

Peace Corps Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection
Questionnaire for Peace Corps Volunteer Background Investigation Form
OMB Control Number 0420-0001
Supporting Statement

Section A: Justification

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Section 22 of the Peace Corps Act requires that each applicant be investigated to ensure that enrollment of the applicant as a Volunteer is consistent with the national interest. The Peace Corps therefore obtains an appropriate background investigation for all applicants who are invited to serve in the Peace Corps. Information revealed by the background investigation may be grounds for disqualification from Peace Corps service. The Peace Corps applicant cannot depart for service until the background investigation is complete.

The Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection uses the Questionnaire for Peace Corps Volunteer Background Investigation form (BI form) as authorization from the invited Peace Corps Volunteer applicant to conduct a background check through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or other contract background investigator of pertinent records pertaining to applicants' interactions with the judicial system, qualifications, eligibility and suitability for Peace Corps volunteer service.

2. By whom, how, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

The BI form is used to collect information and consent from Peace Corps applicants for a background check relating to their legal and/or criminal history and other interactions with the judicial system. The information obtained on the form is provided to OPM or other contract investigator to obtain necessary information as to an applicant's qualifications, eligibility and suitability for service.

Only applicants invited to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer are asked to complete the BI form. The BI form is only requested to be completed once and is collected through the online applicant portal, phasing out a hard copy version.

3. Consideration of the use of improved information technology.

Peace Corps has coordinated with OPM to collect the BI form electronically, rather than via hard copy. The Peace Corps anticipates this will be a more efficient process, as historically there has been much effort in tracking down an Invitee's paper copy of the form and coordinating corrections of the form with Invitees. The online form will reduce errors made by Invitees. When errors are made, the electronic form can be corrected, eliminating the need to mail hard copies back and forth.

A background investigation may take several months to complete. Because an Invitee cannot depart for service until the investigation is complete, it is important to have an efficient process to avoid unnecessary delays or cancellations of departures. The Peace Corps anticipates that the electronic version of the form will reduce the amount of time it takes to receive the BI form from the Invitee so the investigation can begin.

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4. Efforts to identify duplication. Why similar information cannot be used.

Some of the information requested on the BI form is also requested in the Peace Corps Volunteer Application Form. However, the Application Form does not carry authority to conduct a background check and does not contain consent for release of documents.

5. Methods to minimize the burden to small business if involved.

The collection of information does not impact small businesses or other small entities in any capacity.

6. Consequences to the Federal program if collection were conducted less frequently.

Failure to collect this information would hinder the mission of the Peace Corps by eliminating the mechanism to meet the requirement in Section 22 of the Peace Corps Act, which is that each applicant be investigated to ensure that enrollment of the applicant as a Volunteer is consistent with the national interest.

Moreover, Peace Corps Volunteers are closely observed in the foreign countries in which they serve. The negative impact of a volunteer with inappropriate, undesirable or illegal personal behavior while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer could diminish his or her effectiveness as a Volunteer or the effectiveness of the Peace Corps program.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause the information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with guidelines.

No special circumstances exist that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

8. Consultation.

The agency's 60-Day notice was published in the Federal Register on May 10, 2017 [82 FR 21836]. No public comments were received during the 60-day period. The agency's 30-Day Federal Register Notice was published on August 22, 2017 [82 FR 39918]. No public comments were received during the 60-day period.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

There is no payment of gift provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.

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No assurance of confidentiality beyond that provided by the Privacy Act is provided to respondents.

11. Additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

The form requests the applicant to provide their Social Security number, which is required to conduct a background investigation through OPM or other BI contractor for criminal/legal history.

12. Estimates of reporting and recordkeeping hour and cost burdens of the collection of information.

Estimated burden (hours) of the collection of information:

- a. Number of Respondents: 5,000
- b. Frequency of response: One time
- c. Completion time: Two minutes
- d. Annual burden hours: 167 hours

13. Estimates of annualized capital and start-up costs.

* The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.

* If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collections services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use 10/95 existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.

* Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

The estimated start-up costs were as follows: There will be no cost to respondents.

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14. Estimates of annualized Federal Government costs.

Labor Cost (Review of responses)	\$1200
Technology Costs	
Total	

15. Explanation of change in burden.

- a. The agency no longer incurs printing or mailing costs associated with the form.
- b. The agency has reduced the burden on Federal Employees by eliminating the number of staff that reviews the form.
- c. The agency maintains an electronic system through which the form collects the information.

16. Information collections data planned to be published for statistical use.

The information collected will not be quantified and/or published.

17. Explanation for seeking not to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.

N/A

18. Exception to the certification statement.

N/A

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR SECTION B. GO!

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If you checked “Does this ICR contain surveys, censuses or employ statistical method” on the OMB 83-I, the following questions should be answered. Note if any of the methods listed below do not apply to the proposed information collection please note “N/A” and provide a brief explanation.

B: COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection of information does not employ statistical methods.

1. Respondent universe and sampling methods.

2. Procedures for the collection of information.

Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- * Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
- * Estimation procedure,
- * Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
- * Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
- * Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

3. Methods to maximize responses rates and deal with nonresponse.

4. Tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.

Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of test may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

5. Individuals consulted on statistical aspects and individuals collecting and/or analyzing data.

Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.