

**To:** Josh Brammer  
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)  
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

**From:** Nicole Constance, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE)  
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

**Date:** January 14, 2021

**Subject:** Nonsubstantive Change Request – OPRE Research Study: Coparenting and Healthy Relationship and Marriage Education for Dads (CHaRMED) [Descriptive, Exploratory Study] (OMB #0970-0540)

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This memo requests approval of nonsubstantive changes to the approved information collection, Coparenting and Healthy Relationship and Marriage Education for Dads (CHaRMED) (OMB #0970-0540).

### ***Background***

The purpose of the CHaRMED study is to better understand the services that federal and non-federal fatherhood programs provide in the areas of Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education (HMRE) and coparenting to learn what strategies hold promise for promoting fathers' active engagement in these services. To accomplish this, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has contracted with Child Trends to conduct semi-structured interviews with fatherhood program and community partner staff, fathers who are not currently enrolled and/or participating in healthy romantic or coparenting relationship services ("nonparticipating" fathers), and curriculum developers; focus groups with fathers who are currently enrolled in fatherhood programs and attending healthy romantic or coparenting relationship services (participating fathers) and coparents; and on-site program observations of fatherhood programs. Materials for this descriptive, exploratory study received OMB approval on February 03, 2020 (OMB #0970-0540). Data collection began in March 2020 just as many states and local jurisdictions were beginning to implement social distancing guidance to contain the spread of COVID-19. As a result, ACF seeks to modify several components of the CHaRMED study's design so that the study can continue data collection using remote procedures and so that the study can address a few new questions related to how COVID-19 may be affecting fathers, coparents, and the programs that serve them. Additional modifications are requested to account for minor updates to the study's target population of fathers and the data collection instruments.

### ***Overview of Requested Changes***

This nonsubstantive change request seeks to:

- 1) Revise components of the study's design in order to conduct data collection with fathers participating in fatherhood programs and coparents remotely via semi-structured interviews instead of in-person focus groups. This shift requires changes to the study's recruitment, design, overall sample size, and total estimated burden. As a result, we have revised the following materials:

- a. Instrument 5. Interview Protocol Fathers
- b. Instrument 6. Interview Protocol Coparents
- c. Appendix G. CHaRMED Consent Forms
- d. Supporting Statements A and B

See the revised Supporting Statements for more details about the specific changes that are being requested.

- 2) Add a small number of new questions to the data collection protocols to better understand if and how fatherhood program services have shifted due to the spread of the novel coronavirus within the US, and how fathers' and coparents' relationships and interactions may have changed. ACF is also interested in learning more about how its programs are responding to COVID-19 and how its service populations are affected. New questions have been added to the following approved instruments:
  - a. Instrument 2. Interview Protocol with Fatherhood Program Staff
  - b. Instrument 3. Interview Protocol with Program Partner Staff
  - c. Instrument 4. Interview Protocol with Nonparticipating Fathers
  - d. Instrument 5. Interview Protocol Fathers
  - e. Instrument 6. Interview Protocol Coparents
- 3) Add a new set of informed consent forms for fathers that have recently been released from prison (see **Appendix G. CHaRMED Consent Forms**; specifically, Consent Form – Nonparticipating Father Interview (Form B) and Consent Form – Father Interview (Form B)). The team has recruited multiple fatherhood programs that exclusively serve incarcerated fathers or fathers recently released from prison. Because the study aims to understand the range of fatherhood programs offered and the populations served, it is important to include fathers recently released from prison in our study population. The Child Trends' IRB requires this population of fathers to sign a consent form with specific language indicating that study participation will not impact parole or probation and information obtained will not be shared with participants' parole officers.
- 4) Clarify questions and probes in the data collection instruments after feedback from study team data collection trainings and conducting staff interviews. The nature of these minor changes includes reorganizing existing content, clarifying questions, editing for consistency across protocols, and removing redundant or unnecessary questions. These changes will help to ensure consistency in data collection across interviewers. Updates have been made to the following approved instruments:
  - a. Instrument 2. Interview Protocol with Fatherhood Program Staff
  - b. Instrument 3. Interview Protocol with Program Partner Staff
  - c. Instrument 4. Interview Protocol with Nonparticipating Fathers
  - d. Instrument 5. Interview Protocol Fathers
  - e. Instrument 6. Interview Protocol Coparents

### ***Time Sensitivities***

We are requesting approval as soon as possible. Enrolled fatherhood programs are beginning to notify fathers and coparents about the CHaRMED study, therefore, the team would like to move

forward with conducting remote interviews using the revised instruments while their interest is piqued. Additionally, the CHaRMED team would like to be able to collect information on changes in programming due to social distance policies as soon as possible when these changes and their implications are still recent.