

**To:** Kelsi Feltz  
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)  
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

**From:** Jessica Hale  
Office of Community Services  
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

**Date:** May 20, 2024

**Subject:** NonSubstantive Change Request – Office of Community Services Affordable Housing and Supportive Services Demonstration Data Collection (OMB #0970-0628)

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This memo requests approval of nonsubstantive changes to the approved information collection, Office of Community Services Affordable Housing and Supportive Services Demonstration Data Collection (OMB #0970-0628).

### ***Background***

The Office of Community Services (OCS) Affordable Housing and Supportive Services Demonstration (AHSSD) data collection was approved on March 1, 2024. OCS has begun collecting information with the service receipt questionnaire, the self-sufficiency matrix, quarterly narrative performance progress reports, and semi-annual report forms. This summer, we plan to begin conducting focus groups and interviews with program staff.

Based on our early administration of instruments, OCS has identified several nonsubstantive changes that will 1) improve the quality of the information collected through the self-sufficiency matrix, service receipt questionnaire, and quarterly narrative performance progress reports by clarifying items, and 2) support the analysis self-sufficiency matrix and service receipt questionnaire items by identifying responses that are clustered within households and reducing item non-response, and 3) improve the study information provided to research participants to obtain their informed consent.

### ***Overview of Requested Changes***

OCS requests several minor changes to improve the quality of the information collected, support our analysis of the information, and improve the study information provided to potential participants.

For the self-sufficiency matrix, we have made several changes to achieve these objectives. First, we updated Instrument 1 to clarify the meaning of food stamps to include SNAP. We also clarified that N/A could be included in the score cell to ensure that items that are not applicable to the individual are coded correctly. Additionally, in Attachment D, which accompanies Instrument 1, we added an AHSSD Household Unique Identifier and clarified that the other AHSSD identifier requested is an individual identifier. Both identifiers are randomly generated numbers that cannot be used to identify individuals or households but will permit the study team to link data from individuals to other data from their household, over time, and across

instruments. We also updated Attachment E, the study information sheet for individuals completing the matrix, to add information about the household identifier as well as contact information for the research compliance office associated with the study's IRB.

For the service receipt questionnaire, we have achieved these objectives by combining two items requesting information on whether individuals have received training to learn a new job or skills or education to learn a new job or skills into a single item. Additionally, we have added the household identifier item to this instrument as well. The questionnaire document format now shows how it is implemented in Qualtrics.

For the quarterly narrative performance progress reports, we have added instructions and clarified item language to emphasize that the reports should focus on grant activities for the reporting period and focus on describing AHSSD-funded activities. We also added clarify that descriptions of AHSSD-funded services or resources should include descriptions of new, continuing, and enhanced services or resources.

For the focus groups with residents, we made several adjustments to the study information materials to provide additional information to participants. In Instrument 3, we added language to the opening to clarify that we are not requesting identifying information and that individuals will not be identified in the report. We also removed reference to a transcription service because the research team will prepare the transcripts rather than an outside service. We also provided contact information for the research compliance office associated with the IRB. Similarly, in Attachment B, which is the invitation to the focus group, and Attachment C, which is the study information sheet, we updated to include the contact information for the research compliance office.

Finally, we made a minor correction to the opening language for the staff interviews (Instruments 7 & 8) to replace the word confidential with the word private, and to clarify that the conversation is voluntary and will not impact grant funding.

### ***Time Sensitivities***

OCS would like to implement these changes in the coming weeks in to clarify existing collections and begin sending information about the study to potential participants in the interviews and focus groups. Note that the current expiration date for this information collection is September 2024. OCS is currently working on a request for an extension and these updated materials will be available for public comment through that upcoming process. The 60-day public comment period is expected to open this spring 2024.