Alternative Supporting Statement for Information Collections Designed for Research, Public Health Surveillance, and Program Evaluation Purposes

TANF Data Collaborative (TDC) 2.0 – Formative Data Collection

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A

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Part A

Executive Summary

- **Type of Request:** This Information Collection Request is for a generic information collection under the umbrella generic, Formative Data Collections for Program Support (0970-0531).

- **Description of Request:** The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation within the Administration for Children and Families plans to conduct focus groups and administer an interest inventory survey to individuals from six state or county Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agency teams who were awarded TANF Data Collaborative (TDC) Equity Analysis Awards. Participating agency teams are receiving training and technical assistance as part of their grant award through the TDC 2.0 project. The data collection activities will be carried out during the TDC 2.0 January 2025 in-person convening. The data collected will be used to inform and tailor coaching and technical assistance activities to meet the needs of agency teams, with a focus on building their data analytics capacity to complete an equity-related data analytics project during the grant period. The results will inform the support provided to participating agencies; they are not intended to be generalized to a broader population.

  We do not intend for this information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.

- **Time Sensitivity:** To fit within project timeline constraints, the data collection must occur as part of the in-person convening to be held from January 13 – 15, 2025.

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A1. Necessity for Collection

The Administration for Children and Families awarded Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Data Collaborative (TDC) Equity Analysis Awards (discretionary grants) to strengthen the data analytic capacities of state and county TANF agencies to support evidence-informed decision making, particularly as it relates to equity issues, in order to advance the economic well-being of individuals and families currently receiving or eligible to receive TANF services. Participating agency teams are receiving intensive training and technical assistance as part of their grant award through the TDC 2.0 project, which is funded by the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE).

The proposed information collection is essential to support the TDC 2.0 project, as it is intended to inform the design and delivery of tailored technical assistance by assessing participating agencies' data capacity, interests, needs, and goals. Gathering input through focus groups and a survey at the January 2025 convening will ensure that coaching and technical assistance efforts align with the agencies' goals and are responsive to their learning needs.

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate this collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose

Purpose and Use

The purpose of the proposed data collection activities is to identify training and technical assistance needs, challenges, and goals among the six state or county TANF agency teams who were awarded funding through the TDC Equity Analysis Awards and are receiving training and technical assistance provided through the TDC 2.0 project to support the completion of equity-related data analytics projects using their agency's TANF data.

The information collected will be used by OPRE and the TDC 2.0 project team (TA providers) to identify TA needs and tailor the provision of TA for participating TANF agency teams. The focus groups (Instrument 2 - TDC 2.0 Convening Focus Group Protocol) will be a facilitated discussion to identify high-priority goals and areas of growth for each team and their organization. The information gathered from each team will be used to design coaching and technical assistance activities and to assess the team's initial capacities and needs. The data collected from the focus groups may also be included in public materials such as a final report. The findings will be used to describe agency goals for the initiative at the beginning of the project and to descriptively summarize progress made by agencies during the project period. The technical assistance topic interest survey (Instrument 1 - TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory) will be used to identify topics that are of interest across the six TANF agency teams for future training and technical assistance.

This proposed information collection meets the following goal of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for program support (0970-0531):

- inform the provision of training and technical assistance.

The information collected is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision-maker, and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

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Guiding Questions

1. What are the ways you see participation in TDC 2.0 having a potential impact on your agency's TANF program and the families it serves?
2. How will you know these impacts have been achieved?
3. Thinking of the areas of growth your team identified, has your agency previously attempted to grow in these areas or address barriers to growth in those areas?
4. How do you want TDC 2.0 to support your team and agency in supporting your growth and meeting your goals?
5. What would success look like for your agency as it relates to successful analytic data use?
6. In what ways does your agency currently embed equity in research and analytics?
7. What do you see as the biggest challenges for your organization to authentically embedding equity in research and analytics from beginning to end? And for your TDC Equity Analysis Award project?
8. What would success look like in your organization, as it relates to authentically embedding equity in research and analytics?

Information Collection Procedures and Processes

The focus group will be facilitated by the technical assistance coach for each site during an in-person convening. Coaches will provide the link to the technical assistance topic interest survey to each participating agency team member during the convening.

The study team will not draw any statistical inferences from the information collected. Instead, they will examine responses to questions that ask respondents to indicate their interest (using a 5-point Likert scale from (1) "Very Uninterested" to (5) "Very Interested") in potential TA topics, summing the scores by topic. The topics with the highest scores will be considered for TDC 2.0 webinars, tools, or coaching sessions.

Data from the focus group will be collected in two parts, including an interactive exercise and a semi-structured discussion. Data from the interactive exercise will be used to create an inventory of identified growth areas and a thematic analysis will be conducted to group these areas into broader categories. The frequency of specific themes will be calculated to determine the most cited areas of growth. Data from the discussion will be transcribed and coded to identify recurring themes and participant perspectives on needs, past successes/failures, and expectations for TDC 2.0 support.

Data Collection Activity	*Instruments*	*Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection*	*Mode and Duration*
TA Topic Interest Survey	Instrument 1 – TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory	**Respondents**: TANF agency staff attending the January convening **Content**: This survey asks the agency staff which potential technical assistance topics they are interested in learning more about. **Purpose**: To identify agency teams' interests; to inform the design and delivery of future technical assistance	**Mode**: web-based survey **Duration**: 20 mins
Focus Group	Instrument 2 – TDC 2.0 Convening Focus	**Respondents**: TANF agency staff attending the January convening	**Mode**: In-Person

	Group Protocol	**Content**: This focus group will assess goals and desired areas of growth (see guiding questions above) **Purpose**: To identify agency teams' capacity, needs, and goals; to inform the design and delivery of future technical assistance	**Duration**: 1 hour

This data collection is not designed to be representative or generalizable to any subpopulation.

Other Data Sources and Uses of Information

This information will not be used in concert with other federal data collection activities.

A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

The interest survey (Instrument 1 – TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory) will be administered electronically. Focus group (Instrument 2 – TDC 2.0 Convening Focus Group Protocol) discussions will be facilitated in-person as part of an already planned in-person convening, which will reduce burden on participants' time by eliminating time spent on travel. The sessions will be recorded electronically, with participants' consent, and notes will be taken electronically for analysis which will reduce the time needed to take detailed notes or repeat discussion points and comments. The recordings will be used internally to provide comprehensive summaries of the discussions and findings.

A4. Use of Existing Data: Efforts to reduce duplication, minimize burden, and increase utility and government efficiency

The guiding questions and topic interest inventory survey are based on learning from the TANF Data Innovation (TDI) project, which was launched by ACF in 2017 and conducted activities to support the use of administrative data from TANF and related human services proms. However, the information to be collected in the focus groups and the interest survey has not been collected from the six TANF agencies awarded funding through the TDC Equity Analysis Awards and is essential to designing and delivering tailored training and technical assistance for this group.

A5. Impact on Small Businesses

No small businesses will be involved with this information collection.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Now subsumed under 2(b) above and 10 (below)

A8. Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

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 request to extend approval of the umbrella generic with minor changes. The notice was published on January 28, 2022, (87 FR 4603), and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. ACF did not receive any comments on the first notice. A second notice was published, allowing a thirty-day period for public comment, in conjunction with submission of the request to OMB. ACF did not receive any comments on the second notice.

Consultation with Experts

No external experts were consulted in preparation for this data collection activity.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation

No tokens of appreciation will be provided to participants.

A10. Privacy: Procedures to protect privacy of information, while maximizing data sharing

Personally Identifiable Information

The only personally identifiable information that will be collected is on Instrument 1 – TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory, in which respondents will have the option of including their name for follow up purposes.

Information will not be maintained in a paper or electronic system from which data are actually or directly retrieved by an individuals' personal identifier.

Assurances of Privacy

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. As specified in the contract, the Contractor will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information.

Data Security and Monitoring

The focus group sessions will be audio-recorded and stored in a secure environment. The recordings will be for the technical assistance providers only and will be accessible only by the very limited group of staff whose access is required. All recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the TDC 2.0 project.

A11. Sensitive Information [1]

[1] Examples of sensitive topics include (but not limited to): social security number; sex behavior and attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close relationships, e.g., family, pupil-teacher, employee-supervisor; mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to respondents; religion and indicators of religion; community activities which indicate political affiliation and attitudes; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those

No sensitive information will be collected as part of this data collection activity.

A12. Burden

Explanation of Burden Estimates

We anticipate that 30 TANF agency staff members from agencies awarded TDC Equity Analysis Awards will fill out the interest survey (Instrument 1 – TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory) and will participate in a focus group session (see Instrument 2 – TDC 2.0 Convening Focus Group Protocol). Multiple focus group sessions will be held with up to 5 participants in each group. We anticipate that the interest survey will take about 20 minutes to complete, and the focus groups will last 60 minutes.

Estimated Annualized Cost to Respondents

The cost to respondents was calculated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) job code for State Government – Social and Community Service Managers [Social and Community Service Managers] from May 2023, which is $40.10 per hour.

Instrument	No. of Respondents (total over request period)	No. of Responses per Respondent (total over request period)	Avg. Burden per Response (in hours)	Total Burden (in hours)	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
Instrument 1 – TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory	30	1	.33 (20 mins)	10	$40.10	$401.00
Instrument 2 – TDC 2.0 Convening Focus Group Protocol	30	1	1	30	$40.10	$1,203.00
Total	**30**	**2**	**Avg: .67**	**40**	**-**	**$1,604.00**

A13. Costs

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimated Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

Cost Category	Estimated Costs
Conduct focus groups; administer survey; analyze findings (estimated contractor staff time: 20 hours)	$6,400
Total/Annual costs over the request period	$6,400

A15. Reasons for changes in burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-0531).

A16. Timeline

of lawyers, physicians and ministers; records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment; receipt of economic assistance from the government (e.g., unemployment or WIC or SNAP); immigration/citizenship status.

- Conduct focus groups and administer survey: at January 2025 in-person convening, upon OMB approval
- Analysis of findings (after OMB approval): 2 months
- Production of final report (after OMB approval): 36 months

A17. Exceptions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

- Instrument 1 – TDC 2.0 Technical Assistance Topic Interest Inventory
- Instrument 2 – TDC 2.0 Convening Focus Group Protocol