

Paperwork Reduction Act Submission:  
Supporting Statement A for the Office  
of Disability Employment Policy  
(ODEP)

Retaining Employment and Talent  
after Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN)  
Demonstration Projects and  
Evaluation, OMB Control No. 1230-  
0014

**June 2025**

## **OMB SUPPORTING STATEMENT PRA PART A**

### **Retaining Employment and Talent after Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) Demonstration Projects and Evaluation**

**This is an extension without change of a currently approved information collection**

Collection instruments:

- Baseline Collection Form Part 1
- Baseline Collection Form Part 2

#### **A.1 Circumstances Necessitating the Information Collection**

The RETAIN Demonstration Projects are a collaborative effort led by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) in partnership with DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). RETAIN—Retaining Employment and Talent after Injury/Illness Network—projects are testing the impact of early intervention strategies that improve stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW) outcomes of individuals who experience work disability while employed. "Work disability" is defined as an injury, illness, or medical condition that has the potential to inhibit or prevent continued employment or labor force participation.

SAW/RTW programs succeed by returning injured or ill workers to productive work as soon as medically possible during their recovery process and by providing interim part-time or light-duty work and accommodations, as necessary. The RETAIN Demonstration Projects are modeled after promising programs operating in Washington state, including the Centers of Occupational Health and Education, the Early Return to Work, and the Stay at Work programs. While these programs operate within the state's workers' compensation system and are available only to people experiencing work-related injuries or illnesses, the RETAIN Demonstration Projects provide opportunities to improve SAW/RTW outcomes for both occupational and non-occupational injuries and illnesses of people who are employed, or at a minimum in the labor force, when their injury or illness occurs.

Central to these projects is the early coordination of health-care and employment-related supports and services to help injured or ill workers remain in the workforce. These supports and services include:

- Training in occupational health best practices for participating health-care providers;

- Active involvement of a Return-to-Work Coordinator throughout the medical recovery period to facilitate continued employment;
- Enhanced communication among workers, employers, and health-care providers;
- Accommodations and job modifications; and
- Retraining and rehabilitation services.

To accomplish this, projects are providing services through an integrated network of partners that includes close collaboration between state/local workforce development entities, health-care provider systems/networks, and other partners as appropriate.

The primary goals of the RETAIN Demonstration Projects are:

1. To increase employment retention and labor force participation of individuals who acquire, and/or are at risk of developing, work disabilities; and
2. To reduce long-term work disability among project participants, including the need for Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income.

The ultimate purpose of the demonstration is to validate and expand implementation of evidence-based strategies to accomplish these goals.

DOL administers and manages the grants as well as manages a third-party provider of programmatic technical assistance. SSA manages a third-party independent evaluation of the grant program, covered by a separate PRA package submitted by SSA.

In order to assess whether the RETAIN projects are serving the target populations through coordinated care and achieving RETAIN's primary goals, DOL and SSA need to collect information that will assist the project's performance management and continuous quality improvement efforts, as well as the third-party evaluation effort, by providing baseline information relating to worker participants and also providing quarterly updates relating to project performance.

## **A.2 Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

The purpose of the RETAIN information collection, both baseline worker participant data and quarterly project performance data, is to understand and assess RETAIN program start-up, pilot projects, and full implementation. In addition, worker participant data is used as baseline data in RETAIN program evaluation activities conducted by SSA's third-party independent evaluator.

The Baseline Participant Forms are provided to the grantees by ODEP and are included in this package. Part 1 is completed by each worker participant seeking to enroll in RETAIN. Part 2 is completed by the health-care provider and/or Return-to-Work Coordinator for each worker participant at the time of enrollment.

### **A.3 Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction**

State agencies and health-care partners are utilizing existing IT systems to the extent possible for collecting data. The completion of the enrollment process is integrated with the informed consent process provided to worker participants by the grantees to meet the requirements of the grantees' health-care partners and institutional review boards. All information is completed and submitted electronically, to minimize burden.

### **A.4 Identification of Duplication of Information Collection Efforts**

RETAIN is a demonstration project, and as such this effort does not duplicate information already collected by ODEP, nor does it duplicate information currently being collected by other programs.

### **A.5 Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities**

This effort is not expected to impact small businesses, as respondents will be individual worker participants, health-care providers, or RTW coordinators.

### **A.6 Consequence to Federal Proposal or Policy if Collection Is Not Conducted**

This data collection will inform ODEP in developing and promoting policies and effective practices to encourage and support positive SAW/RTW outcomes among individuals who develop, or are at risk of developing, a work disability. Without the information provided by this collection, ODEP will be limited in its ability to properly manage and monitor the performance of RETAIN grantees. Additionally, if the information is not collected, SSA's third-party evaluator will not be able to match the data to administrative records, which will severely hamper the quality of the evaluation. The scope and burden of the forms have been reduced as much as possible without sacrificing the value of the information to be collected.

## **A.7 Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5**

There are no special circumstances relating to the general requirements cited in 5 CFR 1320.5. This request fully complies with 5 CFR 1320.5.

## **A.8 Federal Register Notice**

### **A.8.1 Federal Register Notice and Comments**

DOL published a 60-Day *Federal Register* Notice on April 14, 2025 (90 FR 15587), to allow for public comments. No public comments were received. A copy of this notice is included in this package.

### **A.8.2 Consultations outside the Agency**

The following agencies were consulted in developing the instrument design:

- Office of Management and Budget
- U.S. Department of Labor, Chief Evaluation Office
- U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration
- Social Security Administration

In addition, the third-party evaluator reviewed and provided comments on the instruments.

## **A.9 Payment or Gifts to Respondents**

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents. Grantees are permitted to pay incentives to any party for participation in RETAIN. However, such incentives are not specifically for response to this information collection, completion of which is mandatory for each RETAIN enrollee.

## **A.10 Assurance of Privacy**

Terms of the DOL cooperative agreement authorizing data collection require the states to maintain the privacy of all information collected, unless written permission is provided by the respondent. Informed consent is provided by all RETAIN participants, allowing the use of data for enrollment procedures, project performance monitoring, continuous quality improvement,

and evaluation. All information submitted on the Baseline Participant Form Part 1 is fully protected under the Privacy Act, and a Privacy Act Statement is included on the form.

### A.11 Justification for Sensitive Questions

The instrument asks for the following sensitive information: name, date of birth, social security number, phone number, and address. This information is necessary for Return-to-Work Coordinators to properly track participants' progress and follow up as necessary. Some of this information is also used to match participant data to administrative data from existing programs with which RETAIN will collaborate, including SSA data. DOL will not receive any personally-identifying information.

### A.12 Estimates of Burden Hours and Costs

Table A.12.1 provides the number of respondents, frequency of response per respondents, and total number of responses for the Baseline Participant Forms; as well as the annualized burden hours (50 hours) and the annualized burden cost (\$5,385.00) for the data collection. The two Baseline Participant Forms combined are expected to take 20 minutes to complete.

**Table A-12.1 Estimated Respondent Hour and Cost Burdens**

Study Component/Form	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total No. of Responses	Burden per Response (In Hrs.)	Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage <sup>1</sup>	Total Annualized Cost
State 1	30	1	30	20/60	10	\$35.90	\$359.00
State 2	30	1	30	20/60	10	\$35.90	\$359.00
State 3	30	1	30	20/60	10	\$35.90	\$359.00
State 4	30	1	30	20/60	10	\$35.90	\$359.00
State 5	30	1	30	20/60	10	\$35.90	\$359.00
<b>Annualized Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>20/60</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>\$35.90</b>	<b>\$1,795.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> The hourly wage rate for the study respondents was taken from Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Economic News Release, Table B-3. Average hourly and weekly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls by industry sector, seasonally adjusted", February 2025, found at: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t19.htm>.

### **A.13 Estimates of Annualized Respondents Capital and Maintenance Costs**

There are no expected costs to the respondents or record-keepers.

### **A.14 Estimates of Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

There is no cost to the federal government from these data collections.

### **A.15 Changes in Hour Burden**

This is an extension of an existing collection. Although the burden time per response remains unchanged, the number of future respondents is lower than in the previous extension.

### **A.16 Plans for Tabulation and Publication**

Descriptive statistics on enrollees assigned to the group receiving RETAIN services will be produced by DOL.

### **A.17 Approval to Not Display the Expiration Date**

All written instruments associated with the effort display the OMB expiration date.

### **A.18 Exceptions to Certification Statement**

There are no exceptions to the Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act (5 CFR 1320.9) for this collection.