

Federal Case Registry (FCR)

**OMB Information Collection Request
0970 - 0421**

Supporting Statement Part A - Justification

October 2026

Type of Request: Revision

Submitted By:
Office of Child Support Enforcement
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) amended the Social Security Act (“the Act”). PRWORA requires the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) to establish and maintain the Federal Case Registry of Child Support Orders (FCR) in the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS). The FCR is a national database of state-provided abstracts of Title IV-D child support cases and non-Title IV-D cases, including orders that are entered or modified by courts or other tribunals after October 1, 1998. PRWORA also amended the Act to require each state to have a “State Case Registry” (SCR) that includes information on individuals involved in child support cases. Title IV-D cases are those in which the state is currently providing child support services as directed by the state’s Title IV-D program. A non-Title IV-D case is one in which the state has no current application for services or is not receiving services from any other state program.

Each state is required to transmit SCR information to the FCR, which serves as an electronic information exchange system within the FPLS. The FCR contains key information, including an order indicator and case and participant data received from each of the SCRs. Using the FCR allows authorized state agencies to determine whether any state has an interest in the same individuals, thereby enhancing the nation’s child support enforcement efforts and avoiding duplication of efforts.

The authorities for the FCR information collection activities are:

- (1) 42 U.S.C. 653(h), requiring the establishment of the FCR within the FPLS
- (2) 42 U.S.C. 654a(e), requiring state child support agencies to include a SCR in the state’s automated system
- (3) 42 U.S.C. 654a(f)(1), requiring states to conduct information comparison activities between the SCR and the FCR

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The purpose of the FCR is to help states administer child support enforcement programs under state plans that are approved under Title IV-D and programs funded under Title IV-A of the Act. Accessing and exchanging FCR child support case information helps state agencies:

- Establish, modify, or enforce child support obligations
- Establish paternity
- Enforce state laws regarding parental kidnapping
- Establish or enforce child custody or visitation determinations

Furthermore, the FCR allows an individual or agency to obtain information through the FPLS to help locate missing parents.

Access to the information from the FPLS is limited to authorized persons, as defined under 42 U.S.C. 653(c). Authorized persons include:

- (1) any agent or attorney of any state or Indian tribe or tribal organization having in effect an approved state plan who has the duty or authority under such plan to seek to recover any amounts owed as child and spousal support;
- (2) the court which has the authority to issue an order or to serve as the initiating court in an action to seek an order against a noncustodial parent for the support and maintenance of a child;
- (3) the resident parent, legal guardian, attorney, or agent of a child (other than a child receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families);
- (4) a state agency that is administering a child welfare, foster care, or adoption assistance program under an approved state plan; and
- (5) an entity designated as a Central Authority for child support enforcement in a foreign reciprocating country or a foreign treaty country.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

Since its implementation, the FCR database and automated matching technology have vastly reduced the amount of time and effort state agencies require to process cases. New case information is compared to existing case information maintained in the FCR. OCSE verifies the data with the Social Security Administration, compares it against data maintained in the National Directory of New Hires and against external locate sources (if requested), and then returns any matched data to authorized persons within two days of initially receiving it.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

The FCR does not collect or maintain duplicative information. This is the only national database with abstracted information from child support cases and participants, including an order indicator.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

Not applicable.

6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

Collecting SCR information daily or weekly is vital for efficient and effective case management. If case information is not collected at all or is collected less frequently, states may not learn of, or may experience delays in learning about, information of common participants, resulting in multiple orders, duplicative actions, or ineffective child support activities. Changes to the existing collection frequency could also put OCSE in jeopardy of violating federal law.

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

In accordance with 45 CFR § 307.11(f)(1), states must submit new and updated case and participant information from SCRs to the FCR “within five (5) business days of receipt.”

8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency’s intention to request an OMB review of this information collection activity. This notice was published on May 6, 2026 (Vol. 91, No. 87, page 24546) and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. OCSE received one comment from Virginia’s Division of Child Support Enforcement (Virginia DCSE) supporting the burden estimates and affirming the efficacy and necessity of the FCR.

9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

Not applicable.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

OCSE is statutorily required to adhere to the security requirements under 42 U.S.C. 653 and 5 U.S.C. 522a, which include authorized uses, disclosure, retention, and safeguards pertaining to records maintained and transmitted through the FCR. Additionally, OCSE safeguards sensitive information according to the HHS Information Security and Privacy Program, as provided by the HHS Office of the Chief Information Officer and applicable laws, rules, and policies.

OCSE published a System of Record Notice (SORN) for the FCR at 80 FR 17912 (April 2, 2015), amended at 83 FR 6591 (February 14, 2018), and again at 87 FR 56055 (September 13, 2022). The SORN contains the type of data, the routine use of the data, and the security requirements.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The OCSE operation of the FPLS is a federal requirement to help child support agencies locate, establish, enforce, and collect child support. States are required to obtain sensitive information to meet these child support program requirements.

The FCR collects sensitive information to ensure participants are correctly matched to cases. See 42 U.S.C. 653(h)(2) and 45 CFR § 303.70(d)(2).

12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

The annual burden estimate for the FCR collection activities pertain to data transmissions from the SCR to the FCR. Respondents use Appendix G: Input Record Layout to submit the necessary information electronically.

The annualized cost to respondents for the hour burden is based on an average cost per Computer Processing Unit (CPU) minute of \$12, or \$720 per burden hour. This estimated CPU cost is based on the OCSE experience from reimbursement agreements with the data center provider. The automated process eliminates any labor costs associated with the data transmission from the SCR to the FCR.

Information Collection Title	Total Number of Respondents	Total Annual Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage	Annual Cost per Individual Respondent	Total Annual Cost
Appendix G: Input Record Layout	54	390 ¹	0.0333 ²	701 ³	\$720 ⁴	\$9,347 ⁵	\$504,720 ⁶
Estimated Annual Burden and Cost Totals:						-	\$504,720

13. Estimates of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents and Record Keepers

Respondents use existing, statutorily required systems to provide information to the FCR, so there is no capital or start-up cost burden to respondents. Any ongoing cost to states is usual and customary to operate and maintain their existing state systems. There are also no incremental costs associated with collecting this information.

14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

The annualized cost to the federal government for the case registry requirements is approximately \$8.4 million. This includes FCR system development, technical assistance,

¹ Number of responses per respondent is the average number of submissions to the FCR per state in Calendar Year 2025.

² Estimated transmission time is 2 minutes. For the hourly calculation, use 2/60 or 0.0333.

³ 54 respondents submit an average of 390 responses per year multiplied by the transmission time of 0.0333 minutes for an annual total of 701 burden hours (rounded).

⁴ 60 minutes, or 1 burden hour, multiplied by \$12 per CPU minute is \$720 per burden hour.

⁵ Total costs of \$504,720 divided by the number of respondents (54) is an annual cost per respondent of \$9,347.

⁶ To calculate the total annual cost of \$504,720: 701 respondent hours multiplied by \$720 (60 minutes at \$12 per CPU minute).

and contracting costs, as well as the software and hardware costs incurred by OCSE in association with the FCR.

15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments

OCSE did not make changes to Appendix G: Input Record Layout.

The estimated number of responses decreased based on FCR submissions per state in calendar year 2025, which constitutes an adjustment that resulted in a reduction to the annual burden estimate.

16. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

Records contained in the FCR are included in the OCSE Annual Report to Congress. There are no other planned analyses, tabulations, or publications of the data collected.

17. Reason(s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate

Not applicable.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

Not applicable.