

B. Statistical Methods (used for collection of information employing statistical methods)

1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

Section 454(15)(A) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 654(15)(A)) contains a requirement for each State to annually assess the performance of the State's child support enforcement program under title IV-D of the Act in accordance with standards specified by the Secretary, and to provide a report of the findings to the Secretary.

Section 308.1(b) specifies that a State must either review all of its cases or conduct sampling which meets the criteria specified. Due to the differences in administrative structures in States, we did not prescribe a single sampling formula for universal use by all States. Instead, under paragraph (b), a State has discretion in designing its own sampling methodologies that could be tailored to meet individual State needs. However, under paragraphs (b)(2) and (3), each State must maintain a minimum confidence level of 90 percent for each criterion, select statistically valid samples, and assure that there are no portions of the IV-D case universe omitted from the sample selection process.

Using the incremental approach, a State selects cases from several periods during the review period and adds the results to provide a picture of performance for the entire period. The State would draw a separate sample for each incremental review period. The incremental approach enables the State to spread its review effort over time and make more efficient use of available resources because the sample size could be smaller, while allowing the State to identify problem areas and take corrective action prior to the end of the review period. For those States who review their case samples incrementally, the cases selected must be reviewed and evaluated for the actions required at the beginning of the incremental review period.

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

Using the incremental approach, a State selects cases from several periods during the review period and adds the results to provide a picture of performance for the entire period. The State would draw a separate sample for each incremental review period. The incremental approach enables the State to spread its review effort over time and make more efficient use of available resources because the sample size could be smaller, while allowing the State to identify problem areas and take corrective action prior to the end of the review period. For those States who review their case samples incrementally, the cases selected must be reviewed and evaluated for the actions required at the beginning of the incremental review period.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Nonresponse

We expect States to use the self-assessment as a management tool and to be entirely accurate and objective when reporting their performance. To do otherwise would only harm the State and its future performance. In addition OCSE will provide any State the technical assistance it needs to meet these requirements.

4. Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken

OCSE issued a Techniques for Effective Management of Program Operations (TEMPO) monograph on statistical sampling for self-assessment.

5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

The following individuals may be contacted on the statistical data collection and analysis operations:

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