

Alternative Supporting Statement for Information Collections Designed for
Research, Public Health Surveillance, and Program Evaluation Purposes

Fatherhood Family-Focused, Interconnected, Resilient, and Essential (Fatherhood FIRE) Grantee Local Evaluation Plan Template

Formative Data Collections for Research and Evaluation

0970 - 0356

Supporting Statement

Part A

December 2020

Submitted By:
Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Part A

Executive Summary

- **Type of Request:** This Information Collection Request is for a generic information collection under the umbrella generic, Formative Data Collections for ACF Research and Evaluation (0970-0356).
- **Description of Request:** Fatherhood FIRE grantees conducting local evaluations are required to develop and execute an evaluation plan that meets ACF standards for quality and rigor.¹ This Information Collection Request seeks clearance for an evaluation plan template that grantees will submit to ACF. The template ensures grantees systematically develop and document an evaluation plan that meets grant requirements. This information will only be used by the grantee, evaluation technical assistance provider, and ACF, and will not be published. We do not intend for this information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.
- **Time Sensitivity:** Fatherhood FIRE grantees conducting local evaluations must obtain ACF approval for their evaluation plan by the end of the grant's planning period on March 31, 2021. The evaluation plan template will help facilitate the approval process and help ensure strong local evaluations that meet ACF standards for quality and rigor. Since evaluation plans would need to be due by February 19, 2021, ACF is requesting for approval by the end of the year to ensure that grantees have sufficient time to complete the evaluation plan template.

¹ The Office of Family Assistance (OFA), within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), in the Department of Health and Human Services awarded Fatherhood Family-focused, Interconnected, Resilient, and Essential (Fatherhood FIRE) demonstration grants to support responsible fatherhood promotion activities as authorized under 42 U.S.C. § 603(a)(2).

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A1. Necessity for Collection

As part of their grant agreements, Fatherhood Family-Focused, Interconnected, Resilient, and Essential (FIRE) grantees conducting local evaluations must develop an evaluation plan that directly aligns with the requirements provided in the funding opportunity announcement (FOA) for the demonstration grant (ACF-OFA-ZJ-1846). Only evaluation plans approved by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Family Assistance (OFA) will proceed. The evaluation plan template covered in this information collection request will help facilitate the approval process, guide grantees in their evaluation efforts, and ensure grantees undertake strong local evaluations that ACF standards for quality and rigor.

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate this collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose

Purpose and Use

This information collection provides Fatherhood FIRE grantees a template to systematically document all required components of their local evaluation plans. The ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) developed the Evaluation Plan Template with their evaluation TA contractor to standardize the review of Fatherhood FIRE local evaluation plans to ensure plans meet grant requirements and standards for quality and rigor. Grantees will conduct local evaluations as explicated in their evaluation plan template.

The evaluation plan template provides a way for grantees to systematically document all required components of their local evaluation plans to guide evaluation activities throughout the grant period. The template will also allow ACF to systematically review the plans to ensure they meet the standards for rigor and quality.

The evaluation TA provider will use information collected from the Evaluation Plan Templates to inform ongoing technical assistance efforts to strengthen grantee evaluation capacity. The goal of these efforts is to support grantees in designing and conducting evaluations that are well-designed and well-implemented, so that local evaluations yield strong evidence about what works and why in responsible fatherhood programming.

This proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for research and evaluation (0970-0356):

- maintain a research agenda that is rigorous and relevant
- inform the provision of technical assistance.

The information collected is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision-maker and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

Research Questions or Tests

Not applicable; there are no research questions or tests in this information request..

Study Design

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Following OMB approval, the 42 Fatherhood FIRE grantees conducting local evaluations will complete and submit their Evaluation Plan Templates over a two-month period. Submitted evaluation plans will be reviewed by the evaluation TA contractor to assess evaluation plans’ potential strength and alignment with ACF standards for rigor and quality. Grantees may be asked to provide additional clarification or revise information submitted to ensure their evaluation plan meets grant requirements for local evaluations.

The Evaluation Plan Template reflects best practices for developing evaluation plans by documenting key evaluation activities that need to be explicated prior to carrying out the evaluation. The template follows the evaluation plan components outlined in the Fatherhood FIRE funding announcement (ACF-OFA-ZJ-1846). Data collected from the evaluation plan templates will only represent evaluation activities for the 42 Fatherhood FIRE grantees conducting local evaluations. Data are not intended to be generalizable beyond these 42 grantees.

<i>Data Collection Activity</i>	<i>Instrument(s)</i>	<i>Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection</i>	<i>Mode and Duration</i>
Documentation of grantee evaluation plans	Evaluation Plan Template	<p>Respondents: Fatherhood FIRE grantee staff and contracted local evaluator staff</p> <p>Content: Key components of grantees’ evaluation plan, including research questions, data collection plan, and methodology.</p> <p>Purpose: To guide grantees in their evaluation efforts and support grantees in the conduct of strong evaluations that meet ACF standards for quality and rigor.</p>	<p>Mode: Documented responses submitted in the template</p> <p>Duration: 8 hours</p>

Other Data Sources and Uses of Information

Additional sources of information that will be used to inform evaluation TA activities include: information abstracted from grantees’ Fatherhood FIRE grant applications, on-going communications with grantees as part of TA provision, and ACF guidance.

A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

The evaluation TA contractor will employ information technology by allowing grantees to submit the Evaluation Plan Template electronically, to reduce burden on grantees conducting local evaluations. Additionally, the layout and format of the Evaluation Plan Template is designed to reduce burden by pre-defining response categories, as appropriate.

A4. Use of Existing Data: Efforts to reduce duplication, minimize burden, and increase utility and government efficiency

No other sources of information will allow ACF and the evaluation TA contractor to assess local evaluation plans’ potential strength and alignment with ACF standards for rigor and quality. No unnecessary information is being requested of program staff or grantees. None of the instruments will ask for information that can be reliably obtained through other sources.

A5. Impact on Small Businesses

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Some Fatherhood FIRE grantee organizations conducting local evaluations are small nonprofit organizations. Grantees may contract with local evaluators affiliated with small organizations and task the local evaluator to provide information requested in the Evaluation Plan Template. The Evaluation Plan Template is designed to minimize burden on these entities by standardizing the collection of the information and allowing electronic submission of the completed template.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Now subsumed under 2(b) above and 10 (below)

A8. 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 the overarching generic clearance for formative information collection. This notice was published on October 11, 2017, Volume 82, Number 195, page 47212, and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. A subsequent notice, updated with more specific information, was published on June 18, 2019, Volume 84, Number 117, page 28307, and provided a thirty-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment periods, no substantive comments were received.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

ACF consulted the evaluation TA contractor, MDRC and MEF Associates, to prepare the Evaluation Plan Template according to best practices described under A2 in Study Design.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation

No tokens of appreciation will be provided.

A10. Privacy: Procedures to protect privacy of information, while maximizing data sharing

Personally Identifiable Information

This information request will not collect personally identifiable information (PII).

Assurances of Privacy

No PII and no sensitive information will be collected. Respondents will be informed of all uses of the information provided and the information will be shared only between the evaluation TA contractor and ACF.

Data Security and Monitoring

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Grantees will submit their completed Evaluation Plan Template electronically to the evaluation TA team. Completed templates will be transferred, stored, and accessed on MDRC systems that adhere to data security standards described below. The plans are intended to document evaluation processes for planning purposes only; they will not be published or disseminated.

MDRC’s security procedures include the following:

1. Access to information on a need-to-know basis, supported by multi-factor authentication factors
2. End-to-end encryption, in-transit and at-rest, using TLS 1.2+ and AES256 via FIPS 140-2 modules for systems integrity, systems and communications protection, and media protection
3. Continuous monitoring of application and transport-level traffic for inbound and outbound flows

These are supplemented by 1) employee nondisclosure agreements and annual data security training, 2) IT support teams well-versed in cyber security, and 3) policies for responding to data security incidents.

A11. Sensitive Information²

No sensitive information will be collected.

A12. Burden

Explanation of Burden Estimates

Estimated burden for the data collection covered by this clearance request is 336 hours, for a total cost to respondents of \$11,776.80. We assume 42 grantee respondents will be involved in the information collection. We estimate it will take each grantee respondent 8 hours to complete the Evaluation Plan Template.

Estimated hourly costs to respondents are based on the average hourly wage of social and community service managers of \$35.05, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates (U.S. Department of Labor, May 2019; <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes119151.htm>).

Estimated Annualized Burden and Cost to Respondents

Instrument	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses	Avg. Burden per Response (in	Total/Annual Burden (in	Average Hourly	Total Annual Respondent
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² Examples of sensitive topics include (but not limited to): social security number; sex behavior and attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close relationships, e.g., family, pupil-teacher, employee-supervisor; mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to respondents; religion and indicators of religion; community activities which indicate political affiliation and attitudes; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers; records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment; receipt of economic assistance from the government (e.g., unemployment or WIC or SNAP); immigration/citizenship status.

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	(total over request period)	per Respondent (total over request period)	hours)	hours)	Wage Rate	Cost
Evaluation Plan Template	42	1	8	336	\$35.05	\$11,776.80
Total	42	1	8	336	\$35.05	\$11,776.80

A13. Costs

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimated Total Costs to the Federal Government

Cost Category	Estimated Costs
Instrument Development and OMB Clearance	\$35,588.13
Field Work (technical assistance)	\$62,452.93
Publications/Dissemination	0
Total costs over the request period	\$98,041.06

A15. Reasons for changes in burden

This is a new individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for Research and Evaluation (0970-0356).

A16. Timeline

Activity	Time Period*
Grantees complete and submit evaluation plan template	January - February 2021
Evaluation TA contractor reviews submitted evaluation plan templates	February - March 2021
Grantee revises and/or clarifies information in the evaluation plan template	February - March 2021
ACF approves grantee evaluation plan	April 2021

*Start dates for use of templates is dependent on OMB approval if this generic information collection request.

A17. Exceptions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

Instrument – Evaluation Plan Template