

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

TANF Pilot Convenings

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A

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Submitted By:
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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 Program Support (0970-0531).

- **Description of Request:** The Office of Family Assistance and the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) plan to conduct a series of virtual convenings to gather the input and perspectives of multiple constituency groups to inform the design and implementation of the new pilot program for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program enacted as part of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023. That law permits ACF to select up to five states to participate in the pilot program and test “alternative ways to measure the states’ performance in improving employment and earnings outcomes and other indicators of family stability and well-being for TANF recipients.” The virtual convenings will solicit feedback from groups including TANF administrators, individuals with lived experience, researchers, representatives from advocacy groups, and workforce development providers to gather input on how the TANF pilot programs should be selected; factors to be considered in establishing performance benchmarks; how an equity lens can be applied to the pilots; the technical assistance and other supports states will need to participate; and the type of information that should be collected to evaluate the success of the pilots. Information shared during these sessions will inform strategies for ACF’s design and implementation of TANF pilot programs, including establishing and applying criteria for pilot site selection. We do not intend for this information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.

- **Time Sensitivity:** ACF is on a tight timeline to design the pilot program, announce selection criteria, and select the pilot sites by October 2024, per the legislative requirements. The information gathered during these convenings will be critical to the successful execution of these tasks. To meet the overall timeline for pilot implementation, these virtual convenings must be held between October 2023 and early January 2024. ACF and its logistics contractor will summarize the information gathered during the convenings for internal use by ACF, in order to design and announce the pilot implementation and selection criteria in early Spring 2024.

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A1. Necessity for Collection

Since Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) was enacted in 1996, the chief measure of program performance has been the requirement that states meet “work participation rate” (WPR) targets. In 27 years of TANF, there have been many critics of the WPR being the only means of defining the success of states in supporting TANF recipients in achieving economic self-sufficiency. The Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (FRA) recently gave the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) the authority to administer a new pilot program wherein up to five states selected by ACF will test “alternative ways to measure the states' performance in improving employment and earnings outcomes and other indicators of family stability and well-being for TANF recipients.”

The TANF pilots represent an entirely new opportunity related to the TANF program and legislation, and an important mechanism for states to demonstrate different approaches to measuring their performance in assisting families with low incomes. As such, the ACF Office of Family Assistance (OFA) and Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) plan to conduct a series of virtual convenings to gather the input and perspectives of multiple constituency groups to inform the design and implementation of the TANF pilots, including establishing and applying criteria for pilot site selection.

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate this formative information collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose

Purpose and Use

This proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for program support (0970-0531):

- Obtaining input on the development of performance measures (PM) from experts in a relevant field.
- Obtaining feedback about processes and/or practices to inform ACF program development and support.

The purpose of the proposed virtual convenings is to gather the input and perspectives of multiple constituency groups including TANF administrators, individuals with lived experience, researchers, representatives from advocacy groups, and workforce development providers to inform strategies for ACF's design and implementation of the TANF pilots, including establishing and applying criteria for pilot site selection. The information will primarily be used internally by ACF to inform planning for the TANF pilot program. However, some information may be incorporated into documents that are made public such as the pilot application materials and technical assistance plans. If summary information is included in such public documents, we will describe the information collection methods and limitations regarding generalizability and as a basis for policy.

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.

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Guiding Questions

ACF is committed to developing an open and fair selection process for the pilots, and to ensuring the pilots result in useful information for policymakers and the practice field to inform improvements to the TANF program. Given these aims, it is important that the design and implementation of the TANF pilots are informed by the perspectives of a wide variety of constituents and interested parties. The virtual convenings will be guided by a broad set of questions (Instrument 1) to facilitate group discussion and obtain detailed feedback from all participants. Topics addressed include important considerations and criteria for selecting pilot sites; factors to be considered in establishing performance benchmarks; how an equity lens can be applied to the pilots; the technical assistance and other supports states will need to participate; and the type of information that should be collected to evaluate the success of the pilots.

Information Collection Procedures and Processes

<i>Data Collection Activity</i>	<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Respondents, Content, Purpose of Collection</i>	<i>Mode and Duration</i>
Series of 4-6 Virtual Convenings	Instrument 1 - TANF Pilot Listening Session Facilitation Guide	<p>Respondents: TANF Administrators; individuals with lived experience; researchers; representatives from advocacy groups; and workforce development providers</p> <p>Content: Facilitated discussion based on guiding questions</p> <p>Purpose: Gather input to inform the design and implementation of FRA TANF pilots</p>	<p>Mode: Virtual group discussions</p> <p>Duration: 60-90 minutes each</p>

Other Data Sources and Uses of Information

In order to receive a wide variety of input from diverse constituent groups, OFA is also planning to release a Request for Information (RFI) to solicit written comments on the FRA TANF provisions. Responses to the RFI will be reviewed in concert with the information collected under this request, to inform the design and implementation of the TANF pilots.

A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

The convenings will be held virtually via Zoom, which reduces burden on participants to travel. The convenings will also be recorded, with participants' consent, which reduces the time needed to take detailed notes or repeat discussion points and comments. The recordings will be utilized internally by ACF's logistics contractor to provide transcripts and summaries of the discussions and findings to ACF. All recordings will be destroyed after such transcripts and summaries are submitted to and approved by ACF.

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

Discussion questions will be based on ACF's understanding of current and past TANF implementation successes and challenges. However, no existing information pertaining to the new FRA provisions is

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available, and the convenings will provide critical perspectives from diverse constituents to inform the implementation of this new legislation.

A5. Impact on Small Businesses

No small businesses will be involved with this information collection, with the exception of some participating constituency group representatives who may be involved in small businesses. Discussions will be held virtually, allowing more flexibility for those who choose to participate.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

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

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 a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of this information collection request to extend approval of the umbrella generic with minor changes. The notice was published on January 28, 2022, (87 FR 4603), and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. ACF did not receive any comments on the first notice. A second notice was published, allowing a thirty-day period for public comment, in conjunction with submission of the request to OMB. ACF did not receive any comments on the second notice.

Consultation with Experts

No external experts were consulted in preparation for this data collection activity.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation

No tokens of appreciation will be provided to participants.

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

Personally Identifiable Information

The only personally identifiable information that will be collected is name, organization, job title, and email of the individuals participating in the virtual convenings. This information will be used to register participants for the virtual convenings.

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Information will not be maintained in a paper or electronic system from which data are actually or directly retrieved by an individuals' personal identifier.

Assurances of Privacy

Information collected will be kept private. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private. As specified in the contract of ACF's logistics contractor, the Contractor will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information.

Data Security and Monitoring

Recordings of the virtual convenings will be password protected and housed on a secure MS Teams space. The recordings will be for the summary writers only and able to be accessed only by the very limited group of staff whose access is required. All recordings will be destroyed once the summary reports are submitted to and approved by ACF.

A11. Sensitive Information¹

No sensitive information will be collected as part of this data collection activity.

A12. Burden

Explanation of Burden Estimates

Each listening session will be 60-90 minutes in length to allow sufficient time for discussion with participants. This is based on prior experience with gathering information virtually from groups of this size on projects of similar scope.

We plan to engage about 40 individuals in each of the following groups, for a total of 200 respondents:

- Technical Assistance (TA) Providers
- Researchers
- TANF Administrators
- Program Providers
- Practitioners

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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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
Instrument 1 - TANF Pilot Listening Session Facilitation Guide	200	1	1.5	300	\$42.86	\$12,858.00

Estimated Annualized Cost to Respondents

We calculated an average hourly wage rate of \$42.86 using the following [May 2022 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/occ202205.pdf) for respondents:

- TA Providers: Social Scientists and Related Workers (BLS Job Code 19-3000) = \$45.46.
- Researchers: Economists (BLS Job Code 19-3011) = \$61.63.
- TANF Administrators: Social and Community Service Managers (BLS Job Code 11-9151) = \$38.13.
- Program Providers: Social and Community Service M (BLS Job Code 11-9151) = \$38.13.
- Practitioners: Social Workers, All Other (BLS Job Code 21-1029) = \$30.94.

A13. Costs

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimated Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

Cost Category	Estimated Costs
Conduct planning meetings and virtual convenings (estimated contractor staff time: 250 hours)	\$43,125
Analyze and summarize findings from each session, plus provide final formatted cohesive summary of all sessions (estimated contractor staff time: 150 hours)	\$25,875
Total costs over the request period	\$69,000

A15. Reasons for changes in burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-0531).

A16. Timeline

- Preparation for virtual convenings: 1 month

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- Conduct virtual convenings (after OMB approval): 2 months
- Production of final internal reports for ACF summarizing discussions from virtual convenings: 2 months

A17. Exceptions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

- Instrument 1 - TANF Pilot Listening Session Facilitation Guide