

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION
Prison Education Program (PEP) Accreditation Requirements**

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. What is the purpose for this information collection? Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Include a citation that authorizes the collection of information. Specify the review type of the collection (new, revision, extension, reinstatement with change, reinstatement without change). If revised, briefly specify the changes. If a rulemaking is involved, list the sections with a brief description of the information collection requirement, and/or changes to sections, if applicable.**

The Secretary publishes regulations for Federal Pell Grants for Prison Education Programs (PEPs), in order to implement the statutory requirements in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, which amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA). The Act established Pell Grant eligibility for a confined or incarcerated individual enrolled in a PEP, reflected in 34 CFR Section 668, Subpart P.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 added section 484(t) to the HEA to formally establish Pell Grant eligibility for confined or incarcerated individuals, as long as they are enrolled in a PEP as defined under the HEA. These regulations implement the statutory requirements allowing access to Federal Pell Grants for individuals who are confined or incarcerated when enrolled in programs that meet necessary standards.

This information collection captures requirements that have been established under 34 CFR 668.237 - Accreditation requirements. The regulations prescribe program evaluation at the first two additional PEP locations of a participating institution of higher education to ensure institutional ability to offer and implement the PEP in accordance with the accrediting agency's standards, as well as evaluating the first additional prison education program offered by a new method of delivery. The regulations also require the accrediting agency to conduct a site visit no later than one year after the institution has initiated a PEP at its first two additional locations at correctional facilities.

Accrediting agencies are required to review the methodology used by an institution in determining the PEP meets the same standards for substantially similar non-PEP programs offered at the institution.

- 2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

The information gathered by the accrediting agency will be used to ensure that the programs offered by the institution and how its PEP locations meet the eligible program standards established by the agency.

3. **Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision of adopting this means of collection. Please identify systems or websites used to electronically collect this information. Also describe any consideration given to using technology to reduce burden. If there is an increase or decrease in burden related to using technology (e.g. using an electronic form, system or website from paper), please explain in number 12.**

There is nothing in the regulations which prohibit the electronic exchange of information between the accrediting agency and institutions requesting evaluation for participation in a PEP.

4. **Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

There is no information that can be used or converted from any currently available Department system that would meet the requirements. **If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden. A small entity may be (1) a small business which is deemed to be one that is independently owned and operated and that is not dominant in its field of operation; (2) a small organization that is any not-for-profit enterprise that is independently owned and operated and is not dominant in its field; or (3) a small government jurisdiction, which is a government of a city, county, town, township, school district, or special district with a population of less than 50,000.**

No small businesses will be impacted based on these regulations.

5. **Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

If the requirements of the regulations are not met, accrediting agencies will not be able to ensure an institution had the ability to offer and implement the PEP in accordance with agency standards. Students of the program would not be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant.

6. **Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**
 - **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
 - **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
 - **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

- requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;
- in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results than can be generalized to the universe of study;
- requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;
- that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or that unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or
- requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

This information collection does not require any special circumstances.

8. As applicable, state that the Department has published the 60 and 30 Federal Register notices as required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

Include a citation for the 60 day comment period (e.g. Vol. 84 FR ##### and the date of publication). Summarize public comments received in response to the 60 day notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden. If only non-substantive comments are provided, please provide a statement to that effect and that it did not relate or warrant any changes to this information collection request. In your comments, please also indicate the number of public comments received.

For the 30 day notice, indicate that a notice will be published.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instruction and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years – even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

ED will publish the applicable 60- and 30-day notices in the Federal Register inviting public comment on the form and the burden assessment.

- 9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees with meaningful justification.**

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

- 10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If personally identifiable information (PII) is being collected, a Privacy Act statement should be included on the instrument. Please provide a citation for the Systems of Record Notice and the date a Privacy Impact Assessment was completed as indicated on the IC Data Form. A confidentiality statement with a legal citation that authorizes the pledge of confidentiality should be provided.¹ If the collection is subject to the Privacy Act, the Privacy Act statement is deemed sufficient with respect to confidentiality. If there is no expectation of confidentiality, simply state that the Department makes no pledge about the confidentiality of the data. If no PII will be collected, state that no assurance of confidentiality is provided to respondents. If the Paperwork Burden Statement is not included physically on a form, you may include it here. Please ensure that your response per respondent matches the estimate provided in number 12.**

The Department makes no pledge about the confidentiality of the data.

- 11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. The justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

There are no questions of a sensitive nature in this collection.

- 12. Provide estimates of the hour burden for this current information collection request. The statement should:**

- **Provide an explanation of how the burden was estimated, including identification of burden type: recordkeeping, reporting or third party disclosure. Address changes in burden due to the use of technology (if applicable). Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- **Please do not include increases in burden and respondents numerically in this table. Explain these changes in number 15.**

¹ Requests for this information are in accordance with the following ED and OMB policies: Privacy Act of 1974, OMB Circular A-108 – Privacy Act Implementation – Guidelines and Responsibilities, OMB Circular A-130 Appendix I – Federal Agency Responsibilities for Maintaining Records About Individuals, OMB M-03-22 – OMB Guidance for Implementing the Privacy Provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002, OMB M-06-15 – Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information, OM:6-104 – Privacy Act of 1974 (Collection, Use and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information)

- **Indicate the number of respondents by affected public type (federal government, individuals or households, private sector – businesses or other for-profit, private sector – not-for-profit institutions, farms, state, local or tribal governments), frequency of response, annual hour burden. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable.**
- **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burden in the table below.**
- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents of the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. [Use this site](#) to research the appropriate wage rate. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14. If there is no cost to respondents, indicate by entering 0 in the chart below and/or provide a statement.**

Section 668.237 – Accreditation requirements.

Regulations at § 668.237, prescribe accrediting agencies perform program evaluation at the first two additional locations to ensure institutional ability to offer and implement the Prison Education Program (PEP) in accordance with the accrediting agency's standards. The regulations require the accrediting agency to conduct a site visit no later than one year after the institution has initiated a PEP at its first two additional locations at correctional facilities.

Of the 61 currently recognized accrediting agencies, 6 accrediting agencies perform the required reviews for 21 institutions under their oversight. Each of these accrediting agencies will require 8 hours per institution to evaluate the written applications for the first two programs offered by PEP or any change in methodology review. With an estimated 21 institutions participating in the PEP program, accrediting agencies will require 168 hours to complete this initial review (21 institutions x 8 hours = 168 burden hours).

It is estimated that to perform the site visits as required under the regulations require an estimated 50 hours to prepare for, perform the site visit, and report the findings. With an estimated 21 institutions participating in the PEP program, accrediting agencies will require 1050 hours to complete this initial review (21 institutions x 50 hours = 1050 burden hours).

Currently, there are 206 participating institutions participating in the current Second Chance Pell Experimental Program. These institutions have until 2026 to convert their programs into PEPs. With an estimated additional 206 institutions participating

in the PEP program, accrediting agencies will require hours to complete this initial review (206 institutions x 8 hours = 1,648 burden hours)

Additionally, the final regulations at § 668.237 require accrediting agencies to review the methodology used by an institution in determining the PEP meets the same standards for substantially similar non-PEP programs.

The total estimated burden for accrediting agencies to perform these tasks for the PEP evaluations is 24,516 hours under the OMB Control Number 1840-0863.

The monetized net cost of the burden for institutions was calculated using wage data developed using Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. For institutions we have used the median hourly wage for Education Administrators, Postsecondary, \$49.33 per hour according to BLS as of March 2023.

<https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes119033.htm>.

Estimated Annual Burden and Respondent Costs Table

Information Activity or IC (with type of respondent)	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses	Average Burden Hours per Response (Accreditation Agency)	Total Annual Burden Hours	Estimated Respondent Average Hourly Wage \$49.33	Total Annual Costs (hourly wage x total burden hours)
Private Institutions (Enrolled in PEP)	21	1	8	168	\$49.33	\$8,288
Private Institutions (Enrolled in PEP) Site Visit	21	1	50	1,050	\$49.33	\$51,797
Total APPROVED (Currently Enrolled in PEP)				2,268		\$60,085
Private Institutions (eligible to convert to PEP in 2026)	206	1	8	1,648	\$49.33	\$81,296
Private Institutions (eligible to convert to PEP in 2026) Site Visit	206	2	50	20,600	\$49.33	\$1,016,198
Total (Eligible to convert to PEP)				22,248		\$1,097,494
Total	227			24,516		\$1,157,579

Please ensure the annual total burden, respondents and response match those entered in IC Data Parts 1 and 2, and the response per respondent matches the Paperwork Burden Statement that must be included on all forms.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14.)

- The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a

total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and acquiring and maintaining record storage facilities.

- If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.
- Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices. Also, these estimates should not include the hourly costs (i.e., the monetization of the hours) captured above in Item 12.

Total Annualized Capital/Startup Cost :
 Total Annual Costs (O&M) : _____
 Total Annualized Costs Requested :

There are no start-up costs related to this regulation.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

There are no additional costs to the Federal government from these regulations.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments. Generally, adjustments in burden result from re-estimating burden and/or from economic phenomenon outside of an agency's control (e.g., correcting a burden estimate or an organic increase in the size of the reporting universe). Program changes result from a deliberate action that materially changes a collection of information and generally are result of new statute or an agency action (e.g., changing a form, revising

regulations, redefining the respondent universe, etc.). Burden changes should be disaggregated by type of change (i.e., adjustment, program change due to new statute, and/or program change due to agency discretion), type of collection (new, revision, extension, reinstatement with change, reinstatement without change) and include totals for changes in burden hours, responses and costs (if applicable).

Provide a descriptive narrative for the reasons of any change in addition to completing the table with the burden hour change(s) here.

	Program Change Due to New Statute	Program Change Due to Agency Discretion	Change Due to Adjustment in Agency Estimate
Total Burden			-1,884
Total Responses			-11,773
Total Costs (if applicable)			-72,397

The change in burden, responses, and costs are due to having actual data on these items. This is the first renewal of this data collection. The prior submission was based on projected information and this is now based on actual information received in 2023.

- 16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The information is available via the Department's website if the public wishes to view the information.

- 17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

The Department is not seeking this approval.

- 18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the Certification of Paperwork Reduction Act.**

The Department is not requesting any exceptions to the "certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions" of OMB Form 83-I.