

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Generic Clearance for Formative Data Collections for Evaluation, Research, and Evidence-Building

ACTION: 30-Day notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is seeking approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the information collection described below. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act and OMB procedures, DHS is publishing this notice to allow all interested members of the public an additional 30 days to provide comments on the proposed collection of information.

DATES: Submit comments on or before 07/14/2023.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments by the deadline stated in the DATES section above using any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments to <https://www.regulations.gov>, will be posted to the docket unchanged.
- Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. You can find this information collection by selecting “Currently under Review—Open for Public Comments” and searching by title, “Generic Clearance for Formative Data Collections for Evaluation, Research, and Evidence-Building”.
- Department of Homeland Security. Tyrone Huff, Agency Clearance Officer, Compliance and Information Services, Department of Homeland Security, tyrone.huff@hq.dhs.gov, (202) 557-5312.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to Tyrone Huff, Agency Clearance Officer, Compliance and Information Services, Department of Homeland Security, tyrone.huff@hq.dhs.gov, (202) 557-5312 or Rebecca Kruse, Assistant Director for Evaluation, Program Analysis and Evaluation, Department of Homeland Security, rebecca.kruse@hq.dhs.gov, (202) 731-7002.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Generic Clearance for Formative Data Collections for Evaluation, Research, and Evidence-Building.

OMB Control Number: 1601–New.

Abstract: This Information Collection Request establishes a new generic clearance to conduct formative studies that inform the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) evaluation, research, and evidence-building activities. Under this generic clearance, the DHS plans to engage in a variety of formative and exploratory data collections with DHS grantees, program and potential program providers and participants, researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders to fulfill the following goals:

- maintain a rigorous and relevant evaluation and research agenda,
- inform the development of DHS’s future evidence-building activities,

- inform the delivery of targeted assistance and workflows related to program and grantee processes,
- inform the development and refinement of recordkeeping and communication systems,
- plan for the provision of programmatic or evidence-capacity related training or technical assistance,
- obtain grantee or stakeholder input on the development or refinement of program logic models, evaluations, and performance measures,
- test activities to strengthen programs, and
- preparation for summative evaluations.

The DHS's formative studies will collect data using well-established methodologies, including but not limited to questionnaires and surveys, semi-structured small group discussions or focus groups, observation, interviews, cognitive interviews and user testing. To minimize the burden of information collections approved under this clearance, the DHS will collect information electronically and/or use online collaboration tools, as appropriate, ask for readily available information, and use short, easy-to-complete information collection instruments when possible.

Conducting formative evaluation, research, and evidence-building activities will help the DHS better understand emerging needs and issues, identify evidence gaps, and ensure that DHS leadership and program offices have current data and information to implement DHS programs and initiatives successfully. The data from formative studies will be used to improve internal decision-making, such as improvements of program management and the delivery of products and services and to inform future studies but will not be highly systematic nor intended to be statistically representative. Findings from these formative studies will not be generalized to the broader population and are not intended to produce influential information that is expected to have a genuinely clear and substantial impact on major policy decisions. Information gathered may inform future evaluation, research, and evidence-building, which could inform future influential public policy decisions.

The primary purpose of data collected under this generic clearance is not for publication. However, because the formative data collection efforts are intended to inform DHS's decision-making related to evidence-building and programmatic activities, the findings may be incorporated into documents and presentations available to the public. Such documents may include design and method documents, process or journey maps, conceptual frameworks or logic models, background materials for technical workgroups, informational presentations, technical assistance plans, and evaluation or research reports. The aggregated results of this work may be prepared for presentation at professional meetings or disseminated in evaluation reports, research papers, and professional journals. Shared findings will include a discussion of the limitations regarding generalizability and intended use, and when necessary, results will be labeled as formative or exploratory.

Description of Respondents: The populations to be studied include DHS grantees, program and potential program providers and participants, researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholder groups involved in or eligible for DHS programs, experts in fields pertaining to DHS evaluation and research, or others involved in conducting DHS evaluation, research, or evidence-building projects.

Estimated Number of Respondents: Below is a preliminary estimate of the aggregate burden hours for this new collection. The Agency will provide refined estimates of burden in subsequent notices.

Description of Data Collection Method	Estimated Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Estimated Annual Responses	Estimated Average Minutes/Response	Estimated Annual Hour Burden	Estimated Annual Cost
Small group discussions or focus groups	3600	1	3600	90	5400	\$151,254
Surveys or questionnaires	6750	1	6750	30	3375	\$94,533
Interviews	2025	1	2025	60	2025	\$56,720
Cognitive interviews or user testing	1125	1	1125	90	1688	\$47,281
<i>Total</i>	<i>22750</i>		<i>22750</i>		<i>12488</i>	<i>\$349,788</i>

Estimated Number of Respondents per Activity: One response per respondent per activity.

Estimated Annual Responses: 22750.

Estimated Annual Hour Burden: 12488.

Estimated Annual Respondent Cost: \$349,788.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding any aspect of this information collection, including the following: (1) The necessity and utility of the proposed information collection for the proper performance of the Agency’s functions; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology to minimize the information collection burden of those who are required to respond to the request for information.

Tyrone Huff,
 Agency Clearance Officer