

Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

ConnectHome Baseline Survey Data Collection

Part A: Justification

This supporting statement provides information on the data collection activities associated with the baseline survey for the White House and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's ConnectHome initiative.

A.1 Circumstances necessitating data collection.

President Barack Obama and Secretary Julián Castro announced ConnectHome on July 15, 2015 as the next step in the Obama Administration's efforts to increase access to high-speed Internet access for all Americans. The ConnectHome initiative builds on ConnectED, which aims to connect 99 percent of K-12 students to high-speed Internet in schools and libraries by 2018. ConnectHome will bring the opportunity for high-speed home Internet access to low-income families across the nation, including an estimated nearly 200,000 children. Through public-private partnerships, nonprofits, businesses, and Internet service providers (ISPs) ConnectHome will offer high-speed Internet service, devices, technical training, and digital literacy programs to residents of HUD assisted housing in 28 pilot communities, including the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. To date, local government executives have already committed to reallocate local funds, leverage local programming, and use regulatory tools to support this initiative and the expansion of broadband access in low-income communities.

ConnectHome responds to an urgent need in our communities. As a recently released report from the President's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) illustrates, some Americans are still unable to benefit from high-speed internet access, especially America's lower-income children.¹ The report highlights that while nearly two-thirds of households in the lowest-income quintile own a computer, less than half have a home internet subscription. While many middle-class U.S. students go home to Internet access, allowing them to do research, write papers, and communicate digitally with their teachers and other students, too many lower-income children go unplugged every afternoon when school ends. This "homework gap" runs the risk of widening the achievement gap, denying hardworking students the benefit of a technology-enriched education.

HUD selected the twenty-seven cities and one tribal nation to participate in ConnectHome. HUD selected these communities through a competitive process that took into account local commitment to expanding broadband opportunities; presence of place-based programs; and other factors to ensure all are well-positioned to deliver on ConnectHome:

Albany, GA; Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Baton Rouge, LA; Boston, MA;
Camden, NJ; Choctaw Nation, OK; Cleveland, OH; Denver, CO; Durham, NC;
Fresno, CA; Kansas City, MO; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; Macon, GA;
Memphis, TN; Meriden, CT; Nashville, TN; New Orleans, LA; New York, NY;
Newark, NJ; Philadelphia, PA; Rockford, IL; San Antonio, TX; Seattle, WA;
Springfield, MA; Tampa, FL; and Washington, DC.

¹ White House Council of Economic Advisors. July 2015. *Mapping the Digital Divide*.
https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/wh_digital_divide_issue_brief.pdf.

HUD is also taking major steps to provide communities across the nation with tools to improve digital opportunity for its residents:

- Rulemaking that requires HUD-funded new residential construction and substantial rehabilitation projects to support broadband internet connectivity.
- Providing communities with the flexibility to spend portions of their Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grants on local broadband initiatives and associated connectivity enhancements, including approximately \$150 million dedicated to the current competition.
- Rulemaking to include broadband planning as a component of the Consolidated Planning process, which serves as a framework for a community-wide dialogue to identify housing and municipal development priorities.
- Providing guidance and share best practices with HUD-funded grantees on how to more effectively utilize HUD funding to support broadband connectivity.
- Integrating digital literacy programming and access to technology into related initiatives.

The purpose of this data collection is to support communities in the 28 ConnectHome sites in administering a baseline survey of targeted residents' current at-home Internet access. HUD has engaged Insight Policy Research to conduct the sampling and administration of the baseline survey. The survey administration will include the development of an outreach plan with HUD ConnectHome collaborators and communities; selection of a sample of participants to be surveyed; administration of an initial baseline internet access survey; and submission of a database, codebook, frequency output tables for collected data; and submission of a summary analysis of the collected data.

The baseline survey will provide HUD with baseline measures of in-home high-speed internet access, barriers to access among those without access, and types of devices used to access the internet. Upon establishing baseline measures, HUD's ConnectHome team will use this information to support local efforts in closing the digital divide.

The baseline survey is the initial step in HUD's broader evaluation plan for ConnectHome. Participating Internet Service Providers (ISPs) will provide stakeholder organization EveryoneOn with updates on ConnectHome subscription figures, and PHAs will provide HUD with *ad hoc* updates on how many of their assisted buildings and units are accessible for high-speed Internet service. HUD also plans to perform telephone surveys and focus groups that will consider ConnectHome subscribers' use of their high-speed, at-home Internet connections and self-reported benefits, including for education and employment. The follow-up telephone surveys and focus groups will be the subject of separate submissions for OMB clearance.

The advance notice for the ConnectHome Demonstration is located at:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/04/03/2015-07719/advance-notice-of-digital-opportunity-demonstration>

A2 How and by whom the data will be used.

This survey will be used to establish a baseline for ConnectHome’s performance and identify the current context for at-home Internet access among target populations in the 28 communities. The baseline will target public family households, as communities are focusing on public housing residents for their initial implementation of ConnectHome. The participating Internet Service Providers have signed agreements with EveryoneOn, a stakeholder organization assisting with ConnectHome, to provide quarterly data on households’ uptake.

The baseline survey (included with the consent form) asks households about their current at-home Internet access, methods of access (e.g., by high-speed Internet subscriptions, by cellular data plans), devices used, reasons for lack of access if applicable, past at-home Internet access, and knowledge of ConnectHome.

The survey will be administered in coordination with PHAs by mail to targeted assisted households at 28 ConnectHome sites, using the detailed description of the targeted household samples. Insight Policy Research will manage the consent forms, baseline questionnaires, and follow-up telephone surveys and focus groups. Contingent upon OMB approval, the consent form and administration of the baseline survey will be conducted over an 8-week period beginning in November 2015.

The proposed survey will fill an important need for both HUD and participating communities. The baseline survey will provide information on existing at-home Internet access, devices, and knowledge before ConnectHome is implemented. This information will enable HUD to track increases in access related to ConnectHome, and will enable communities to plan and set goals for increased access among their residents.

A3 Improved technology.

The baseline surveys will be administered as paper and pencil surveys. The tracking of study participants will be conducted through a database created by Insight Policy Research to collect and store the information collected on study participants.

A4 Efforts to identify duplication.

HUD’s ConnectHome team is working with the 28 participating communities to identify and avoid any duplicative surveying of targeted populations.

A5 Involvement of small entities.

The respondents to this survey will be public housing households within 28 communities. Efforts have been made to minimize the response burden through careful design of the data collection strategy and the data collection instruments. Because HUD is leading the data collection effort in coordination with PHAs, this process will substantially reduce the burden on PHAs to survey and track their residents' prior and subsequent Internet access.

There will be no burden to small business or small entities.

A6 Consequences if information is collected less frequently.

This is a one-time information collection request.

A7 Special circumstances.

There are no special circumstances.

A8 Consultations outside the agency.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, HUD published a notice in the Federal Register on October 15, 2015.² There was no public comment period prior to submission. However, HUD is soliciting comments on this information collection and will address any significant issues raised by the commenters.

The Office of Management and Budget granted HUD's request for emergency processing of the ConnectHome baseline survey under 5 CFR 1320.13. HUD requested emergency processing on the grounds that the collection of information was necessary prior to the time periods under the regular process; is essential to HUD's mission to utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life and as a secretarial priority; and the use of normal clearance procedures are likely to prevent or disrupt the collection of information, because the participating communities will begin implementing ConnectHome in the next two months.

The survey was designed by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research with in consultation with HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing; HUD's contracted research organization, Insight Policy Research; EveryoneOn, a national nonprofit working to eliminate the digital divide; and the communities participating in ConnectHome.

A9 Payment or gifts.

Participating residents are offered entry into a lottery for 10 Chromebook devices, provided by stakeholder organization EveryoneOn, to complete the baseline survey.

² <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/10/15/2015-26271/notice-of-submission-of-proposed-information-collection-to-omb-emergency-comment-request-notice-of>

A10 Assurance of confidentiality.

HUD does promise confidentiality as stated in the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), Records Maintained on Individuals. While surveys will include unique HUD ID numbers for each household, the findings will be publicly reported only at the aggregate level.

A11 Sensitive questions.

The baseline survey asks for the study participant’s name, address, telephone number, and email address. These questions are not considered sensitive. The findings from the study will be publicly reported only at the aggregate level: individual residents will not be identified in any subsequent reports.

A12 Costs to respondents for collection of information

Households participating in the ConnectHome baseline survey will range widely in employment position and earnings. We have estimated the hourly wage at the federal minimum wage rate, which is \$7.25 per hour. We expect about 50 percent of the respondents to be employed at the time they complete the survey. A 2014 Center on Budget and Policy Priorities report estimated that in 2010, 56 percent of non-elderly, non-disabled households in public housing reported earned income. The typical (median) annual earnings for these families were \$15,500.³ Accordingly, HUD estimates an average hourly cost to respondents of 50% * \$7.25 = \$3.625.

HUD intends to mail surveys to approximately 5,600 respondents and expects a response rate of about 50 percent. HUD estimates each respondent will take approximately 5 minutes (.0833 hours) to complete the survey.

	ConnectHome Baseline Survey Data Collection						
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS	# Respondents	# Responses	Total Responses	Hours Per Response	Total Hours	Cost Per Hour	Total Cost
Contract	5600	2800	2800	.0833	233.24	\$3.625	\$845.50
TOTAL PAPERWORK BURDEN	5600	2800	2800	.0833	233.24	\$3.625	\$845.50

A13 Estimate of Additional Total Costs to Respondents

HUD does not have any additional costs associated with this collection.

A14 Estimate of Annualized Cost to Federal Government

³ (<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=3634>). Based on this, we assumed 50% of tenants would be working at the federal minimum wage.

The cost to the Federal Government is approximately \$160,726.00. This reflects (6) weeks for Task 1 for the survey administration plan and (12) weeks of survey administration and data collection under Task 2.

A15 Explanation of Program Changes / Adjustments

This is a new one-time information collection.

A16 Publication of Results

HUD will publish initial baseline survey results after collection is complete in January 2016 and in an annual report on ConnectHome in 2016.

A17 Display of the Expiration date for OMB Approval of the Information Collection

HUD is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18 Explanation of Each Exception to the Certification Statement

No exceptions are requested.