

Supporting Statement for Form SSA-781
Certificate of Responsibility For Welfare and Care of Child Not in Applicant's Custody
20 CFR 404.330, 404.339-404.341 and 404.348-404.349
OMB No. 0960-0019

A. Justification

1. Introduction/Authoring Laws and Regulations

Sections 202(b)(1)(B), 202 (c)(1)(B), and 202(g)(1)(E) of the *Social Security Act (Act)*, and 20 CFR 404.330, 404.339-404.341, and 404.348-404.349 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, contain the “in-care” entitlement requirement and the conditions under which a claimant meets it. A requirement for entitlement to Social Security benefits as a mother, a father, a surviving divorced mother or father, or as a spouse who is under age 62, is that the spouse under age 62; the surviving divorced mother or father; the mother; or the father must have in their care an entitled child (under age 16 or disabled).

2. Description of Collection

SSA uses Form SSA-781 to determine if non-custodial parents who file for spouse’s, mothers, fathers, or surviving divorced mother’s or father’s benefits based on having a child in their care, meet the “child-in-care” requirements. The child-in-care provision requires claimants to have an entitled child under age 16 or disabled in their care. The respondents are applicants for spouse’s; mother’s; father’s or surviving divorced mother’s or father’s Social Security benefits.

3. Use of Information Technology to Collect the Information

Form SSA-781 is available for the respondent to print from SSA’s website, complete, and mail back to SSA. This collection does not currently have a fully public-facing Internet version, as we prioritized other information collections for full electronic conversions. Given that IT Mod programming is an ongoing, dynamic project, we cannot provide specific timelines for when we will be able to make any particular ICR available via Internet web-based application. We will ultimately convert most existing ICRs to full electronic versions depending on how they fall within our overall IT Mod schema, but this may be unconnected to the PRA approval lifecycle.

In the interim, we evaluated this collection for conversion to a submittable PDF. Given the high volume of conversions we are coordinating and the more urgent nature of some of the other conversions, we ultimately decided not to prioritize this ICR for conversion to fully submittable PDF at this time. When we are able to schedule this form for conversion to a submittable PDF, we will submit a Change Request to OMB to request prior approval.

4. Why We Cannot Use Duplication Information

The nature of the information we collect and the manner in which we collect it

preclude duplication. SSA does not use another collection instrument to obtain similar data.

5. Minimizing Burden on Small Respondents

This collection does not affect small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequence of Not Collecting Information or Collecting it Less Frequently

If we did not collect this information, we would not be able to determine whether the claimant meets the statutory “child-in care” requirement. Because we only collect the information once, we cannot collect it less frequently. There are no technical or legal obstacles to burden reduction.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances that would cause SSA to conduct this information collection in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Solicitation of Public Comment and Other Consultations with the Public

The 60-day advance Federal Register Notice published on March 10, 2022 at 87 FR 13783, and we received no public comments. The 30-day FRN published on May 24, 2022 at 87 FR 31598. If we receive any comments in response to this Notice, we will forward them to OMB.

9. Payment or Gifts to Respondents

SSA does not provide payment or gifts to the respondents.

10. Assurances of Confidentiality

SSA protects and holds confidential the information it collects in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 1306, 20 CFR 401 and 402, 5 U.S.C. 552 (Freedom of Information Act), 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), and OMB Circular No. A-130.

11. Justification of Sensitive Questions

The information collection does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimates of Public Reporting Burden

Please see the burden chart below:

Modality of Completion	Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Average Burden Per Response (minutes)	Estimated Total Annual Burden (hours)	Average Theoretical Hourly Cost Amount (dollars)*	Average Wait Time in Field Office or for Teleservice Centers (minutes)**	Total Annual Opportunity Cost (dollars)***
SSA-781	390	1	5	33	\$28.01*	21**	\$4,762***

* We based this figure on the average U.S. worker’s hourly wages, as reported by Bureau of Labor Statistics data (https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm).

** We based this figure by averaging the average FY 2022 wait times for field offices and teleservice centers, based on SSA’s current management information data.

*** This figure does not represent actual costs that SSA is imposing on recipients of Social Security payments to complete this application; rather, these are theoretical opportunity costs for the additional time respondents will spend to complete the application. **There is no actual charge to respondents to complete the application.**

In addition, OMB’s Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) is requiring SSA to use a rough estimate of a 30-minute, one-way, drive time in our calculations of the time burden for this collection. OIRA based their estimation on a spatial analysis of SSA’s current field office locations and the location of the average population centers based on census tract information, which likely represents a 13.97-mile driving distance for one-way travel. We depict this on the chart below:

Total Number of Respondents Who Visit a Field Office	Frequency of Response	Average One-Way Travel Time to a Field Office (minutes)	Estimated Total Travel Time to a Field Office (hours)	Total Annual Opportunity Cost for Travel Time (dollars)****
390	1	30	195	\$5,462

**** We based this dollar amount on the Average Theoretical Hourly Cost Amount in dollars shown on the burden chart above.

Per OIRA, we include this travel time burden estimate under the 5 CFR 1320.8(a) (4), which requires us to provide “time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons [for]...transmitting, or otherwise disclosing the information,” as well as 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3)(iii) which requires us to estimate “the average burden collection...to the extent practicable.” SSA notes that we do not obtain or maintain any data on travel times to a field office, nor do we have any data which shows that the average respondent drives to a field office, rather than using any other mode of transport. SSA also acknowledges that respondents’ mode of travel and, therefore, travel times vary widely dependent on region, mode of travel, and actual proximity to a field office.

NOTE: We included the total opportunity cost estimate from this chart in our calculations when showing the total time and opportunity cost estimates in the paragraph below.

We base our burden estimates on current management information data, which includes data from actual interviews, as well as from years of conducting this

information collection. Per our management information data, we believe that 5 minutes accurately shows the average burden per response for reading the instructions, gathering the facts, and answering the questions. Based on our current management information data, the current burden information we provided is accurate. The total burden for this ICR is 33 burden hours (reflecting SSA management information data), which results in an associated theoretical (not actual) opportunity cost financial burden of **\$10,224**. SSA does not charge respondents to complete our applications.

13. Annual Cost to the Respondents (Other)

This collection does not impose a known cost burden on the respondents.

14. Annual Cost to the Federal Government

The annual cost to the Federal Government is approximately **\$55,018**. This estimate accounts for costs from the following areas:

Description of Cost Factor	Methodology for Estimating Cost	Cost in Dollars*
Designing and Printing the Form	Design Cost + Printing Cost	\$749
Distributing, Shipping, and Material Costs for the Form	Distribution + Shipping + Material Cost	\$0*
SSA Employee (e.g., field office, 800 number, DDS staff) Information Collection and Processing Time	GS-9 employee x # of responses x processing time	\$50,154
Full-Time Equivalent Costs	Out of pocket costs + Other expenses for providing this service	\$0*
Systems Development, Updating, and Maintenance	GS-9 employee x man hours for development, updating, maintenance	\$4,115
Quantifiable IT Costs	Any additional IT costs	\$0*
Total		\$55,018

* We have inserted a \$0 amount for cost factors that do not apply to this collection.

SSA is unable to break down the costs to the Federal government further than we already have. It is difficult for us to break down the cost for processing a single form, as field office staff often help respondents fill out several forms at once, and the time it takes to do so can vary greatly per respondent. As well, because so many employees have a hand in each aspect of our forms, we use an estimated average hourly wage, based on the wage of our average field office employee (GS-9) for these calculations. However, we have calculated these costs as accurately as possible based on the information we collect for creating, updating, and maintaining these information collections.

15. Program Changes or Adjustments to the Information Collection Request

When we last cleared this IC in 2019, the burden was 2,333 hours. However, we are currently reporting a burden of 33 hours. This change stems from a decrease in the number of responses from 14,000 to 390. In addition, we have decreased the completion time of the form from 10 minutes to 5 minutes. In previous clearances, we had no means in place to track or furnish definitive figures. However, we are now able to track Management Information (MI) data for this collection. Due to this, we have adjusted our number of responses and time burden estimates according to our MI data.

Note: The total burden reflected in ROCIS is 228, while the burden cited in #12 of the Supporting Statement is 33. This discrepancy is because the ROCIS burden reflects the following components: field office waiting time + a rough estimate of a 30-minute, one-way, drive burden. In contrast, the chart in #12 of the Supporting Statement reflects actual burden.

16. Plans for Publication Information Collection Results

SSA will not publish the results of the information collection.

17. Displaying the OMB Approval Expiration Date

OMB granted SSA an exemption from the requirement to print the OMB expiration date on its program forms. SSA produces millions of public-use forms with life cycles exceeding those of an OMB approval. Since SSA does not periodically revise and reprint its public-use forms (e.g., on an annual basis), OMB granted this exemption so SSA would not have to destroy stocks of otherwise useable forms with expired OMB approval dates, avoiding Government waste.

18. Exceptions to Certification Statement

SSA is not requesting an exception to the certification requirements at 5 *CFR* 1320.9 and related provisions at 5 *CFR* 1320.8(b)(3).

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

SSA does not use statistical methods for this information collection.

