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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: January 7, 2025

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

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

Background

The Affordable Housing and Supportive Services Demonstration (AHSSD) Data Collection (OMB #0970-0628) was originally approved in March 2024 and then revised in September 2024. The information collection includes individual-level survey instruments and on-site focus groups to collect information from program participants, onsite and virtual interviews to collect information from program staff, and report forms to capture service delivery and outcomes.

The Office of Community Services (OCS) has not yet collected data using the focus group and interview protocols. After we awarded our most recent round of grants, we realized that budgetary constraints may impede the collection of data via in-person site visits. Collecting this data in person would require extensive staff travel, which will be difficult to achieve given budgetary and staff constraints.

OCS has begun collecting data with the survey instruments for baseline data, and we have recently begun the first wave of data collection for the follow up survey. Our analyses of the follow-up data has demonstrated that we can trim a few items to reduce participant burden as they are not needed for the longitudinal analysis.

Overview of Requested Changes

OCS requests changes to achieve efficiencies in collecting in-depth qualitative data from participants and staff, as well as minor changes to reduce burden. To achieve efficiencies in collecting in-depth qualitative data, OCS would like to transition from on-site data collection with participants and staff to virtual data collection. OCS had originally planned to conduct site visits during which we would conduct interviews and focus groups, but we believe that conducting these collections virtually would lead to significant time savings for OCS, grant recipients, and participants. Additionally, in order to better promote participant privacy in the virtual environment, we propose to transition from using a focus group format for the participant data collection to using an interview. It is difficult in a virtual environment to ensure that

participants are only sharing information with those in the focus group, so we would like to conduct this collection as individual interviews to better ensure privacy of participants. The study materials include the following updates to support this transition:

- Attachment B – Outreach Letter for Participants and Attachment C – Study Information for Participants are updated to reflect the shift from focus groups to individual interviews. We also make a clarifying note about our relationship with the IRB organization in these study materials.
- Instrument 3 has been updated for use in an individual interview format with participants. We include additional probes for services and how individuals work with staff as we will not have a group conversation to support a full discussion of all service types and experiences with staff. We also update the introductory question as we will have a brief introduction at the start of the call. Finally, we remove the reference to handing out the token of appreciation in person, as the grant recipient will provide that token as a follow-up after the call.
- Instrument 9 has been updated to remove an introductory question as the introduction of the virtual call will cover this information.
- Supporting Statements A and B have been updated to reflect the shift to virtual interviews and the number of program participants being included in interviews. Specifically, we propose to interview 4 interviews per site (68 individuals total), and the burden estimates have been updated accordingly.

We also make revisions to reduce burden on participants. Upon running our preliminary analysis on the service receipt questionnaire and self-sufficiency matrix, we realized that we do not need length of time in current housing and number of children in the household in the service receipt questionnaire. The self-sufficiency matrix provides a firmer sense of length of time in service delivery with the item about enrollment in case management services. Additionally, our analysis does not use the number of children item because we are most interested in child-care utilization, the need for which is captured in the self-sufficiency matrix. As a result, we make the following change:

- Instrument 2 – Service receipt questionnaire – remove “how long have you lived in your current housing” and “how many children under the age of 18 live in your household”

Finally, we make minor revisions to increase the flexibility of these instruments moving forward. Primarily, across all items in this change request, we indicate that we will insert an appropriate contact in the PRA statement by adding [contact] to the statement.

Time Sensitivities

OCS would like to conduct interviews with cohort 1 grant recipients before they close out their grants in March 2025.