs and no operation and maintenance of service costs to respondents associated with this application.

14. Annualized Cost to the Government

The use of a web-based database form for the collection and organization self-reported reviewer information produces economic and business process efficiencies. An estimated 35 FTE hours will be utilized for system administrative activities (form creation) using existing DIR staff and resources. DIR staff time dedicated to system management is 10% of a GS-12 step 5 (2015 Office of Personnel Management Salary Table) FTE (approximately \$6,969).

15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments

Not applicable. This is a continuation of a previously approved activity under HRSA’s generic clearance and will be included in the total burden currently approved by OMB under OMB Control No. 0915-0212.

16. Plans for Analysis and Timetable of Key Activities

The Division of Independent Review continues to perform analyses of data from each individual review for process and quality improvement in the objective review experience. Narrative information from the survey Assessment is summarized and examined using descriptive analysis. Findings are only used for internal service improvement and the information collected is not published outside of the Agency.

**17. Exemption for display of Expiration Date**

No exemption is requested. The expiration date will be displayed.

**18. Certification**

This information collection activity complies with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

**Attachments**

1. HRSA Survey Assessment of Objective Peer Review –Reviewer Form 1 (6 screen shots)
2. HRSA Survey Assessment of Objective Peer Review – Chair Form 2 (3 screen shots)