

## Supporting Statement A

### State Offices of Rural Health Grant (SORH) Program Technical Assistance

OMB Control No. 0915-0322 Revision/ Expiration 04/30/2026

#### A. JUSTIFICATION

##### 1. Circumstances of Information Collection

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), is requesting OMB approval to continue use of a Technical Assistance Data Form for the State Offices of Rural Health (SORH) program. In its authorizing language (Sec. 711. [42 U.S.C. 912]), Congress charged FORHP with “administering grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to provide technical assistance (TA) and other activities as necessary to support activities related to improving health care in rural areas.” The mission of FORHP is to sustain and improve access to quality health care services for rural communities. This electronic form is used to collect information from SORH grantees on the amount of direct TA assistance they provide to clients within their state.

The SORH Program established by section 338J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254r) began in 1991 and is a matching (3:1) grant program that has resulted in the establishment of State Offices of Rural Health in all 50 states. The mission of each office is to help strengthen and improve rural health care delivery systems in rural communities. To accomplish this mission, each office collects and disseminates information, helps coordinate state-wide rural health interests and activities in order to avoid duplication and provides TA to rural clients. Grantees submit an annual progress report narrative that includes their TA outreach activities. However, the information was not standardized and did not provide quantitative detail on the provision of technical assistance.

In FY2024 performance period, SORHs provided 84,566 TA encounters to 30,316 unduplicated rural clients. SORH grantees will continue to submit a Technical Assistance Report that includes: (1) the total number of technical assistance encounters provided directly by the grantee; and (2) the total number of unduplicated clients that received direct technical assistance from the grantee. FORHP proposes the following minor revisions to the form:

- Removal of “*Type of audience collaborated with*” section,
- An edit to response categories under “*Topic area collaborations*” sections, and
- Adding two responses under the “*Types of Clients that Received TA*” to capture the number of new and returning organization receiving technical assistance during the reporting period to align with the administration priorities.

Submission of the Technical Assistance Report is submitted via the HRSA Data Collection Platform (DCP) no later than 60 days after the end of each 12-month budget period.

## **2. Purposes and Use of Information**

The purpose of this data collection is to provide HRSA/FORHP with standardized information on how well each SORH grantee meets the technical assistance needs of their States and rural communities. Consolidated data from the form provides quantitative information about technical assistance provided directly by the SORH grant program.

Responses provide useful information on the SORH program and will enable HRSA/FORHP to provide data required by Congress under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. It also ensures that grantees have a demonstrated need for technical assistance services in their communities and documents that Federal funds are being effectively used to meet those needs.

## **Instructions**

The SORH electronic data form consists of one table and is completed by all 50 grantees. Definitions for technical assistance and unduplicated client are long standing and have been provided to grantees. The table provides data on the number of technical assistance encounters provided and the number of unduplicated clients that received technical assistance. *Once approved by OMB, grantees will submit answer “yes/no” on the following (1) information disseminated, (2) information created, and (3) collaborative efforts by a) topic area.* The information is then entered into the HRSA Data Collection Platform web-application. Grantees can call HRSA’s DCP Helpdesk with any technical questions.

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

This database is fully electronic. Grantees submit the data electronically via a HRSA managed web-application. This reduces the paper burden on the grantee and on the SORH program staff.

## **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information**

The information on technical assistance provided by grantees is unique to the SORH program.

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

Every effort has been made to ensure the data requested is the minimum necessary to answer basic questions about the appropriate use of grant funds for the provision of technical assistance. This activity does not have a significant impact on small entities.

## **6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently**

Grant dollars are awarded annually; therefore, this information is needed annually by the program in order to measure effective use of grant dollars consistently among all the grantees.

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

The data are collected in a manner consistent with guidelines contained in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

**8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice / Outside Consultation**

The 60-day notice required in 4 CFR 1320.8(d) was published in the *Federal Register* on January 29, 2026 (Vol. 91, No. 19, page 3897-3898). No comments were received. A 30-day notice was published in the *Federal Register* on April 24, 2026 (Vol. 91, No. 79, pages 22157-22158).

**9. Explanation of any Payment /Gift to Respondents**

Respondents will not be remunerated.

**10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents**

No individual level data are collected on the TA form, and the data system does not involve the reporting of personally identifiable information about individuals. The SORH program requests only **aggregate data** on total number of technical assistance encounters provided by the grantee and the total number of clients receiving the assistance. Data will be kept private to the extent allowed by law

**11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

The SORH program does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature.

**12. Estimates of Annualized Hour and Cost Burden**

**12A. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours**

Form Name	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Average Burden per Response (in hours)	Total Burden Hours
Technical Assistance Report	50	1	50	13.5	675
Total	50		50		675

***Basis for the estimates:*** There are 50 SORH grantees. Estimates of average burden per response were obtained from consultations with the grantees.

It should be noted that the burden is expected to vary across the grantees. This variation is tied primarily to the type of data system(s) used by the grantees. However, many more grantees are now using a customized commercially available MIS system to track the information whereas others still rely on paper systems.

**12B.**

Based on the average SORH Director salary of \$28.85 per hour. The average was determined based on budgets submitted with the application and progress reports across the SORH program.

This cost is estimated as the estimated hourly wage of \$28.85 plus 50% for benefits and fringe (\$28.85 per hour + \$14.43 fringe per hour x 675 hours = \$29,214).

### **13. Estimates of other Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Recordkeepers/Capital Costs**

Other than their time, there is no cost to respondents.

### **14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

The data collection platform is maintained by an information technology (IT) contractor at the HRSA level. The State Office of Rural Health (SORH) Program's share to maintain and enhance the data collection platform is estimated to be \$50,000 annually. FORHP staff will monitor the program and provide guidance to recipient project staff at a cost of \$4,376.50 per year. This cost is estimated as 50 hours of staff time per year at a GS-13 Step 1 salary level, estimated hourly wage of \$58.35 plus 50% for benefits and fringe (\$58.35 per hour + \$29.18 fringe per hour x 50 hours = \$4,376.50).

The total cost to the government of this project for 5 years is approximately \$271,882.50. The total annual cost to the government for this project is approximately \$54,376.50 (rounded up to \$54,377 in ROCIS).

### **15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments**

The estimated burden has not been impacted from the current burden inventory of 675 hours annually as proposed changes are non-substantive. Measures were swapped to align with the administration priorities.

### **16. Plans for Tabulation, Publication, and Project Time Schedule**

HRSA is working with our agency's Data Disclosure Review Board to develop a Public Use Data File, which will provide the data in a machine-readable format. HRSA is determining where the data will ultimately be published or if it will be available upon request pending consideration of cost constraints. FORHP will monitor progress of this initiative and comply where applicable. This information is collected to fulfil GPR requirements and certain measures are published in the annual Budget for HRSA. Aggregate data is also used to assess the progress and success of this program. The information is accessible to the grantees as the data relates to them.

This is a recurring data collection that program recipients report once a year. We are requesting clearance of this information collection for the next three years. The next reporting period is scheduled for 07/01/2026-08/30/2026.

This information collection will not use statistical methods such as sampling, imputation, or other statistical estimation techniques.

### **17. Reasons (s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate**

The expiration date will be displayed on every page of every form.

### **18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

This project fully complies with CFR 1320.9. The certifications are included in this package.