



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

February 8, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shagufta Ahmed
Office of Management and Budget Desk Officer

FROM: Michelle Asha Cooper, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Higher Education Programs,
Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions and Duties of the
Assistant Secretary,
Office of Postsecondary Education

RE: Emergency request for Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval

Pursuant to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR 1320, ED requests that the following collection of information, Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) Quarterly Budget and Expenditure Reporting (1840-0849), be processed in accordance with section 1320.13 Emergency Processing. ED has 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 ED's ability to effectively implement the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136), the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) (P.L. 116-260), and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) (P.L. 117-2) in order to address the economic disruption posed by the Novel (new) Coronavirus ("2019-nCoV").

Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act authorizes the Secretary of Education to allocate formula grant funds to participating institutions of higher education (IHEs). Section 18004(c) of the CARES Act allows the IHEs to use up to one-half of the total funds received to cover any costs associated with the significant changes to the delivery of instruction due to the coronavirus (with specific exceptions). Section 18004(a)(2) of the CARES Act authorizes the Secretary to make awards under parts A and B of title III, parts A and B of title V, and subpart 4 of part A of title VII of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended ("HEA"), to address needs directly related to the coronavirus. These awards are in addition to awards made in Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act. Section 18004(a)(3) of the CARES Act, Pub. authorizes the Secretary to allocate funds for part B of Title VII of the HEA, for IHEs that the Secretary determines have the greatest unmet needs related to coronavirus.

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

This information collection request includes additions and revisions to the quarterly budget and expenditure reporting form that will be used by grantees under these sections of the CARES Act, as well as comparable sections of CRRSAA and ARP. These revisions to the collection will ensure the Department will be able to more effectively monitor the use of funds by grantees that have received awards under these sections. The majority of the quarterly report aligns closely with the recently-approved annual reporting form, for which 60- and 30-day comment notices were published. Comments submitted in conjunction with those notices were reviewed and responded to by the Department.

ED has ample experience designing other similar forms in a way that is clear and minimizes burden. We estimate that completing the form will require 5 hours per report, an additional 3 hours from the previous version of this report.

The Department is requesting an emergency clearance from OMB by March 15 and will publish an emergency notice with a 30-day comment period to solicit public comments on the information collection. Expedited approval will allow the revisions to be implemented and announced prior to the first quarter reporting deadline on April 10, 2022. If we are unable to implement the changes in time for this reporting deadline, the Department will be lacking critical information needed to monitor and provide technical assistance to HEERF grantees. Given the amount of HEERF funds that have been distributed, it is imperative that the Department has the information needed to ensure that all uses of funds are in accordance with the governing statutes and program guidance.