



Sept 8, 2022

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, Assessing Vector-Borne Disease Experiences and Risk of Transmission (AVERT) 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 mission to promote health equity, mitigate disease transmission during ongoing outbreaks, and reduce disease incidence among populations at disproportionate risk. Recent outbreaks of vector-borne diseases have been identified among people experiencing homelessness. To address this ongoing disease risk, CDC's Division of Vector-Borne Diseases developed the AVERT (Assessing Vector-Borne Disease Experiences and Risk of Transmission) survey to identify knowledge gaps and practices in homeless shelters to reduce risk of body lice and flea infestations and associated diseases. This project has been identified as one of CDC's CORE Health Equity priority projects.

On February 7, 2022, the PRA/OMB 60-day public review package was submitted to CDC's ICRO office; the public review period ended without any comments or suggestions for changes. In June 2022, pilot testing of the AVERT survey instruments were completed with collaborating public health colleagues in Seattle, WA. This pilot testing provided important insights that informed survey instrument revisions that were included in the 30-day public review package was submitted to CDC's ICRO office on July 5, 2022. Unfortunately, due to overwhelming demand on ICRO due to multiple concurrent emergency responses (COVID-19, polio, monkeypox), the package was not published to the federal register until September 9, 2022.

The collaborating public health partner, Public Health – Seattle & King County, is receiving funding for personnel and project support as one of three Homelessness Centers of Excellence; however, this funding expires on September 30, 2022. In addition, all associated CDC funding for data collection in Seattle, Washington (estimated to be \$5,250) will be lost if the project is not completed within the month of September, as these funds must be spent in the current fiscal year and cannot be carried over to subsequent fiscal years. Furthermore, inability to complete this data collection would erode key stakeholder confidence in CDC to follow through on its commitments and undermine CDC's mission to rapidly address ongoing disease threats in the community.

Data collected through the AVERT project are critical to inform prevention of vector-borne disease in



people experiencing unsheltered or sheltered homelessness. Subsequent phases of this project include development of an infectious disease handbook for homeless service providers, a toolkit of best practices and standard operating procedures to rapidly detect disease vectors in homeless service sites and implementation of mitigation strategies to minimize transmission risk in congregate settings.

Please provide an approval/disapproval determination of this request to collect information under an emergency clearance by close of business Wednesday, September 14, 2022.

Respectfully,

Christopher R. Braden, MD
Acting Director
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious
Diseases (NCEZID)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)