

FMLA Wave 4 Surveys: Summary of Public Comments to 30 Day Notice and DOL Responses

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), DOL 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 Friday, September 1, 2017 and provided a 30 day period for public comment.

During the notice and comment period, the government received comments from six entities. Most of these entities (5 of 6) are supportive of the FMLA study. They praised the value of past waves of FMLA surveys in facilitating other studies of family and medical leave and enabling DOL to administer and enforce the law and expressed their expectation that the current study will continue to provide useful information.

Some of these entities also provided specific suggestions for changes to the surveys and sampling plans. DOL has carefully considered these pieces of feedback and will incorporate updated prompting language to facilitate the survey data collection based on the suggestions. At the same time, DOL's concerns with achieving a high response rate while balancing burden and survey administration costs result in not accepting some suggestions such as to add an open-ended or close-ended question with a range of categories to the survey instrument.

Finally, one comment raises opposition to the study by raising concerns related to a news report of FMLA abuse in New Jersey's transportation system. However, the comment was not relevant to the study as the issues and activities included in the comment are beyond the scope of this study.