

To: Jordan Cohen
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: September 15, 2020

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

This memo requests approval of non-substantive 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 9/18/2018. 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.

All qualitative interviews were intended to take place over three site visits, with family interviews taking place at the second and third visits. Our second site visit is scheduled to take place in Fall/Winter 2020. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be conducting our second round of site visits virtually, and accordingly, we propose to conduct interviews with families virtually instead of in-person as was originally planned. The primary goal of the interviews is to understand how families experience the program.

Overview of Requested Changes

The first set of requested changes are intended to clarify our protocols to understand how the program was working before COVID-19 and during COVID-19. We propose updates to the following interview protocol:

- Appendix K - Guide for Implementation Study for Families

These changes that we have made are meant to clarify that we would like to know how families experienced FUP prior to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the questions are largely the same.

In addition, because we are now proposing to conduct the interviews virtually instead of in person, we are requesting to make changes to our consent process and outreach script. First, we have created a verbal consent process (Attachment 1B and Attachment 3). Because some of the housing authorities may not accept verbal consent to provide contact information, we will retain

the original, unchanged written consent form (Attachment 1A) for use on an ad hoc basis.

Second, we have modified our outreach script for parents to accommodate scheduling virtual interviews and determining the mode of virtual interview that they would prefer: Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or a phone call. In addition, we have given the families the option of being reminded via mailer or via email (Attachment 6).

The changes that we have made are meant to avoid in person contact and to accommodate the technological preferences and capabilities of respondents. However, the content remains largely the same.

Time Sensitivities

This work is time sensitive. We are planning our interviews for this Fall. We will need the protocols finalized by October 15th so that we can have time to train the staff who will be conducting the interviews.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1A - Informed Consent Form (Written)
- Attachment 1B - Informed Consent Form (Verbal)
- Attachment 3 - Informed Consent for Parents
- Attachment 6 - Outreach call script for parents