

Generic Clearance for the Collection of Certain Biographic and Employment Identifiers on Immigration Forms - Responses to 30-day FRN Public Comments

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Comment ID	Comment Sub-Theme	Comment Summary	USCIS Response
Topic 1. Legal Authority to Collect			
0024		The comments raise concerns about the legal authorities for collecting certain biographic and employment-related information as proposed. Below is a summary of the issues highlighted: 1. Exceeds INA Authority: The comments argue that USCIS's proposed collection of biographic and employment-related information exceeds the statutory limits set by the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The INA does not authorize USCIS to collect sensitive data such as relatives' Social Security Numbers (SSNs) or employer identifiers like Federal Employer Identification Numbers (FEINs). Congress has only delegated narrow, benefit-specific discretion for data collection, and the inclusion of these additional data fields is not contemplated by the INA. 2. Executive Overreach: Executive Order 14161 cannot create legal obligations without congressional authorization. Using it to impose these mandates violates statutory limits and undermines the separation of powers by enabling administrative overreach. 3. Bypassing Rulemaking Processes: USCIS sidestepped formal rulemaking requirements, including issuing proposed regulations, conducting cost-benefit analyses, and collecting meaningful public input, by relying on a generic clearance process. 4. Precedent for Undermining Congressional Oversight: Allowing USCIS to unilaterally impose these expansive data collection requirements risks administrative overreach and sets a precedent for bypassing congressional oversight in other regulatory areas. 5. Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) Violations: The proposed changes violate the PRA by failing to demonstrate that the additional data collection is necessary or minimizes the burden on the public. The PRA requires agencies to justify the utility of the information collected, but USCIS has not shown that the new data fields are relevant to adjudicating immigration benefits.	DHS disagrees with commenters that its collection of certain biographical and employment information is outside the scope of its legal authority. DHS has broad authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and Homeland Security Act (HSA) of 2002, to administer immigration laws including collecting information included in this information collection. See generally, INA secs. 101, 103, 8 U.S.C. 1101, 1103; sec. 402 of the HSA. For example, INA § 287(b), 8 U.S.C. § 1357(b), and 8 C.F.R. § 287.5(a)(2) empower officers and agents to “take and consider evidence concerning the privilege of any person to enter, reenter, pass through, or reside in the United States.” Specific to the N-400, INA § 335, 8 U.S.C. 1446, requires “a personal investigation of the person applying for naturalization” and authorizes USCIS to take testimony “in any way affecting the admissibility of any applicant for naturalization” and to require the production of relevant documents. Additionally, the Privacy Act System of Records Notice DHS/USCIS-007 Benefit Information System, 84 FR 54622, October 10, 2019, lists current, former, and potential derivatives of requestors (family members) in its Category of Individuals Covered by the System. DHS also has practical utility for the collection of this information. This information collection is necessary to ensure compliance with Executive Order (E.O.) 14161, which directs the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence to “identify all resources that may be used to ensure that all aliens seeking admission to the United States, or who are already in the United States, are vetted and screened to the maximum degree possible”. This collection will be used to conduct thorough security checks and verify applicants’ identities and eligibility for the immigration benefits for which they are applying. USCIS disagrees that this collection of information violates the Administrative Procedure Act. USCIS’ statutory and regulatory authorities permit the agency to request information necessary for

			determining eligibility for an immigration request. Here, USCIS is asking for additional data points to enhance vetting that it already lawfully conducts. The Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes USCIS to collect information needed to assess eligibility for an immigration benefit. USCIS notes that identity is always material to the immigration benefit sought, and the information collected through the biographic and employment identifiers will assist USCIS to determine identity and evaluate other information key to benefit eligibility.
Topic 2. Compliance with the PRA			
0024	Practical Utility	The comments argue that USCIS has not provided sufficient evidence, data, or analysis to justify how collecting Social Security numbers (SSNs), employer data (e.g., FEINs), or relatives' SSNs improves vetting, enhances national security, or ensures more accurate benefit determinations. Additionally, the relevance of these data fields is highly questionable for many application types, such as asylum, humanitarian relief, or family-based petitions, as they appear unrelated to the adjudication process and fail to serve a legitimate adjudicatory or national security purpose. They emphasize that the additional data fields impose unnecessary burdens on applicants and adjudicators, increase the risk of errors and delays, and fail to meet the standards of the PRA. Commenters urge USCIS to abandon the proposed changes to ensure efficiency and fairness in the immigration process. Recommendation: USCIS should only collect information that is directly relevant to determining an applicant's eligibility for immigration benefits. The recommendations suggest USCIS should provide clear evidence and justification that demonstrate collecting this information improves vetting processes, enhances national security, or results in more accurate benefit determinations.	Response: 5 CFR 1320.9 states, "As part of an agency's submission to OMB of a proposed collection of information, the agency," in this case, USCIS, "... shall certify... that the proposed collection of information" "(a) [i]s necessary for the proper performance of the function of the agency, including that the information to be collected will have practical utility." This collection will have immediate practical utility to verify the applicant's identity and eligibility. DHS has practical utility to collect the information covered by the generic clearance in compliance with 5 CFR § 1320.9(a). The information which will be collected – including the social security numbers of the alien and of the alien's parents, siblings, spouses, and children, as well as the business or employer name, its physical address, its mailing address and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) - is relevant to determining eligibility for Forms N-400, I-131, I-485, I-751, I-590, I-829, I-730, I-192 and I-589 because it will allow USCIS and its national security and law enforcement partners to better vet applicants for potential information of interest that could affect eligibility and/or admissibility. Thus, the proposed information collection is directly relevant to determining the applicant's eligibility for immigration benefits. The information collection contains critical data elements for identity verification and screening. USCIS has a layered approach to security, and information collected would be only one piece of a large mixture of information used in the analysis of the applicant's eligibility. Although the potential exists for an applicant to provide false or inaccurate information, the response (or lack thereof) the applicant provides in the context of the larger picture will guide the line of inquiry pursued by the officer. The potential for inaccurate/false information does not render the collection of this information unnecessary. In addition, USCIS has established authorities to address fraud and

			misrepresentation on immigration benefit requests. USCIS makes case-by-case determinations based on the totality of the circumstances consistent with its authorities.
0024 0027	Underestimation of Burden	The comments provided significant concerns about the increased burden imposed by the proposed changes. Below are the key points: 1. Increased Complexity and Stress for Applicants • Length and Complexity of Forms: The addition of new questions and data fields (e.g., Social Security numbers, employer information, family member details) increases the length and complexity of forms, making them more difficult to complete, particularly for applicants without legal representation. • Time Burden: The estimated time to complete forms is criticized as unrealistic, with commenters suggesting the actual time burden could be significantly higher (e.g., 20 hours per form). This creates additional stress and delays for applicants. • Difficulty Accessing Required Information: Applicants may struggle to provide details such as past employment records, family members' Social Security numbers, or employer identification numbers (FEINs). 2. Disproportionate Impact on Vulnerable Populations: Proposed changes disproportionately burden vulnerable groups, such as low-income applicants, survivors of violence, and asylum seekers, who may lack access to required documentation due to trauma, estrangement, or unsafe circumstances.	Response: USCIS disagrees that the estimated hour burden per response to complete these six (6) new data elements has been significantly underestimated. USCIS assessed that the estimated hour burden per response to complete these new six (6) new data elements will have an overall increase by an average of two (2) hours on each information collection. USCIS closely reviewed the estimated average hour burden per response and the addition of these six (6) new data elements and instructional content to allow the applicant to provide the requested information, as necessary, and is confident that the estimated increase in the hour burden per response for each affected information collection accurately reflects the burden imposed on the public. The estimated increase in hour burden per response is an overall average that may not capture every applicant's individual experience when collecting information for these six (6) new data elements, as it may take some respondents less or more time based on the amount of information to provide and research involved as applicable to the applicant. USCIS acknowledges that some respondents would take less or more time to complete the new data elements, however, to report a higher burden increase could overestimate the time burden imposed on the overall average population of respondents. With the collection of Social Security Number for family members being identifying information, this may be generally available to applicants without extensive research involved. In addition, the Business/Employer information should be readily available to the public, such as on personal tax records or publicly available sources of information. USCIS disagrees that this collection will disproportionately impact vulnerable populations. This collection is not targeted at certain populations or demographic groups. This collection will affect all applicants completing relevant forms and USCIS does not deny benefits based on the applicant's race, color, age, sexual orientation, religion, sex, national origin, or disability. A universal collection is more fair and equitable than requesting the collection on a case-by-case basis or providing accommodations to any particular group of applicants.

		3. Cumulative Burden: The comments highlight that the cumulative burden of multiple recent changes to USCIS forms is substantial, with the agency allegedly attempting to obscure the full impact by publishing separate notices. Recommendations: • Abandon or reconsider the proposed changes, as they are seen as unnecessary, overly burdensome, and unjustified. • Focus on simplifying forms to reduce burdens on applicants and adjudicators, rather than adding unnecessary data fields. • Instead of imposing blanket requirements, USCIS should request additional information on a case-by-case basis when necessary for adjudication, reducing the burden on applicants overall. • USCIS should provide accommodations for applicants who cannot access required information due to trauma, domestic violence, persecution, or socio-economic barriers. • USCIS should clearly define terms (e.g., "immediate family") and explain the consequences of omissions or errors to help applicants navigate the process.	USCIS has taken into account the cumulative burden involved in collecting this information, along with additional collections in related recent changes, and has found that the cumulative burden is reasonable and justified from a comprehensive perspective, given the security and fraud prevention benefits from these collections. USCIS also believes that the key terms are sufficiently defined and, in the event of any potential confusion, USCIS generally would not deny a benefit based on such inference without first confronting the applicant, petitioner, or benefit requestor with the information and providing an opportunity to explain it or rebut any negative inferences USCIS may have drawn from it. See 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(16)(i) and (ii).
0024	Appropriateness of generic clearance	The comments argue that the proposed information collection is inappropriate for the generic clearance process, which is intended for voluntary, low-burden, and uncontroversial collections, such as surveys or minor technical adjustments. They highlight that the collection imposes significant burdens on applicants, family members, and employers by requiring invasive and extensive data, such as Social Security Numbers and employer identifiers, which are irrelevant to many immigration benefits. Additionally, the collection is described as controversial, linked to broader immigration enforcement efforts, and politically charged, further disqualifying it from generic clearance. The commenters assert that using generic clearance bypasses the formal rulemaking process required for substantive changes, undermines transparency, and violates the Paperwork Reduction Act's goals of minimizing public burden and ensuring meaningful public input. They recommend separate Federal Register notices and detailed review for each affected form instead of fast-tracking through generic clearance. Recommendation: USCIS should not use the generic clearance process for significant and controversial changes to immigration forms.	Response: The process used by DHS to obtain this generic clearance is similar to, but no less demanding than, the process to obtain approval of any new or revised information collection as it still requires the standard 60 and 30-day notice process. In addition, a generic information collection clearance requires the same level of justification, support, analysis, and level of approval as any other information collection approved by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act and implementing regulations.¹ The generic clearance is being used to propose the identified six (6) new data elements for the affected information collections, which allows for the public to review the new individual data elements that will appear on the affected information collections. This method provides a single docket for the public to provide comments on the proposed six (6) data elements and affected information collections, which reduces the burden on the public, rather than the public having to identify and comment on a separate notice and docket for nine separate proposed information collections. The use of a generic clearance also reduces burden and cost to the Federal government to publish separate Federal register notices. USCIS agrees that a generic clearance is usually used for information collections

¹ 44 U.S.C. chapter 35; 5 CFR Part 1320.

		Instead, the commenters recommend USCIS follow the formal rulemaking process for substantive changes, including publishing detailed cost-benefit analyses and allowing for public input. Commenters also suggest issuing separate 60-day and 30-day Federal Register notices for each affected form, allowing for detailed public review and comment on the specific changes proposed, as mandated by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA).	that are voluntary, low-burden, and non-controversial.² As per requirements under 44 U.S.C. 3501 et. seq. and 5 CFR 1320, USCIS believes that a generic clearance is appropriate to use for this process in order to make the proposed necessary changes to ensure a thorough screening and vetting process. USCIS published a 60-day Federal Register notice and 30-day Federal Register Notice for the Generic Clearance for the New Collection of Certain Biographic and Employment Identifiers on Immigration Forms. The 60-day notice and the 30-day notice included the proposed six (6) new data elements and the programs affected on the Federal eRulemaking Portal site at: https://www.regulations.gov and entering USCIS-2025-0006.
Topic 3. Compliance with the Privacy Act/Records Act/Information Security/Data Integrity			
0024 0027		The comments collectively raise the following key privacy concerns regarding the proposed USCIS data collection: 1. Concerns About Privacy Violations • Sensitive Information Collection: The comments highlight that the collection of Social Security numbers, detailed employment information, and data on family members (spouses, parents, children, siblings) is invasive and raises privacy concerns. Such information is considered highly sensitive, and its collection must meet strict standards under the Privacy Act of 1974. • Necessity and Relevance: The Privacy Act requires that information collected by federal agencies must be both relevant and necessary to accomplish a clearly defined purpose. The comments argue that USCIS has not sufficiently demonstrated how the proposed data fields meet this threshold. Without justification, the collection of this information could be seen as excessive and inconsistent with the Privacy Act. • Potential Misuse of Data: The comments express concerns about inter-agency data sharing between USCIS, ICE, and CBP, which could lead to enforcement actions against individuals who did not consent to the disclosure of their information. This raises fears of misuse of personal data and a lack of transparency about how the information will be used.	Response: DHS disagrees that this information collection is an invasion of privacy. USCIS complies with the Privacy Act and DHS policy regarding collection and protection of information as required. DHS understands that information provided on its forms may be about U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents who are covered by the Privacy Act. USCIS is authorized to perform background checks on all individuals associated with an immigration benefit petition. This includes sponsors, representatives, and family members of the individual seeking the benefit. These background checks assist in mitigating fraud and threats to national security and public safety. Any personal information gathered by DHS will only be used and released in accordance with law and policy. Social security numbers of individuals are voluntarily provided by the applicant along with all other information requested on a form. This is explained in the applicable privacy notice on the form itself. USCIS uses social security numbers as an additional way to confirm identity and legally administer immigration benefits. The new information collected will be used and treated in the same manner as the information that is already collected on the subject forms. DHS's proposal is respectful of individual privacy and strictly adheres to Federal privacy laws and guidance and Departmental privacy policies and procedures. DHS provides public notice about collection and use of data under appropriate System

² 8 CFR 1320.3(c)(1); Sunstein, Cass R., *Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, and Independent Regulatory Agencies: Paperwork Reduction Act – Generic Clearances* (May 28, 2010).

		2. Lack of Adequate Notice: The Privacy Act requires agencies to inform individuals about the intended use of their information and the consequences of not providing it. The comments argue that USCIS has not provided sufficient notice about the routine uses of the collected information or its potential impact on applicants. 3. Violation of Privacy Act Protections - Social Security Numbers: The Privacy Act prohibits denying benefits or privileges to individuals for refusing to disclose their Social Security numbers unless explicitly required by law. The comments suggest that the proposed collection does not meet this standard and fails to clarify whether providing Social Security information is voluntary or mandatory. 5. Concerns About Enforcement: The comments suggest that the collection of detailed information about family members and employers may be used to identify additional targets for immigration enforcement, rather than solely for adjudicating benefits. This raises concerns about the administration's broader immigration enforcement objectives and the potential weaponization of personal data.	of Records Notices (SORNs) published online and in the Federal Register, Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) posted on the DHS website, and privacy notices on DHS forms. DHS has evaluated potential privacy risks and determined that multiple published System of Records Notices (SORNs) in the Federal Register and associated Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) cover and apply to information gathered in this collection. Submission of information to USCIS for an immigration benefit is a voluntary action and information provided on the form is provided by the individual completing the form. Third-party information, such as that of family members and associates, is provided by the individual applicant for lawful purposes and is often needed to determine identity and eligibility for a request. For example, individuals who present a threat to national security or public safety may be inadmissible to the United States. U.S. immigration laws preclude DHS from granting immigration and naturalization benefits to individuals with certain disqualifying characteristics including association with terrorist organizations. See, e.g., INA § 208(b)(2)(A), 8 U.S.C. § 1158(b)(2)(A) (mandatory bars to asylum); INA § 214, 8 U.S.C. § 1184 (admission of nonimmigrants); INA § 212(a), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a) (inadmissible aliens); INA § 215, 8 U.S.C. § 1185 (travel control of citizens and aliens); INA § 217, 8 U.S.C. § 1187 (Visa Waiver Program eligibility determination); INA § 245(a)(2), 8 U.S.C. § 1255(a)(2) (admissibility requirements for adjustment of status applicants and agency discretion); and INA § 316(a)(3), 8 U.S.C. § 1427(a)(3) (good moral character requirement for naturalization). A uniform baseline of data fields, and screening and vetting standards will assist DHS in making sure that these requirements are met. Federal laws, including the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and Homeland Security Act of 2002, provide authority for this information collection. For example, INA § 287(b), 8 U.S.C. § 1357(b), and 8 C.F.R. § 287.5(a)(2) empower officers and agents to “take and consider evidence concerning the privilege of any person to enter, reenter, pass through, or reside in the United States.” Specific to the N-400, INA § 335, 8 U.S.C. 1446, requires “a personal investigation of the person applying of naturalization” and authorizes USCIS to take testimony “in any way affecting the admissibility of any applicant for naturalization” and to require the production of relevant documents.
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			DHS staff also follow applicable law and policy when redacting or releasing information in response to FOIA requests. USCIS officers are aware that there may be data integrity issues with any information collected on its forms, including some may inadvertently be inaccurate, out of date, or otherwise compromised. USCIS verifies information provided by various means and considers the totality of evidence before making a final determination on a case. In many instances, applicants are provided notice and opportunity to explain any information that may be inconsistent or deficient.
Topic 4. Administrative Procedure Act (APA) Concerns:			
0024		The comments argue that the proposed information collection violates the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) because it is arbitrary, capricious, and lacks adequate justification. Under the APA, agencies are required to provide a reasoned explanation for their decisions, consider reasonable alternatives, and assess the costs and impacts of their actions. The commenters assert that USCIS has failed to meet these standards by not citing data to support the need for the new fields, neglecting to consider less burdensome alternatives (such as case-specific data requests), and failing to explain how the burdens on applicants were assessed. Additionally, USCIS has not defined key terms like "immediate family" or clarified the consequences for omissions, which could lead to denial of benefits or suspicion. The commenters also highlight that USCIS has not provided evidence to demonstrate how the proposed data collection would materially enhance vetting or adjudication processes, nor has it shown that these changes would improve national security. Instead, the agency relies on vague appeals to executive authority and national security, which are insufficient under APA standards. Overall, the comments emphasize that the proposed changes contravene administrative law by imposing overly burdensome and unjustified requirements without a clear, evidence-based rationale.	Response: DHS disagrees with the commenters as the justification has been provided in the Notice explaining that the need for this information aligns with EO 14161 in completing rigorous vetting and screening of all applicants in order to protect the U.S. from national security and public safety threats. USCIS' statutory and regulatory authorities permit the agency to request information necessary for determining eligibility for an immigration request. The Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes USCIS to collect information needed to assess eligibility for an immigration benefit. USCIS notes that identity is always material to the immigration benefit sought, and the information collected through the biographic and employment identifiers will assist USCIS to determine identity and evaluate other information key to benefit eligibility.
Topic 5. Impacts on Immigration Benefit Processing			
0024 0027	Delay Benefit Processing	The comments argue that the proposed data collection will significantly delay benefit processing due to: 1. Increased Complexity: Longer, more complex forms will take applicants more time to complete and lead to more errors, omissions, or erroneous denials.	Response: USCIS believes that in most situations adding the proposed questions will not increase the agency's processing time. While the collection of these new data elements may increase the data elements reviewed on a form by adjudicators, the new data elements will help USCIS validate information is correctly associated with the applicant in relevant systems. This will provide trained DHS adjudication personnel with more timely access to relevant information, all of which

		2. Burden on Adjudicators: Increased burden on adjudicators is likely to exacerbate existing backlogs and processing delays, reducing efficiency in the immigration system. 3. Requests for Evidence (RFEs): Applicants may have difficulties in gathering and providing sensitive third-party information (e.g., family members' SSNs or employer information), resulting in RFEs, denials, and re-filings. Commenters recommend that applicants should be given opportunities to contest or remedy evidentiary demands without facing automatic denials. 4. Cumulative Impact: Multiple recent changes to forms compound delays, which USCIS has failed to account for. The comments emphasize that these delays will harm applicants, overburden adjudicators, and undermine the efficiency of the immigration system.	may reduce unnecessary delays and costs by allowing timelier confirmation of an applicant's identity and/or benefit eligibility. Through efficient collaboration and information sharing, over time, the government's burden may decrease. Additionally, USCIS has taken into account the burden involved in collecting this information and has found this burden is reasonable and justified, given the security and fraud prevention benefits from this collection.
0024	Deter Immigration	The comments argue that the proposed data collection will deter immigration by creating unnecessary barriers, particularly for vulnerable populations. The increased complexity and burden of longer and more detailed forms may discourage applicants, as they require extensive preparation, guidance, and research. Financial barriers also play a significant role, as the complexity of the forms may force applicants to hire legal representation at significant expense, discouraging low-income individuals from pursuing benefits. The proposed changes also blur the lines between immigration benefits and enforcement, eroding trust in the system and creating fear or uncertainty about applying. Fear of enforcement actions, increased complexity, and burdensome requirements collectively discourage eligible individuals from accessing or applying for benefits.	Response: USCIS seeks to balance its national security, public safety, and fraud missions with the provision of immigration benefits to eligible aliens. While we recognize that this collection may influence the decisions of a limited number of immigration benefit seekers, USCIS' top priority is the safety and security of the American people. USCIS does not seek to unnecessarily burden applicants but rather seeks to obtain all information necessary to maintain a robust and dynamic screening system. Additionally, DHS does not anticipate that the collection of this additional information will significantly affect processing times for most applicants. The United States will continue to attract the best and brightest to our shores.
Topic 6. Constitutional Issues			
0024	Fifth Amendment i. Due Process	The proposed collection of Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and other biographic and employment information on immigration forms raises Fifth Amendment and due process concerns. The comments argue that the policy imposes unjust and discriminatory procedural burdens on applicants without adequate justification, explanation, or opportunity to contest or remedy these demands. Applicants are required to provide sensitive data, such as Social Security Numbers (SSNs) of family members and employer details, under threat of application denial, without a clear process to appeal or address these demands.	Response: The Fifth Amendment states "No person shall be...deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law...". USCIS believes the additional data elements in this collection are reasonable to obtain and are not insurmountable. USCIS is already authorized to collect information on family members as part of the application process, and DHS uses this information for determining eligibility and to assess and identify potential fraud, national security, and public safety threats. Additionally, USCIS maintains and stores all collected information in accordance with federal regulatory, statutory, departmental, and component

		Vulnerable populations, such as survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and asylum seekers, face disproportionate challenges in providing the required information, violating their right to fair and meaningful procedures. Additionally, the proposal is arbitrary and capricious, lacking a reasoned explanation, failing to examine relevant data, and disregarding adverse consequences, which undermines constitutional due process protections.	privacy requirements, mandates, directives, and policy. The proposed information collection does not impact the due process rights of applicants, petitioners, or benefit requestors. For example, in general other than discretionary overseas denials, USCIS would not deny a benefit based on the new data elements without first confronting the applicant, petitioner, or benefit requestor with the information and providing an opportunity to explain it or rebut any negative inferences USCIS may have drawn from it. See 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(16)(i) and (ii). Additionally, if USCIS makes an adverse finding on any request or application, the individual may be entitled to additional immigration processes which may include the right to appeal or appear before an immigration judge. The Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes USCIS to collect information needed to assess eligibility for an immigration benefit. USCIS notes that identity is always material to the immigration benefit sought, and the information collected through the biographic and employment identifiers will assist USCIS to determine identity and evaluate other information key to benefit eligibility. The goal is to enhance screening and vetting to mitigate potential national security, public safety and fraud concerns. Gathering potential useful information is an essential step in the process of enhancing screening and vetting. SSNs are a unique identifier that can contribute to positive identification of individuals with a nexus to national security, public safety concerns, and fraud concerns. Additionally, definitively identifying family members on current filings will assist in identifying potential fraud in future filings by the applicant or listed family member.
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Topic 7. Discrimination/Vulnerable Populations

0024		The comments raise significant concerns about the proposed collection of biographic and employment-identifying information by USCIS, emphasizing that it is discriminatory and disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations, including asylum seekers, survivors of human trafficking, and applicants under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). These individuals often lack access to required documentation, such as Social Security numbers or employer data, due to estrangement from family members, informal employment histories, or precarious work environments. These requirements exacerbate existing inequalities and create significant barriers for marginalized groups, deterring eligible applicants from seeking immigration benefits.	Response: DHS disagrees with commenters who believe the collection of additional biographic and employment information disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations. The collection of this information will be used to help administer and enforce our immigration laws. Information relating to family members as well as employers is essential to complete the vetting process that would ultimately effect whether the alien is eligible for immigration benefits. As indicated in the above responses, DHS handles all information collected through DHS applications in accordance with law and relevant System of Records Notices (SORN) and Privacy Impact Assessments
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		Moreover, the requirement to contact former employers or estranged family members could expose applicants to retaliation, retribution, or further harm, particularly in cases where these parties were complicit in exploitation or abuse. The comments also critique the one-size-fits-all approach, which applies indiscriminately across various immigration benefit types and fails to account for the diverse realities and vulnerabilities of different immigrant populations. Forcing applicants to disclose or penalizing applicants for failing to disclose sensitive data about relatives or employers creates risks of harm, surveillance, and enforcement actions against third parties, which disproportionately affects marginalized communities. Commenters emphasize that these burdens are unnecessary, harmful, and disproportionately affect those most in need of protection and relief.	(PIA), available on the DHS website (www.dhs.gov/privacy). DHS is committed to the highest standards of conduct, especially when it comes to the fair, unbiased, and transparent enforcement of our mission responsibilities. The collection of this additional information will be used to help enforce our immigration laws by assisting in the adjudication of eligibility to travel to or be admitted to the United States or be granted an immigration-related benefit. Existing DHS policy prohibits the consideration of race or ethnicity in our investigation, screening, and enforcement activities in all but the most exceptional instances. This policy is reaffirmed in manuals, policies, directives, and guidelines. Existing DHS policy also prohibits profiling, targeting, or discrimination against any individual for exercising his or her First Amendment rights.
Topic 8. Other Recommendations			
0023		The commenter provided the following recommendations: 1. Commenter recommends extending the proposed collection to include 15 years of past history, as 5 years is considered insufficient for understanding an applicant's background. 2. Commenter suggests incorporating questions about past criminal and civil infractions to better assess potential risks.	Response: Please see USCIS' responses below. USCIS will not be making this recommended change to extend the length of time for information to 15 years. While we understand and agree with the need for relevant information, USCIS believes that the current 5-year timeframe is sufficient to assess an applicant's background and eligibility. This timeframe aligns with existing statutory and regulatory requirements, ensuring consistency across immigration processes. USCIS remains committed to balancing thorough vetting with efficient processing to uphold the integrity of the immigration system. As to the commenter's suggestion to include questions about past criminal and civil infractions, USCIS already incorporates questions about criminal history in its adjudication processes and background checks, including arrests, charges, and convictions, as these are critical factors in assessing an applicant's eligibility and potential risks. However, expanding these inquiries to include civil infractions would not align at this time with the agency's priorities or the Administration's agenda to streamline government processes and focus resources on matters of national security and public safety.
Topic 9. Out of Scope			
0023 0028 0029 0030		Several comments were out of scope for the proposed collection because they did not provide feedback on the nature of the proposed collection. One commenter included comments on the Generic Clearance for the new collection of certain information on immigration forms.	Response: These comments are out of scope for the proposed generic clearance of the intended information collection because they do not provide feedback on the nature of the proposed generic clearance or the actual information collection instruments affected.

			Public comments received on the generic clearance for the new collection of certain information on immigration forms is not part of this proposed collection, but, rather, is part of another proposed collection also posted for public comment in the <i>Federal Register</i> at 90 FR 11054 on March 3, 2025, for a 60-day notice and at 90 FR 42604 on September 3, 2025, for a 30-day notice. Responses to concerns about this proposed collection will be provided in that specific Federal Register notice in a separate document.
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