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Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

From: Jacquelyn Cabada Branscomb
Office of Grants Policy
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Date: October 19, 2023

Subject: NonSubstantive Change Request – ACF Uniform Project Description (UPD) (OMB #0970-0139)

Overall purpose and request

ACF is testing a new, simplified format for its Notices of Funding Opportunity. This pilot will include 25 NOFOs in fiscal year 2024. As part of this pilot we plan to:

- Rearrange the affected sections to provide a better flow and clearly delineate between portions that require a narrative, attachments, and other types of submissions, such as notices of intent.
- Apply plain language principles to the content.

As a result, we request approval for this non-substantive change to use an alternate version of the Uniform Project Description (UPD) (OMB #: 0970-0139) for 25 NOFOs. Other NOFOs will continue to use the currently approved UPD. In the revisions for the pilot:

- We have changed no requirements. The revisions are to improve flow and readability only. We expect no increase in burden. In fact, in a prior test of a simplified NOFO, applicants reported a significant reduction in burden hours.
- In some cases, portions were deleted simply to combine them into a single section.
- We moved one highly detailed and fully standard section to the web. Moving the detail for preparing a line-item budget and justification ensures that the information is easily accessible for those not familiar with the process while ensuring consistent instruction across all NOFOs.

Because we will also use new methods for designing these NOFOs, using human-centered design principles, we will need some flexibility in the order in which the sections are finally presented.

Specific actions taken

We have made the following updates.

- The title Project Description is changed to Project Narrative to delineate it from the earlier ACF Program Description section.
- The title Project Budget and Budget Justification is changed to Line-Item Budget and Justification to more clearly delineate it from the standard budget forms.

- We moved the following sections to a new section at the bottom of the UPD called “Attachments”. This is the section in the new format that will inform applicants about all attachments that they will need to submit.
 - Legal Status of Applicant
 - The list of attachments formerly in the Organizational Capacity Section.
 - Third-Party Agreements
 - Letters of Support
- We moved the following sections to the bottom of the document under “Other Collections”. Each shows where it will appear in the pilot NOFO.
 - Optional Notice of Intent
 - Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer
 - We deleted the following elements. Explanations follow each.
 - A section in the instructions asks writers not to use cross-links within the document. Under the pilot, these links work and are used. We deleted these instructions.
 - Within certain sections, we give instructions to applicants on file formats, fonts, headings, etc. Additionally, there are instructions related to what happens if the applicant does not follow these rules. These instructions are deleted and compiled in other sections of the NOFO. They do not change the content or requirements.
 - A special note in the Line-Item Budget and Justification section related to limits on the rates of pay to Executive Schedule II. This limitation is covered elsewhere in the NOFO.