

**Supporting Statement
Family Reunification Task Force
Travel Questionnaire and Website Application-NEW
July 26, 2021**

A. Justification

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

On February 2, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14011 (E.O. 14011), Establishment of Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families, in response to the prior Administration decision to intentionally separate children from their parents and legal guardians (families), including through the use of the Zero-Tolerance Policy. E.O. 14011 directs the Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families (Task Force) to identify children who were separated and facilitate and enable the reunification of the families. Additionally, E.O. 14011 directs the Task Force to provide recommendations on providing additional services and support for the reunified families, including behavioral health services with a focus on trauma-informed care. The Secretary of Homeland Security is the chair of the Task Force and is joined by the Department of State, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Justice.

Task Force agency members are involved in multiple active litigation cases involving separated families. Most of the families are represented in the *Ms. L. v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Ms. L.)* class action lawsuit. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) represents the parents in this case. The *Ms. L.* court established a steering committee to contact the separated parents and voice their reunification preferences. The Task Force entered settlement negotiations in *Ms. L.* on March 11, 2021.

The Task Force is reunifying families in coordination with the ACLU by accepting humanitarian parole requests for settlement class members and their households. The individuals who may apply for parole are those separated parents and children who are class members and were returned to their home country post separation, and additional household members when there is a compelling humanitarian interest in including them in the reunification. The current process involves the ACLU submitting names of families in small groups to the Task Force, which then verifies that the families fall within the scope of the Task Force based on available DHS and HHS data. Once a family is confirmed to fall within the Task Force's scope, they submit a Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), through their attorney. As the

settlement negotiations are concluded, the ability to seek reunification will be more broadly available to separated families, without requiring submission through the ACLU.

The U.S. Government (USG) has agreed in the initial settlement to assist families in self-identifying and starting the parole process and to facilitate the return of families whose parole requests have been granted. This requires establishing a new website to allow for the individual to self-identify themselves to the U.S. government for reunification. Once the government has the initial information, this information will be shared with an international organization with whom the government has contracted with to make contact with the family and confirm eligibility to seek parole through the Task Force process. The international organization will assist the family with submitting Form I-131 to USCIS. After the Form I-131 is approved, families will request assistance from the international organization in facilitating travel.

To carry out the Task Force's mission to reunify families, DHS is proposing a new data collection. The purpose is to achieve efficiencies to process these individuals for a successful family reunification. To streamline the initial contact, assistance, and reunification travel coordination process, the Task Force plans to establish a website application to create initial contact and a travel form to collect details and information the Task Force needs to make travel arrangements for the beneficiary and other traveling family members.

The information to be collected on the website application would include:

- o A-Number
- o Name of Beneficiary
- o Contact Information of the Beneficiary (phone, address, email)
- o Country of Birth
- o Country of Citizenship
- o Current Country Location
- o Beneficiary Relationship to Child
- o Beneficiary's Preferred Language
- o Separated Child's A#
- o Separated Child Name
- o Separated Child's Date of Birth
- o Separated Child's Country of Birth
- o Separated Child's Country of Citizenship
- o Whether Beneficiary is in contact with Child
- o Whether Beneficiary has knowledge of Child's current location
- o Name of Attorney, Advocate or Preparer
- o Attorney, Advocate, or Preparer Contact Information
- o Relationship of Preparer to Beneficiary (if applicable)

- o Whether a legal agreement exists between Beneficiary and Attorney, Advocate or Preparer

The information to be collected for travel would include: Name, Date of Birth, Gender, A#, Passport Number and Expiration, Phone Number, Email address, Language(s) spoken, Representative/Attorney name and contact information, Date of Embassy Appointment to obtain boarding foil, Identification of Special Assistance Requests, Departure Airport, Final Airport, Traveling requested time frame, Names of others in the traveling party. The data will be stored by the international organization coordinating travel for the families.

2. **Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

To carry out the Task Force's mandate to reunify families, DHS is proposing this new data collection. The purpose is to achieve efficiencies in making contact with individuals and to process these individuals for a successful family reunification. To streamline the initial contact with families and allow them to self-identify for reunification, as well as for travel coordination, the Task Force plans to collect details at the point the individual submits this information on the new website for reunification assistance and in advance of travel - information the Task Force needs to make arrangements for the beneficiary and other traveling family members.

Providing information through this public facing website will be voluntary .

The travel information will be requested via email to the designated person provided by the beneficiary and returned via email in a password protected file. Providing this travel information will be voluntary, but necessary if the family seeks the U.S. government to facilitate the travel. This process would in turn allow for streamlined travel coordination with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to facilitate travel arrangements, as well as coordination for the beneficiary from point of departure to point of arrival at the final destination. This coordination includes DHS entities such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), ICE, Transportation and Security Administration (TSA), USCIS, and other departments, including the Department of State, Department of Justice, and Department of Health and Human Services, as well as the international organization facilitating the family's travel. The resulting travel information will be shared with the beneficiary and anyone else they designate to receive this information. This could include coordinating with parties the beneficiary identifies to ensure matching itineraries for those in the traveling party that the USG is funding and/or those in the travelling party that the USG is not funding.

3. **Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological**

collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

A new website application, together.gov, will be established to allow for individuals to submit the necessary information to make contact with the government to verify they are part of the class and start the reunification process. The government will then reach out to the individual to assist them throughout the parole and reunification process.

The families will submit their information through a registration on together.gov. The information will be transmitted to government systems and shared with the international organization assisting the families with the reunification process.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

This information is not duplicated for this population in any other place or any other form. Information is collected in the Form I-131 later in the process for parole processing and family reunification.

- 5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

This information collection does not have an impact on small businesses or other small entities.

- 6. Describe consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.**

Failure to collect this information would add additional, piecemeal coordination and delays to facilitating travel arrangements for beneficiaries as directed by E.O. 14011 to reunite families. Not having an established website to allow for families to self-identify for reunification will delay and greatly impact our ability to assist families with the parole and reunification process. Failure to establish this website will inhibit the Task Force's ability to comply on the initial court order that was established in June 2021 to reunify these families in an expedited manner.

- 7. Explain any special circumstances.**

Nothing to report in this section.

- 8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of**

publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA-95), the Agency issued a 60 Day Federal Register notice on November 16, 2021 at 86 FR 63412. No public comments were received. DHS issued a 30 Day Federal Register notice on March 31, 2022 at 87 FR 18807.

- 9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

There is no offer of a monetary or material value for this information collection.

- 10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

A new Privacy Impact Assessments is in process titled "Family Reunification Travel Plans." Upon submission of the full 3-year approval, the PIA will be completed. The Systems of Records Notices that will be included in this ICR include DHS/USCIS/ICE/CBP-001 Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records, September 18, 2017, 82 FR 43556 DHS/USCIS-007 Benefits Information System, October 10, 2019, 84 FR 54622.

- 11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

- 12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

INFORMATION COLLECTION	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	NO. OF RESPONSES PER RESPONDENT	TOTAL RESPONSES	TIME PER RESPONSE

Family Reunification Travel Plans	1,000 Hours	3,000	1	3,000	20 Minutes
Together.gov website	1,000 Hours	3,000	1	3,000	20 Minutes

Public Cost

The estimated cost to the respondents is \$81,600. This is based on the estimated burden hours (2000) multiplied by (\$20.40) for both the Together.gov website and Travel Plans information gathering. DHS used the U.S. Department of Transportation’s guidance on value of travel time for value of time estimates (\$20.40)¹ for travel by land.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There are no record keeping, capital, start-up or maintenance costs associated with this information collection. DHS assumes that basic internet access is a customary cost of doing business and will not additionally burden any NGO/IGO assisting individuals in submitting this form.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government. Also provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The FRTF did not obtain any new federal staff to review these documents. All staff is already assumed and detailed to the FRTF to conduct these duties. The website was created using current resources, and no additional costs were incurred. The FRTF has entered into an agreement with an organization for \$10.9 million dollars to provide support to users after submitting information on together.gov. The organization would assist users with the pre-reunification process (filling out application, obtaining necessary documents, travel assistance) and provide information for post-reunification services.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 12 or 13.

¹ [2016 Revised Value of Travel Time Guidance.pdf \(transportation.gov\)](#)

This is a new information collection.-

- 16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation, and publication.**

This information collection will not be published for statistical purposes.

- 17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date, explain the reasons that displaying the expiration date would be inappropriate.**

DHS will display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

- 18. "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."**

DHS does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

No statistical methods were employed.