

# Employment Processes as Barriers to Employment in the Lower-Wage Market

Formative Data Collections for ACF Research

0970 - 0356

## Supporting Statement

### Part B

MARCH 2022

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

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Mary E. Switzer Building  
330 C Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Project Officer:  
**Megan Reid**

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

**Part B**

**B1. Objectives**

*Study Objectives*

The objectives of the Employment Process as Barriers to Employment in the Low-Wage Labor Market study are to systematically review what is known about how employment processes can present barriers for workers of color, as well as explore and identify potentially promising strategies to address biases in the low-wage labor market. Project collaborator engagement will provide the foundation for the study. Together with the study's review of pertinent literature on racial biases and disparities in the lower wage labor market, the information gathered from the project collaborator (stakeholder) discussions will be used to help identify anti-bias strategies that could be the subject of further study.

*Generalizability of Results*

This study is intended to present internally valid description of the employment processes and barriers for workers in the low-wage market, not to promote statistical generalization to the wider population of workers.

*Appropriateness of Study Design and Methods for Planned Uses*

As described in Section A2 of supporting statement A, the formative data collection under this study will inform the development of ACF research, enable ACF to maintain a research agenda that is rigorous and relevant, and ensure that research products are as current as possible. Project collaborator discussions are appropriate for collecting information about diverse perspectives to the identification of promising anti-bias strategies that may be the subject of further study, in order to build evidence on policies or practices that can disrupt bias in employment processes. As noted in Supporting Statement A, this information is not from a strictly statistically representative set of respondents, nor is it intended to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.

**B2. Methods and Design**

*Target Population*

Project collaborators will come from the following groups: employers, low-wage workers of color, staff from organizations that serve or advocate for workers of color in low-wage jobs, state and local workforce development administrators, and software developers.

The research team will use non-probability, purposive sampling to identify potential respondents who can collectively provide the required breadth of perspective on the study's research questions. Because participants will be purposively selected, they will not be representative of the population of low-wage workers, employers, researchers, State and local workforce development administrators, or software developers.

*Respondent Recruitment*

The research team will work to identify respondents for recruitment. The research team has extensive knowledge of the field that will inform a list of potential project collaborators (and alternates). As noted above, respondents are not intended to be representative. The research team will, however, consider specific experiences and areas of expertise in selecting respondents in order to obtain a range of perspectives and experiences. Once the list of respondents is finalized, a senior member of the research

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

team will reach out to the collaborator by email with a description of the project and a request to participate. If the respondent agrees, the research team will then arrange a one-hour video or audio meeting. If the respondent declines or does not respond, the research team will reach out to alternate respondents using the same process.

### **B3. Design of Data Collection Instruments**

#### *Development of Data Collection Instrument*

Each discussion will address the key steps in the employment process: knowledge of job openings, submission of application, selection of applications for interviews, conducting interviews, making hiring decisions, and retention and promotion, but with topics framed specific to the type of respondent. The Project Collaborator Discussion Guide is structured modularly, containing topics relevant to specific categories of respondents. Discussions with respondents from a given category will cover the set of modules identified as relevant to the respondents from that category. The instrument's modular design around those key steps helps ensure that project collaborators discuss relevant topics only.

### **B4. Collection of Data and Quality Control**

ACF's research team will collect the data.

Prior to starting data collection, the research team will conduct a training for all data collection staff that will cover the purpose of the data collection, how to tailor the instrument to specific project collaborators so that only relevant topics are covered, and how to summarize findings following the discussion using a template. The research team's project director will review all discussion summaries and will request clarification if needed.

### **B5. Response Rates and Potential Nonresponse Bias**

#### *Response Rates*

The discussions are not designed to produce statistically generalizable findings and participating is wholly at the respondent's discretion. Response rates will not be calculated or reported.

#### *Nonresponse*

As project collaborators will not be randomly sampled and findings are not intended to be representative, non-response bias will not be calculated.

### **B6. Production of Estimates and Projections**

The data will not be used to generate population estimates, either for internal use or dissemination.

### **B7. Data Handling and Analysis**

#### *Data Handling*

Research team staff will take notes during the calls with collaborators and summarize the notes following each call. The notes and discussion summaries will be stored on Microsoft Teams in a folder only accessible to members of the research team. Summaries will be made available to ACF. The research team project director will review all discussion summaries for clarity and completeness and will request additional information from the team that facilitated the discussion as needed.

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

### *Data Analysis*

Following each discussion, the research team members that facilitated the call will summarize the discussion in a template that captures key discussion points by employment process step. Following the completion of all project collaborator discussions, the research team will synthesize the findings across discussions by employment steps and share those findings with ACF.

### *Data Use*

The project will use project collaborators characterizations of key sources of bias and suggested approaches to combat bias to identify a set of anti-bias strategies that could be the subject of further research by ACF.

No data will be released to the public.

### **B8. Contact Person(s)**

Andrew Clarkwest, Project Director, [andrew\\_clarkwest@abtassoc.com](mailto:andrew_clarkwest@abtassoc.com)  
Karen Gardiner, Principal Investigator, [karen\\_gardiner@abtasoc.com](mailto:karen_gardiner@abtasoc.com)

### **Attachments**

Instrument 1: Project collaborator Discussion Guide

Appendix A: Draft Outreach Email

Appendix B: Project Description