

**OMB Control Number:** 0560-0237.

**Title of Clearance:** Farm Loan Programs - Direct Loan Making – Online Loan Application (OLA).

**Agency Form Number affected by Change Worksheet:** FSA-2001 “Request for Direct Loan Assistance” and other certain forms for the elements or fieldnames that are included in the OLA. In addition to the GEN IC request for the related surveys, FSA is using this Change Worksheet to request OMB approval to collect the information from applicants in OLA that would have normally been provided on the paper FSA-2001 form. The information to be collected as part of the paper FSA-2001 process is not changing, however, due to the improvements offered by automating the application process, some questions are asked in a different order and in a slightly different way. So, instead of coming into the FSA county office and having the FSA employee help them walk through the form, the OLA system will prompt the applicant for responses using an automated process flow centered on improving customer experience.

**Other Changes:** FSA is currently finalizing development of the Online Loan Application for the applicants to submit requests for Direct Loan assistance electronically.

Future releases and iterations of the OLA software will include expansion of features and functionality for direct loan making and provide ability for primary loan servicing application submission. FSA is scheduled to implement the full production release of OLA in the Fall of 2023.

Prior to full production release, FSA desires to release a beta version of OLA to obtain feedback from customers who voluntarily choose to submit their application through OLA. FSA is requesting OMB approval to cover the beta version of the OLA. Access to the beta version of OLA will be available in 15 selected states. Applicants will be offered the opportunity to use the OLA beta version to submit their request to FSA. Feedback will be obtained from OLA beta applicants using a customer feedback survey.

The OLA beta applicant survey is approved under the OMB Control number of 0503-0024, Improving Customer Experience (OMB Circular A-11, Section 280 Implementation). As described in the GEN IC request (0503-0024), the 15-state beta launch will allow FSA to obtain an adequate sample size of applicants to gather initial customer feedback. Feedback obtained will assist FSA in improving OLA design and functionality for future releases. The 15-state beta launch will take place before peak farm loan application season which generally occurs from January through April annually. The changes are consistent with our on-going meetings with OMB on this topic.

FSA expects to further decrease the burden hours under the OMB Control number 0560–0237 as the functionality and use of the online application software expands, and more applicants shift away from using the hard copy of the FSA-2001 application form. Due to ease of application submission, the expected number of annual respondents for all FSA-2001 submissions for loan making purposes are expected to increase over time.

FSA published the 60-day notice in the Federal Register on 7/21/2023 (88 FR 47102) for the Fall 2023 full production release of OLA as a new information collection request (new OMB control number). USDA plans to publish a 30-day Federal Register notice for the Fall 2023 full production launch of the OLA on 9/20/2023.