



November 3, 2021

Dominic Mancini
Deputy Director
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC

Subject: Request for Emergency Review and Clearance

Dear Mr. Mancini:

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR Part 1320, *Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public*, I request that the proposed information collection project, Requirement for Airlines and Operators to Collect and Transmit Designated Information for Passengers and Crew Arriving into the United States; Requirement for Passengers to Provide Designated Information, be processed in accordance with section 1320.13, Emergency Processing.

I have determined that this information must be collected prior to the expiration of time periods established under Part 1320, and that this information is essential to CDC's COVID-19 emergency response. While vaccination is the most important tool for controlling the COVID-19 pandemic, public health mitigation efforts, including isolation of infected persons and contact tracing and management, remain key to slowing transmission and spread of SARS-CoV-2, even as vaccines are increasingly available to the U.S. public and around the world. Air travel may contribute to the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and its variants around the globe if people who are infected or incubating infection travel by aircraft and do not adhere to public health mitigation efforts. Air travel can also increase a person's risk of getting and spreading communicable diseases by bringing people in close contact with others, often for prolonged periods, and exposing them to frequently touched surfaces. While fully vaccinated travelers are less likely to get and transmit SARS-CoV-2, international travel poses additional risks, and even fully vaccinated travelers might be at increased risk for getting and possibly spreading some SARS-CoV-2 variants. Public health officials may need to follow up with travelers after arrival, either because these travelers may have been exposed before they traveled, or because during travel they were possibly exposed to a person known to have a communicable disease that poses a public health threat, such as COVID-19.

On October 25, 2021, CDC announced an Order titled *Requirement for Airlines and Operators to Collect Contact Information for All Passengers Arriving into the United States*. This Order requires airlines and other aircraft operators to collect contact information for passengers before their arrival into the United States from a foreign country, retain the information for 30 days, and transmit the information to CDC upon request. The purpose of collecting this information is to identify and locate passengers who may have been exposed to a person with a communicable disease, such as COVID-19, for public health follow-up. This Order is effective at 12:01 EST on November 8, 2021.

In the past, public health efforts to follow up with travelers arriving into the United States have been hampered by incomplete or inaccurate contact information, causing delays in conducting contact investigations and requiring resource-intensive entry screening operations to facilitate post-arrival



management of travelers. Timely public health follow-up requires health officials to have prompt access to accurate and complete contact information for travelers as they arrive into the United States or transit through the United States. Inaccurate or incomplete contact information decreases the ability of public health authorities to protect the health of travelers and the public. The best way to ensure airline passengers' contact information is available in real time is to collect the information before they board a flight. As it is impossible to predict which passengers' or crewmembers' information will be needed for public health purposes, it is necessary to collect information for all passengers and crewmembers before they arrive or transit through the United States.

CDC cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance given the fact that COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread rapidly around the world and the extreme transmissibility of the Delta variant. As of November 1, 2021, a cumulative estimated total of over 246 million cases and over 4.9 million confirmed deaths have now been reported worldwide. Even in countries that have managed to slow the rate of transmission, the risks for COVID-19 resurgence remains. In the United States, as of November 1, 2021, there have been over 45 million cases and more than 743,000 confirmed deaths.

Please provide an approval/disapproval determination of this request to collect information under an emergency clearance by close of business November 4, 2021.

Respectfully,

Debra Lubar
Acting Director, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic
Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)