

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

Supporting Family Economic Well-Being through Home Visiting (HomeEc) – Early Childhood Home Visiting Special Topics Substudy

Formative Data Collections for ACF Research

0970 – 0356

Supporting Statement

Part A

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

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

Project Officers:
Pooja Gupta Curtin

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Part A

Executive Summary

- **Type of Request:** This Information Collection Request is for a generic information collection under the umbrella generic, Formative Data Collections for ACF Research (0970-0356).

- **Description of Request:**
This request is for a one-time information collection to better understand the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on promoting family economic well-being services in home visiting. The information collection is part a special topics substudy for the Supporting Family Economic Well-Being through Home Visiting (HomeEc) project. The information collection will include a web-based survey to be completed by interested early childhood home visiting (ECHV) programs; the survey will gather data on the types of family economic well-being services provided by the various programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey will inform the selection of nine ECHV agencies from which the project will have more in-depth conversations with one direct service staff from each. We do not intend for this information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.

- **Time Sensitivity:**
To meet project timelines, all work on this substudy, including recruiting, screening, interviews, analysis, and summary products, must be completed by December 2023.

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A1. Necessity for Collection

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the economic well-being of many families. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has funded the Supporting Family Economic Well-Being through Home Visiting (HomeEc) project to complete activities with a goal to better understand these effects. This proposed information collection will inform a substudy of the HomeEc project that aims to understand how early childhood home visiting (ECHV) agencies have or could better support family economic well-being in areas like stable and fulfilling employment, adequate income to meet short- and long-term needs, and coping with financial stress. The substudy will focus on families' economic resources and needs and ECHV programs' corresponding services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The substudy will include a literature review and discussions with up to nine ECHV programs. The substudy will identify pandemic-related lessons that can inform best practices and future research in promoting family economic well-being in the midst of external threats, such as another pandemic or a natural disaster.

Currently there is not enough available information – either publicly or within ACF – to determine which programs meet the substudy's eligibility and prioritization criteria. This information collection will provide the study team with information to inform the identification of programs most likely to meet these criteria.

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate this collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency. ACF has contracted with Mathematica to complete this study.

A2. Purpose

Purpose and Use

This information collection conducted as part of the HomeEc – Early Childhood Home Visiting Special Topics Substudy has the main purpose of determining which home visiting programs meet the substudy's eligibility and prioritization criteria. Interested programs will complete a short web-based survey to provide information on how they support family economic well-being, the population(s) and region they serve, how they provided services during the pandemic, and their home visiting model. The study team will use the data gathered through the web-based survey to inform the selection of up to nine programs whose director or supervisor will be invited to participate in a discussion with the study team to help describe the influence of COVID-19 on families' economic well-being and how early childhood home visiting programs respond to their economic needs. This request is specific to the initial formative data collection to identify potential programs. The findings from the substudy overall will provide lessons for coping with future external threats affecting home visiting family economic well-being practices.

This proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for research and evaluation (0970-0356):

- inform the development of ACF research
- maintain a research agenda that is rigorous and relevant
- ensure that research products are as current as possible

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The information collected is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision-maker, and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

Research Questions

The web-based survey that is part of this information collection will gather data on the following topics:

1. Whether the programs provide home visiting services to families with young children or pregnant women.
2. What communities, cities, or states the programs provide services in.
3. What main activities the programs provide to families to support their economic well-being and whether they provided the activities during the COVID-19 pandemic and how many hours of services they provided.

Study Design

Project activities for the overarching HomeEc project include the following:

- Conduct a literature review to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic affected family economic well-being and how early childhood home visiting programs responded to these family economic well-being needs within the constraints of the pandemic.
- Conduct a brief web-based survey to gather information to identify programs that best meet the eligibility and prioritization criteria for the study.
- Engage nine early childhood home visiting programs through discussions with one staff member from each program to understand how early childhood home visiting programs have operated and adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic to address the economic needs of the families they serve.

We will identify potential programs through the Home Visiting Applied Research Collaborative (HARC) Practice Based Research Network (PBRN) project leadership contacts. Following Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval, we will send a request through the HARC listserv asking organizations to volunteer to participate in this substudy. Interested organizations will complete the brief web-based survey so the study team can assess their eligibility. We will review all completed surveys and select up to nine programs that best meet the criteria (see above under *Research Questions* and Section B2 of Part B under *Target Population and Sampling*) and up to three alternates. Please see Table A.1 for a description of the contents and purpose of the data collection instrument. If more than nine programs are eligible, we will prioritize programs to optimize variability. If there are still more than nine eligible programs, we will randomly select the nine programs and three alternates. Ultimately, no more than nine programs will be selected to proceed, and no more than one individual from each program will participate in the follow up discussions.

The proposed sampling and data collection approach provide the necessary flexibility to collect information from a wide range of programs without imposing a high level of burden. This data will inform the purposive selection of programs to participate in the interviews, which will allow the study to understand the different ways that the COVID-19 pandemic affected program support of family economic well-being.

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Table A.1. Data collection activities

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection</i>	<i>Mode and Duration</i>
Instrument 1: HomeEc special topic study - program eligibility screener	<p>Respondents: Program directors or other staff knowledgeable about the program</p> <p>Content: Ways programs support family economic well-being; region(s) served; whether programs serve families with children and/or pregnant women</p> <p>Purpose: Collect information about program eligibility based on a set of established eligibility criteria.</p>	<p>Mode: Web</p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes</p>

Other Data Sources and Uses of Information

The information collected through this request will be used in conjunction with information from other substudy activities such as the literature review and the follow-up discussions at the nine programs that meet the eligibility and prioritization criteria participate in discussions with the study team.

A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

We will collect the eligibility screener data through a web-based survey. We will program skip logic into the web-based survey, so respondents are only asked to answer questions that are relevant to them based on their previous responses.

A4. Use of Existing Data: Efforts to reduce duplication, minimize burden, and increase utility and government efficiency

Our examination of work in this area has not identified other complete sources of information to inform what programs are interested in participating in discussions on the proposed topic *and* meet the criteria developed by the study team.

The data collection plan is designed to obtain information efficiently and minimize respondent burden. The web-based survey will not ask for information that can be obtained from alternative data sources.

A5. Impact on Small Businesses

Most home visiting programs will be small organizations. We are sensitive to the burden that data collection can impose; we will limit the web-based survey to include only questions that are essential to this study.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Now subsumed under 2(b) above and 10 (below)

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A8. Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published two notices in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of the overarching generic clearance for formative information collection. This first notice was published on November 3, 2020, Volume 85, Number 213, page 69627, and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. The second notice published on January 11, 2021, Volume 86, Number 6, page 1978, and provided a thirty-day period for public comment. ACF did not receive any substantive comments.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

This study does not have plans to consult with expert advisors as part of this data collection effort.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation

No tokens of appreciation are proposed for participants.

A10. Privacy: Procedures to protect privacy of information, while maximizing data sharing

Personally Identifiable Information

We will be collecting individual contact information, including the name, phone number and email address, of the point of contact at the programs who are interested in participating in the substudy. We will also collect the contact information of the individual who completed the web-based survey (if that person is different than the program point of contact). We will not maintain information in a paper or electronic system from which data can be actually or directly retrieved by an individual's personal identifier.

Assurances of Privacy

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. As specified in the contract, the Contractor will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information.

Data Security and Monitoring

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall protect respondent privacy to the extent permitted by law and will comply with all federal and departmental regulations for private information. The Contractor has developed a Data Safety and Monitoring Plan that assesses all protections of respondents' personally identifiable information (PII). The Contractor shall ensure that all of its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor who perform work under this contract/subcontract, are trained on data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements.

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall use encryption compliant with the Federal Information Processing Standard (Security Requirements for Cryptographic Module, as amended) to protect all

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information during storage and transmission. The contractor shall securely generate and manage encryption keys to prevent unauthorized decryption of information, in accordance with the Federal Processing Standard. The Contractor shall ensure that this standard is incorporated into the Contractor's property management/control system and establish a procedure to account for all laptop computers, desktop computers, and other mobile devices and portable media that store or process information. Any data stored electronically will be secured in accordance with the most current National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements and other applicable federal and departmental regulations. In addition, the Contractor must submit a plan for secure storage and limits on access.

A11. Sensitive Information¹

No sensitive information is requested through this information collection.

A12. Burden

Explanation of Burden Estimates

Table A.2 presents an estimate of time burden for the data collection. We expect up to 60 programs to complete the survey, which is estimated to take about 10 minutes to complete. This estimate is based on our experience with collecting information through web-based surveys. Although we expect 60 programs to complete the survey, we have estimated burden for 80 respondents to allow for the possibility that more programs than expected respond.

Estimated Annualized Cost to Respondents

The study team based the average hourly wage estimates for deriving total annual costs on data collection from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers* (2022 third quarter). For the instrument listed in Table A.2, the team calculated the total annual cost by multiplying the annual burden hours by the average hourly wage.

We used the mean hourly wage of \$30.88 for women in professional and related occupations for the program directors and supervisors, as we expect many of the staff working in these positions to be women. The table from which this wage was drawn is available at the following link:

- Program staff (program directors or supervisors): [Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers Third Quarter 2022 \(bls.gov\)](#) (Table 4)

¹ Examples of sensitive topics include (but not limited to): social security number; sex behavior and attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close relationships, e.g., family, pupil-teacher, employee-supervisor; mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to respondents; religion and indicators of religion; community activities which indicate political affiliation and attitudes; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers; records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment; receipt of economic assistance from the government (e.g., unemployment or WIC or SNAP); immigration/citizenship status.

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Table A.2. Estimated annualized cost to respondents

Instrument	No. of Respondents (total over request period)	No. of Responses per Respondent (total over request period)	Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	Total /Annual Burden (in hours)	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
HomeEc special topic study - program eligibility screener (Instrument 1)	80	1	0.17	13.6	\$30.88	\$419.97

A13. Costs

There are no additional costs to respondents.

Table A.3. Estimated annualized costs to the federal government

Activity	Detail	Estimated Cost
Survey administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FTE time: 8 hours Operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and staff support), A Other expenses which would not have been incurred without this collection of information 	\$2,272.83
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FTE time: 12 hours Operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and staff support) 	\$3,283.96
Total/Annual costs		\$5,556.79

A15. Reasons for changes in burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for ACF research (0970-0356).

A16. Timeline

Table A.4. HomeEc – Early Childhood Home Visiting Special Topics Substudy timeline

Following OMB approval, we will send the survey through the HARC listserv and request responses within 8 weeks. If needed, we may extend the data collection timeline to ensure we receive adequate responses.

A17. Exceptions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

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Instrument

Instrument 1: HomeEc Special Topic Study - Program Eligibility Screener

Appendices

Appendix A: Program Director Recruitment and Survey Invitation Email

Appendix B: Program Director Reminder Email