

# **Phase II Evaluation Activities for Implementing a Next Generation Evaluation Agenda for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program**

**Generic OMB Information Collection Request for  
Formative Data Collection  
0970-0356**

## **Supporting Statement**

### **Part A**

**April 2016**

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Administration for Children and Families  
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## **A. Justification**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) proposes in this Information Collection Request (ICR) to conduct semi-structured informational-interviews with practitioners knowledgeable about programs (including, but not limited to, housing, employment, postsecondary, and financial education) and services (e.g., specialized case management) for youth transitioning to adulthood from foster care. The activities will support ACF's work developing an evaluation agenda as part of the project, Phase II Evaluation Activities for Implementing a Next Generation Evaluation Agenda for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. The interviews will serve two purposes:

1. Identify potential programs and services that might be suitable for future evaluations.
2. Identify experts to potentially participate in working group meetings with ACF about programs and services for youth transitioning to adulthood from foster care.

This request covers interviews with practitioners from state and local agencies and private organizations, employers, and providers, and would fall under ACF's generic clearance for Formative Data Collection for Informing Policy Research (OMB Number 0970-0356). ACF will use the information for internal purposes only and not for release to the public.

### **A1. Necessity for the Data Collection**

Though research over the past several decades documents the challenging early adult outcomes of youth who have aged out of foster care, scholars still know very little about the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving youth outcomes. To understand the current program and practice landscape, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) has contracted with the Urban Institute (Urban) and its partner Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (Chapin Hall) to identify promising youth programs and specialized case-management practices for youth transitioning to adulthood from foster care.

ACF will use the information the project team collects to plan future evaluation activities. ACF is engaging in this collection at the agency's discretion, and has no legal or administrative mandates requiring this specific set of activities.

### **A2. Purpose of Data Collection Procedures**

The purpose of the data collection procedures, which include one-on-one and small group interviews (either in-person or by phone), is to gather firsthand information that is not otherwise published or documented systematically in other data sources.

The project team, in consultation with ACF, will compile a list of potential respondents in the program areas of interest. The project team will contact potential respondents via email (see Appendix A) using contact information found on program websites. The team will follow-up with individual, non-standardized discussions via phone call to answer any questions and schedule the telephone or in-person interview. Each interview will take approximately 1 hour.

One or two team members will conduct each interview with one person leading the conversation and a second person (if present) taking detailed notes.

Appendices B-1, B-2, and B-3 contain discussion guides of the topics the project team will cover in each program area. Topics include questions about the programs or services, the target population, the outreach and referral process, the foster care services context,

staffing and training, and any data and evaluation activities or anticipated or documented program outcomes. Based on ACF leadership priorities, there is potential that additional topics of interest may arise. If so, we will submit tailored instruments for further review as a non-substantive change.

### **A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden**

The study will use semi-structured interviews. While some technology, such as computer-assisted instruments, may reduce burden on respondents (e.g., enabling respondents to answer questions on their own time), this study requires direct person-to-person communication. The discussion questions are designed to elicit nuanced responses, and the project team will need to probe appropriately. A computer-assisted survey method would not allow the interview flexibility the project requires.

To reduce respondent burden, the project team will hold small-group interviews with two or more people when feasible. Small-group interviews will reduce the overall time that a single organization spends on the study. The project team will try to schedule small group interviews when the input from multiple respondents serving comparable roles in the same organization (e.g., case workers), will increase the efficiency and the amount of information the project team can gather in a single session.

### **A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

The information collected will not duplicate information that is already available. The project team will review written documents and organizational materials in advance and use the interviews to fill in missing information – which will make the interviews more efficient. The project is designed to gather details about programs and services that will allow ACF to assess whether the program or services would be a strong candidate for future evaluation or participation in a future ACF working-group meeting. No other studies are exploring these programs or services with these goals in mind or have collected the information the project team needs to make their assessment.

### **A5. Involvement of Small Organizations**

The programs the project team interviews may be small. The team will minimize the burden on program staff by keeping the interview as short as possible, by scheduling the interviews at a time most convenient for respondents, and by not requesting written responses. The interviews will be one-time only.

### **A7. Special Circumstances**

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

### **A8. Federal Register Notice and Consultation *Federal Register Notice and Comments***

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of this information collection activity. This notice was published on

September 15, 2014, Volume 79, Number 178, page 54985, and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment period, no comment(s) were received.

**A9. Incentives for Respondents**

The project team will not offer incentives for respondents.

**A10. Privacy of Respondents**

The project team will maintain participants’ privacy by not sharing respondents’ identities with anyone outside of the research team or federal staff. The information the project team collects will not be released publicly. Respondents will be informed that their responses will be kept private.

**A11. Sensitive Questions**

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection, and the project team will inform respondents that participation is voluntary.

**A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden**

Table 1 below shows estimated burden of the information collection, which will take place within a 12 month period. The project team will interview approximately 120 program leaders or other management staff. The total number of annual burden hours for this effort is 120. The project team will interview most respondents only once.

The total annual cost burden to respondents is approximately \$4,005.60, as shown in the last column of Table 1. The figure is based on the mean wages for “Social and Community Services Managers;” as reported in the 2015 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates.

**TABLE 1: Total Burden Requested Under this Information Collection**

Type of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Average No. of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response (in hours)	Total Burden Hours	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Respondent Costs
Appendix A: Initial Screening	20	1	1	20 hrs	\$33.38	\$667.60
Appendix B-1: Discussion Guide for Specialized Case Management Interviews	30	1	1	30 hrs	\$33.38	\$1,001.40
Appendix B-2:	35	1	1	35 hrs	\$33.38	\$1,168.30

Discussion Guide for College Success Program Interviews						
Appendix B-3: Discussion Guide for Employment Program Interviews	35	1	1	35 hrs	\$33.38	\$1,168.30

**A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers**

There are no additional costs to respondents.

**A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government**

The total cost for the data collection activities under this current request will be \$80,000. This information collection request is for a 12month period.

The estimate includes the costs of project staff time on drafting the discussion guides, collecting the information, analyzing the responses and writing the results.

**A15. Change in Burden**

This is a new data collection.

**A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication**

The informational interviews will occur over twelve months. The project team will take notes during each interview and prepare a summary write-up for each program or service. ACF will not release the notes or summaries publicly, but will use them internally for future evaluation and expert working group planning.

**A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date**

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

**A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.