

**Request for Approval for the Collection of Customer Feedback
(OMB Control Number: 1545-1432)**

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: 2012 W&I CAS Injured Spouse Customer Satisfaction Survey

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Injured Spouse Customer Satisfaction project is to gauge the level of customer satisfaction with the services provided by the Wage and Investment (W&I) Customer Account Services (CAS) Injured Spouse operations. W&I is employing a contractor to perform a survey that will collect information regarding the customers' satisfaction with the Injured Spouse services.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

Respondents are individuals who have filed an Injured Spouse claim with the IRS, and these individuals are external to the IRS. They are randomly selected as survey participants from a population of closed case files.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

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

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: Veronica Ogletree

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

Personally Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? Yes 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 No

Gifts or Payments:

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? Yes No

BURDEN HOURS

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Random Sample of Injured Spouse closed cases (asked to participate)	20,000	2 minute	666.67 hrs
Customers who respond to survey (subset of above)	5,000	7 minutes	583.33 hrs
Totals			1,250 hrs

Estimated Response Rate: 25%

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$97,000.

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?

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?

Anyone who submits an Injured Spouse claim during the survey period may be randomly selected to participate in the customer satisfaction survey. The sample plan will be developed by the contractor based on volumes of Injured Spouse claims at the 8 sites. This sampling plan will include the target population and sampling frame, sampling specifications, expected reliability of the sample estimates, preliminary sampling weights, and the strategy of achieving target quotas within key strata. The sampling plan will be designed to result in 20,000 mail-outs per year, with an expected response of 5,000. The sample design will provide a precision margin of 5% and confidence interval of 95%. The Accounts Management Injured Spouse function will provide the contractor a complete database each month from which a random sample can be drawn. The database will consist of a unique identifying number, customer name and address, and relevant database information about each Injured Spouse case, all in a single record. Upon receipt of the data file, the vendor will run the file through standard checks to ensure a complete mailing address and to remove duplicate cases both within the file, and across files of other surveys that are being conducted. The contractor provides the sampling specifications to W&I to apply to the sampling databases. Each site reports its sampling efforts to the vendor on a weekly basis. The contractor monitors the sampling process to ensure the procedures are producing the desired number of respondents and coordinates with appropriate W&I personnel on sampling and related matters.

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
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? Yes No.

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

Attachments

Procedure: The Dillman Method will be used and includes the (1st Wave) a prenote, (2nd Wave) a letter with the survey and postage paid reply envelope, (3rd Wave) a reminder postcard, and (4th Wave) a reminder letter with the survey, along with postage paid reply envelope. These mailings and the survey questions are attached below:

Dear

I need your help with an important initiative I am undertaking to improve our service to taxpayers across the country. I want to get feedback from taxpayers like you who have been through the Injured Spouse Allocation at the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

In a few days, you will receive a questionnaire asking for your opinions about working with the IRS during and after the processing of your allocation. The questionnaire will take about seven minutes to complete. Your answers will be combined with others to give us an evaluation on Customer Satisfaction with the independent research company to administer the survey. The survey processing center employees will process the questionnaires and report only statistical totals to us so that we can make improvements.

I am committed to improving IRS service to every taxpayer. Please help me in this effort by completing and returning the questionnaire as soon as possible. If you do not receive a questionnaire, please contact our Survey Processing Center toll-free at 1-800-521-7177, or by email at irssurveyhelp@forsmarshgroup.com.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Jane Looney
Director, Accounts Management
Wage & Investment Division



IRS

IRS WAGE AND INVESTMENT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY
INJURED SPOUSE

Dear

A few days ago you received a letter from Jane Looney, Director, Accounts Management, Wage and Investment Division of the Internal Revenue Service, asking for your help with an important research project to help improve the service provided to taxpayers who file Injured Spouse Allocations.

We are administering a nationwide survey among a random sample of people who filed an Injured Spouse Allocation. We want to know your opinions about your experiences using the Injured Spouse Allocation process. Your responses are critical to the accuracy of this research and will help us to better improve our service.

All responses are as anonymous as allowed by law, and your participation is voluntary. Your responses will be grouped with others, so that no single reply can be traced back to an individual. The questionnaire is quite brief and should take about 7 minutes to complete. Please use the postage-paid reply envelope to return your completed questionnaire. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call us at 1-800-521-7177, or email us at irssurveyhelp@forsmarshgroup.com.

The IRS is committed to improving its performance and service to the public. An important step in this process is to gather reliable information from those who have had contact with our services and employees. Your honest opinions will help bring about these improvements.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Brian K. Griepentrog, Ph.D.
Director of Research
Fors Marsh Group LLC

L2_14054

Research conducted by  **FORS | MARSH**
GROUP

P.O. Box 42048 • Arlington, VA 22204-9048

IRS WAGE AND INVESTMENT DIVISION CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY INJURED SPOUSE

The IRS is trying to improve its services to the public. You can help in this important mission by answering the questions below. This voluntary survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept as anonymous as allowed by law to the IRS. If you have any questions about this survey, you may call the Survey Helpline at 1-800-521-7177.

1	Regardless of whether you agree or disagree with the final outcome, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the service received from the IRS about your Injured Spouse Allocation?	Very Dissatisfied ①	Somewhat Dissatisfied ②	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied ③	Somewhat Satisfied ④	Very Satisfied ⑤	Don't Know/Not Applicable NA
----------	---	------------------------	----------------------------	---	-------------------------	---------------------	---------------------------------

2 The questions that follow ask your opinion regarding the Injured Spouse process. For each question, please indicate your answer by checking the box that best represents your opinion.

How would you rate the...	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/Not Applicable
A. Ease of finding out about the Injured Spouse Program?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
B. Ease of getting information about your Form 8379, <i>Injured Spouse Allocation</i> , issue?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
C. Ease of understanding and completing Form 8379, <i>Injured Spouse Allocation</i> ?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
D. Ease of collecting information requested by the IRS?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
E. Time you were given to respond to the IRS?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
F. Amount of time you spent on the Form 8379, <i>Injured Spouse Allocation</i> , process?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
G. Length of time to resolve your Form 8379, <i>Injured Spouse Allocation</i> , issue?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA

If you indicated that you were dissatisfied with any aspects of the Injured Spouse process above, please explain why in the space provided below:

3 Did you contact the IRS to receive instructions on the preparation of the Form 8379, *Injured Spouse Allocation*? ① Yes (Continue below)
② No (Skip to question 4)

If yes, please rate your satisfaction with...	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/Not Applicable
A. Getting through to the right IRS employee by phone regarding your request for instructions?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
B. Courtesy and professionalism of IRS employees?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
C. IRS representatives' knowledge of the Injured Spouse process?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
D. Ease of understanding the information supplied by the IRS?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
E. Completeness of the instructions you received?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
F. Fairness of treatment by the IRS employees?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA

Note: The survey will be corrected to indicate that it will take 7 minutes to complete instead of 5 minutes prior to distribution.

4 When you received resolution, did you contact IRS for an explanation? ① Yes (Continue below)
② No (Skip to question 5)

If yes, please rate your satisfaction with...	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/Not Applicable
A. Getting through to the right IRS employee by phone regarding your request for an explanation?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
B. Courtesy and professionalism of the IRS employees?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
C. IRS representatives' knowledge of the Injured Spouse process?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
D. Fairness of treatment by the IRS employees?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA
E. Explanation of your case resolution?	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA

5 What was your initial notice that you received, which prompted your involvement in the Injured Spouse program, about? **(Check only one response)**

- ① CP 39, We Applied an Overpayment to your Balance Due
- ② CP 42, Overpaid Tax Applied to Other Federal Taxes Owed on Secondary Social Security Number
- ③ CP 49, Overpaid Tax Applied to Other Taxes You Owe
- ④ Letter 3179C, Refund Offset to Treasury Offset Program (TOP) Non-tax Obligation
- ⑤ Letter from Department of Treasury Financial Management Service
- ⑥ Other-Specify _____

6 What is your type of debt issue that warrants filing Form 8379, Injured Spouse Allocation?

- ① Federal tax debt issue
- ② Other type of debt issue (other than Federal tax issue, e.g., child support, Department of Education)

7 How did you find out about the possibility of obtaining Injured Spouse relief? **(Check all that apply)**

- ① IRS Customer Service Representative
- ② IRS Taxpayer Advocate Office
- ③ IRS Web site
- ④ Family/Friend/Colleague
- ⑤ Lawyer or legal counsel
- ⑥ Tax professional (e.g., CPA, accountant)
- ⑦ Tax software
- ⑧ Letter
- ⑨ Other-Specify _____

8 Where did you obtain the forms and instructions for filing your allocation issue? **(Check all that apply)**

- ① IRS via telephone
- ② IRS office
- ③ IRS Web site
- ④ Lawyer or legal counsel
- ⑤ Tax professional (e.g., CPA, accountant)
- ⑥ Tax software
- ⑦ Other-Specify _____

9 From the time you filed the Form 8379, Injured Spouse Allocation, to resolution, did you contact the IRS for resolution status? ① Yes (Continue below)
② No (Skip to question 10)

How many times did you contact the IRS regarding your Injured Spouse allocation? ① 1 ③ 3
② 2 ④ More than 3

10 How satisfied were you with the update you received when you contacted the IRS regarding the status of your resolution?

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know/Not Applicable
	①	②	③	④	⑤	NA

If you were dissatisfied for any reason, please explain why in the space provided below:

- 11** Which of the following methods do you prefer to use when contacting the IRS? (Check all that apply)
- 1 IRS Toll-free Customer Service number
 - 2 IRS number listed on the letter you received
 - 3 IRS Web site
 - 4 Local IRS office by phone
 - 5 Local IRS office in person
 - 6 Mail
 - 7 Through tax professional
 - 8 Other-Specify _____

12 In number of weeks, approximately how long did it take to resolve your Form 8379, Injured Spouse Allocation, issue?

--	--

WEEKS

- 13** Who prepared your Form 8379, Injured Spouse Allocation? (Check only one response)
- 1 Yourself
 - 2 Paid tax professional
 - 3 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
 - 4 Friend/Relative
 - 5 IRS office

14 How much do you agree with the following statement?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
A. I received an adequate description of the Injured Spouse process	1	2	3	4	5	NA
B. My experience reflected the described Injured Spouse process	1	2	3	4	5	NA
C. I had the opportunity to provide information important to my case	1	2	3	4	5	NA
D. I was treated with respect during the Injured Spouse process	1	2	3	4	5	NA

- 15** Overall, how well did the IRS meet your expectations while handling your Injured Spouse case?
- 1 Much better than expected
 - 2 Better than expected
 - 3 As expected
 - 4 Worse than expected
 - 5 Much worse than expected

If you answered "Worse than expected" or "Much worse than expected" to the above question, can you describe what caused you to feel that way?

Occasionally, we conduct additional in-depth IRS-related research. Research participants may receive a small monetary incentive to participate depending on the research. If you are interested in participating in future research, please provide us with your telephone number and your e-mail address (if available). This information will not be shared with the IRS and will be used only for the purpose of survey research.

Telephone number: _____ E-mail address: _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Notice. The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number for this study is 1545-1432. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to the: Internal Revenue Service, Tax Products Coordinating Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20224.

Thank you for completing the survey.

Please return the questionnaire to P.O. Box 42048, Arlington, VA 22204-9927 USA.



FORS | MARSH
GROUP

IRS WAGE AND INVESTMENT
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY
INJURED SPOUSE

Do We Have Your Input Yet?

Recently, you received a questionnaire about your experience with our Injured Spouse Allocation process. If you have already completed and submitted the questionnaire, please accept my sincere thanks. If not, please take a few minutes to complete it and return it today. We want to be sure we have your opinions and suggestions.

If you did not receive the questionnaire, or it got misplaced, please call us at 1-800-521-7177.

Sincerely,

Brian K. Griepentrog, Ph.D.
Director of Research
Fors Marsh Group, LLC

L3_14054



IRS

IRS WAGE AND INVESTMENT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY
INJURED SPOUSE

Dear

A few weeks ago you received a letter from Jane Looney, Director, Accounts Management, asking for your help with an important research project. So far, we have not received your completed questionnaire. If you have not already done so, please take a few minutes to fill in your responses.

We are administering a nationwide survey among a random sample of people who filed an Injured Spouse Allocation. We want to know your opinions about your experiences using the Injured Spouse Allocation process. Your responses are critical to the accuracy of this research.

We have sent questionnaires to a random sample of taxpayers who used the Injured Spouse Allocation process. All responses are as anonymous as allowed by law, and your participation is voluntary. We will group your responses with others, so that no single reply can be traced back to an individual.

The questionnaire is quite brief and should take less than seven minutes to complete. Please use the postage-paid reply envelope to return your completed questionnaire. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call us toll-free at 1-800-521-7177, or email us at irssurveyhelp@forsmarshgroup.com.

The IRS is committed to improving its performance and service to the public. An important step in this process is to gather reliable information from those who have had contact with our services and employees. Your honest opinions will help bring about these improvements.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Brian K. Griepentrog, Ph.D.
Director of Research
Fors Marsh Group LLC

L4_14054

Research conducted by  **FORS MARSH**
GROUP

P.O. Box 42048 • Arlington, VA 22204-9048

Supporting Statement
Approval Request to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research (OMB #1545-1432)
2012 W&I CAS Injured Spouse Customer Satisfaction Survey

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) enlists a balanced measurement system consisting of business results, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. This initiative is part of the Service-wide effort to maintain a system of balanced organizational performance measures mandated by the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act (RRA) of 1998. This is also a result of Executive Order 12862 that requires all government agencies to survey their customers.

The Injured Spouse operation within the Customer Accounts Services (CAS) Operating Unit of the W&I Business Operating Division (BOD) is responsible for responding to written customer technical and account inquiries, resolving customer account issues, providing account settlement (payment options), and working related issues. W&I requires feedback from customers to continually improve the Injured Spouse operations. W&I solicits this feedback through customer satisfaction research.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

Improving agency programs requires ongoing assessment of service delivery, by which we mean systematic review of the operation of a program compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the continuous improvement of the program. W&I will employ a contractor to collect, analyze, and interpret information gathered to identify strengths and weaknesses of current Injured Spouse services and make improvements in service delivery based on feedback. The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as: timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of service offered to the public. If this information is not collected, vital feedback from customers and stakeholders on Injured Spouse services will be unavailable.

By conducting this survey, W&I CAS expects to accomplish the following objectives:

- To measure the level of customer satisfaction concerning services provided to the customer during their Injured Spouse interaction.
- To identify problems that customers encounter when interacting with the Injured Spouse function.
- To gain insight on improvements that can be made to Injured Spouse services.
- To improve the service that Injured Spouse provides to their customers.
- To assess improvements/problems by comparing this year's results to prior years'.

From the survey responses, W&I CAS will be able to assess the current level of customer satisfaction for the Injured Spouse operations and draw on customer input to improve our products and services.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

Surveys will be distributed through U.S Postal mail.

4. Duplication of Information

This survey will provide valuable information that is not available in any internal IRS data source.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

The survey has been designed to minimize burden on the respondent. The time that a respondent takes to complete a survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

Without these types of feedback, the Injured Spouse operations will not have timely information to adjust its services to meet customer needs.

7. Special Circumstances

The statistics derived from the customer satisfaction measures could be used in making management decisions such as business improvement opportunities.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

IRS will employ a contractor to conduct the research.

9. Payment or Gift

Injured Spouse operations will not provide payment or other forms of remuneration to respondents of its various forms of collecting feedback.

10. Confidentiality

All participants will be subject to the provisions of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights II during this study and the vendor will ensure that all participants are treated fairly and appropriately.

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy of taxpayers as allowed by law will be carefully safeguarded at all times. Security requirements are based on the Computer Security Act of 1987 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, Appendices A & B. Physical security measures include a locked, secure office. Notes are stored in locked cabinets or shredded. Data security at the C-2 level is accomplished via the Windows NT operating system. Systems are password protected, users profiled for authorized use, and individual audit trails generated and reviewed periodically.

The IRS will apply and meet fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure privacy protection of all taxpayers as allowed by law. This includes criteria for disclosure—laid out in the Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act, and Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code—all of which provide for the protection of taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

The survey will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. Survey participants will not be identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. We will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized as well as the privacy of the survey respondents. We will apply the fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all survey respondents. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the protection of information as well as its releases to authorized recipients.

11. Sensitive Nature

No questions will be asked that are of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Burden of Information Collection

The estimated time to complete the survey is seven minutes, but some variation in the length of time required to answer the survey is expected. Assuming a 25% response rate, the total annual burden hours requested (1,250 hrs) are based on the number of collections we expect to conduct over the requested period for this clearance (collection start date: January 1, 2012; collection end date: June 30, 2013).

Estimated Annual Reporting Burden				
Type of Collection	No. of Respondents	Annual Frequency per Response	Hours per Response	Total Hours
Asking Injured Spouse customers to participate	20,000	1	2 minutes	666.67
Customers who respond to survey (subset of above)	5,000	1	7 minutes	583.33
Total				1,250 hrs

Note: The survey will be corrected to indicate that it will take 7 minutes to complete instead of 5 minutes prior to distribution.

13. Costs to Respondents

No costs are anticipated.

14. Costs to Federal Government

\$97,000

15. Reason for Change

Not applicable.

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

Findings will be used for general service improvement, but are not for publication or other public release. Although IRS does not intend to publish its findings, IRS may receive requests to release the information (e.g., congressional inquiry, Freedom of Information Act requests). IRS will disseminate the findings when appropriate, strictly following IRS's "Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Information Disseminated to the Public", and will include specific discussion of the limitation of the results.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

We are requesting no exemption.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

B.

STATISTICAL METHODS

The primary purpose of these collections will be for internal management purposes; there are no plans to publish or otherwise release this information.

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The sampling frame consists of W&I taxpayers who file an Injured Spouse claim with IRS.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Participants for the survey will be randomly selected and offered the survey through the mail.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

Standards procedures, including Dillman Method mail waves, will be used in order to obtain the highest response rate possible for the Injured Spouse operations Customer Satisfaction Survey.

4. Testing of Procedures

The function and the contractor have worked together to refine the survey instrument over the years so additional testing is not needed during this administrative period.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

The IRS employs a contractor to develop, design and conduct the Injured Spouse customer satisfaction survey and to analyze the data and generate appropriate reports. Contact with the contractor can be arranged through the IRS Contracting Officer's Representative, Veronica Ogletree, who may be reached at (404) 338-8531.