

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

From: Kathleen Dwyer and Alysia Blandon
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE)
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Date: April 3, 2020

Subject: NonSubstantive Change Request – Evaluation of the Family Unification Program
(OMB #0970-0514)

This memo requests approval of nonsubstantive changes to the approved information collection, Evaluation of the Family Unification Program (OMB #0970-0514).

Background

The Evaluation of the Family Unification Program study was approved on September 18, 2018. The evaluation is a multi-site randomized controlled trial evaluation of the Family Unification Program, which provides housing vouchers to child welfare involved families. The data collection for the study consists of qualitative interviews with program staff and families, forms to be filled out by staff, and administrative data collection.

We recruited four sites in 2019 to participate in the study, which is less than our goal of 6-10 sites. We now have the opportunity to recruit additional sites.

With our four current sites, we have completed the recruitment interviews with staff, the first site visit (to set up the evaluation) and have collected housing status forms, referral forms and dashboards from each of the sites. Through these activities, we received feedback that the sites wanted the referral form to be simplified and shortened.

Additionally, many of the sites are currently dealing with issues that have to do with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overview of Requested Changes

We are requesting to make the following changes to the Referral Form (Appendix P) and the Housing Status Form (Appendix O):

- Both the housing status form and referral form both have the same section called “Current Living Situation”. We have made the same modifications to this section in both forms. We added skip patterns to ensure only relevant questions were asked, we deleted duplicative questions, and we shortened and simplified the text in the questions:
 - Added skip instructions to the “where is the family currently living?” to allow users to skip questions that are not applicable.
 - Added a sub question for institutions of “was the client homeless (in place not

designed for sleeping accommodation/emergency shelter) prior to entering the institution” which allowed for the elimination of the subquestion on exiting institutions

- o Reduced the text to simplify the language for the questions describing the current living situation (e.g., substandard housing)
- On the section asking about past living situation, we removed the question based on current evictions since that has been confusing to case workers.
- On the section on services, we removed the subquestions asking about the type of services.

In addition, we propose to add language to Attachment 5, the Outreach Template, acknowledging that they may be dealing with additional challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Time Sensitivities

This work is time sensitive. The awards were expedited due to COVID-19 and have just been made. The study team will reach out the sites the week of April 6th 2020. We would like to be able to share the referral form with the sites when we are conducting recruitment.