

**Justification for Non-Substantive Changes for
Application Status
20 CFR 401.45
OMB No. 0960-0763**

Background

Application Status provides users with the capability to check the status of their pending Social Security claims via the National 800 Number Automated Telephone Service.

SSA established a process for authenticating the information of individuals who use the Application Status function to check the status of their Social Security claim. Currently, the automated telephone application asks callers for their Social Security number (SSN); date of birth (DOB); and an 8-digit confirmation number, which the system provides when a claimant files a claim.

SSA systems determine the type of claim(s) the callers filed based upon the information provided. Subsequently, the automated telephone system provides callers with the option to choose the claim for which they wish to obtain status. For instance, the callers may have applied for one or multiple types of benefits (for example, Retirement Insurance Benefit (RIB)/Disability Insurance Benefit; or RIB/Spouse of a Retired Worker Benefit). If the callers applied for multiple claims, the automated system allows the callers to select the claim for which they would like to obtain status. Once callers select the claim(s) they are calling about, an automated voice advises them of the status of their claim. The automated responses are limited to one or some combination of the following possibilities:

- A decision has been made on your claim. You will receive the decision by U.S. mail.
- A decision has not been made on your claim.
- The Disability Determination Service in your State is processing the medical portion of your claim.
- As of today, a decision has not been made on your reconsideration request.
- As of today, a decision has not been made on your request for a Federal Reviewing Official Review.
- As of today, the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review has not made a decision on your appeal request.
- We are waiting for your original documents.
- Due to systems problems, we are unable to process your request at this time.
- I'm sorry, but the system is unavailable at this time; or,
- We are sorry; we are unable to process your request.

Revisions to the Collection Instrument:

- **Change #1:** Removal of all confirmation number language in the application path.

Justification #1: Currently Application Status is SSA's least successful telephone application because callers are required to provide the confirmation number(s) they receive when they initially submitted an application. Callers presume all they need to obtain their status is their SSN, and end up failing out of the application for lack of the confirmation number, resulting in a transfer to an agent for service. Removing the confirmation number requirement and just using SSN and DOB will yield a higher self-service success rate and free up call service representatives (CSRs) to handle more complex calls.

- **Change #2:** We are revising Prompt CS0220_out_92 to say "A decision has NOT been made on your claim. If you have any further questions, please contact your local Field Office."

Justification #2: Currently, the system just mentions that a decision has not been made on the claim (see responses listed above). This change will prompt the system to tell the callers to reach out to their local field office for further assistance, only when SSA has not, yet, made a decision. Claimants who apply online or in a field office need to know that the field office has more information available to them than what we provide over the phone. We are implementing this change based on current practices in our field offices.

SSA will implement these changes on **February 8, 2020**. We do not expect these revisions to affect the current burden for this collection.

Justification Resubmission of the Collection within One Year of OMB Approval

We were unable to submit these changes with our original clearance package, approved on 12/13/19, because we were just beginning to analyze the required work for this application. As part of the Commissioner's Digital Transformation Plan, we are required to revise several of our telephone applications and our backend systems so they are more efficient; help the public self-serve more often; free up our CSRs to handle calls that are more complex; and create backend systems that are not silos so they require fewer resources for maintenance. We cannot wait for the next renewal to make these changes since the Commissioner is requiring that we implement these customer-service upgrades as quickly as possible.