State Capacity and Readiness Assessment for a State-Centered Refugee Resettlement Framework

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A - Justification

April 2026

Submitted By:
Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Program Bureau
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

4th Floor, Mary E. Switzer Building
330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks approval under the Formative Data Collections for ACF Program Support generic clearance (OMB #0970-0531) for instruments to collect data from state partners and community stakeholders to inform the design and implementation of a new resettlement framework in Fiscal Year (FY) 2028.

Background

In accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980, the White House determined that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), rather than the State Department, will oversee the Program of Initial Resettlement (PIR). Given this shift and the Executive Order "Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program's" emphasis on increased state involvement, ORR will conduct a state assessment study to obtain data on program implementation and to assess the needs of grant recipients and other stakeholders as they transition to a state-centered programming model. The assessment will also provide ORR with insights into which states may be ready to pilot the framework in FY 2027 and what would be required for broader implementation in FY 2028.

ORR awarded a cooperative agreement to the Welcoming Initiative for Newcomers (WIN) to complete the assessment.

The data collection is formative in nature and is not intended to produce generalizable findings.

Legal or Administrative Requirements that Necessitate the Collection

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

A2. Purpose of Survey and Data Collection Procedures

Overview of Purpose and Use

The purpose of the information collection is to:

- Assess state readiness to support expanded coordination roles
- Identify implementation considerations and risks
- Understand operational capacity and variation across states
- Gather perspectives from national and local stakeholders

The information collected will support ORR’s efforts during the transition to the state-centered model to identify technical assistance (TA) needs and implementation challenges, assist grant recipients to meet statutory and programmatic requirements, and achieve intended outcomes in refugee self-sufficiency. The data will also inform program planning and strengthen implementation strategies. Summary findings may be shared with state partners to facilitate the identification and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned. Additionally, the information will inform ORR leadership on implementation progress and emerging priorities related to the model.

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

- Planning for provision of programmatic T/TA in support of a State-Centric program.
  - ✓ ORR will gain an understanding of any gaps in systems, gain an understanding of State readiness to lead planning and coordination and identify support needs.
- Obtaining feedback about processes and/or practices to inform ORR program development or support.
  - ✓ Specifically, this information collection will use multiple methods to gather input from states and other local stakeholders who can provide critical feedback on system capacity. This includes assessing factors such as employment and labor market conditions and access to healthcare within a tier-based framework for identifying and evaluating capacity.

Processes for Information Collection

This assessment will broadly include mixed methods for information collection, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups. The following table provides an overview of the proposed information collections and Supporting Statement B provides additional details about study design.

Data Collection Activity	*Instrument*	*Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection*	*Mode and Duration*
Survey	State Readiness Survey	**Respondents**: State Refugee Coordinators (ORR grant recipients) **Content**: Capacity across domains, decision-making and coordination, requirements for state-centric model **Purpose**: Assess readiness to lead capacity planning, consultation, community assessments, placement, and overall coordination	**Mode**: Web-based **Duration**: 40 Min
Survey	National Initial Resettlement Provider Survey	**Respondents**: Initial Resettlement Providers **Content**: Expertise of current service delivery model, benefits and risks of this proposed framework, and roles of IRPs in a state-centric system **Purpose**: Understand implementation perspectives and roles of IRPs	**Mode**: Web-based **Duration**: 15 Min
Survey	Local Resettlement Provider Survey	**Respondents**: Local Resettlement Providers **Content**: Local capacity, variation across communities, best practices and challenges regarding coordination with states, coordination with overseas and support needs. **Purpose**: Capture on-the-ground service delivery and capacity	**Mode**: Web-based **Duration**: 15 Min

Survey	Refugee Experience Survey	**Respondents**: Refugees **Content**: Service access, outcomes, tiered model, cost of living, secondary/out migration, family ties, matching job skills/labor market, and alignment with needs. **Purpose**: Better understand refugees' experiences during resettlement and identify ways to improve services and support for future arrivals	**Mode**: Web-based **Duration**: 15 Min
Interview	Key Informant Interview Guide	**Respondents**: National and international nonprofit organizations **Content**: Clarification of survey responses **Purpose**: Complement the state perspective, offering a more complete picture of the feasibility, implementation risks, and opportunities under a potential state-centric refugee resettlement coordination model.	**Mode**: Virtual **Duration**: 60 Min
Focus Group	Interdisciplinary Focus Group Guide	**Respondents**: National and international nonprofit organizations **Content**: Clarification of survey responses **Purpose**: Complement the state perspective, offering a more complete picture of the feasibility, implementation risks, and opportunities under a potential state-centric refugee resettlement coordination model.	**Mode**: Virtual **Duration**: 90-120 min
Focus Group	Refugee Focus Group Guide	**Respondents**: Initial Resettlement Providers and other agencies that serve population including health clinics, employment agencies, schools, etc **Content**: Capture expertise in resettlement system that has a more specialized role or that focuses on longer term service provision (integration aspects), understand involvement in capacity determination, and visibility into arrival data and timing for operational preparedness. **Purpose**: Capture direct service provision outside of the 90-day PRI service providers; important features of the overall resettlement system	**Mode**: Virtual **Duration**: 90-120 min

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

Surveys will be distributed by email and administered using secure, web-based survey platforms to allow respondents to complete the assessment at their convenience and reduce respondent burden. Features such as save-and-return functionality and pre-population of known information may be used, where appropriate, to reduce respondent burden.

Interviews and focus groups will be conducted using virtual meeting platforms to minimize travel and scheduling constraints. Scheduling tools, optional transcription features, and email or shared document follow-up may also be used, as appropriate, to streamline participation and reduce burden.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

This information is not currently available in a comprehensive format for this purpose.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

Participation will be targeted, held at appropriate times, and designed to minimize burden on local partners.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

A8. Federal Register Notice and 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 April 28, 2025, (90 FR 17603), 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 (90 FR 42248, in conjunction with submission of the request to OMB. ACF did not receive any comments on the second notice.

Consultation with Outside Experts

No consultations have taken place with experts outside of the project team.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation for Respondents

Tokens of appreciation will not be provided for most respondents. However, refugee participants who take part in surveys or focus groups may receive a $25 gift card as a token of appreciation for their participation. It is important to secure enough participants to provide quality data and capture the experiences of refugees during resettlement. The potential refugee participants are a hard-to-reach population and are often low-income, which could be barriers to their participation. To ensure recruitment of a sufficient number of refugees and to recognize the importance of information provided, we propose offering participants $25 for their completion of the survey.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

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. Two of the surveys, the State Readiness Survey and the National Initial Resettlement Provider survey, request the respondent to provide contact information for others that may then be surveyed. The information will only be used to send the survey to potential respondents. Otherwise, the information being collected pertains to programs and will be shared as described above in section A2.

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Burden Estimates

This information collection consists of several collections for different populations, as detailed in section A2. The table below provides estimates for the number of respondents we aim to reach and the estimated time to complete each instrument. Respondents will complete a survey once, with a subset of survey completers then selected to participate once in either an interview or focus group. Not all interview and focus group participants will also have completed a survey.

The estimated time to complete an instrument is derived through a structured, item-by-item review of each instrument. Questions were categorized by type—single-select, multi-select, rating/scale, and open-ended—and assigned per-item completion time benchmarks consistent with survey research conventions (20–30 seconds for closed items; 45–60 seconds for multi-select and scale items; 1–4 minutes for open-ended responses, depending on complexity). Estimated times reflect a typical respondent completing all required items, with optional items excluded from the base estimate.

Cost Estimates

The cost to respondents was estimated using wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Multiple wage categories were used to reflect differences in respondent roles and participation contexts.

State Government Respondents

State respondents are expected to include State Refugee Coordinators and other senior state leadership. The wage rate for **General and Operations Managers (11-1021)** was used as a proxy for senior leadership roles. The May 2024 mean hourly wage for this occupation is **$62.01 per hour**. To account for fringe benefits and overhead, the rate was multiplied by two, resulting in an adjusted hourly rate of **$124.02 per hour**.

Other Professional Respondents

For other respondents, including resettlement providers, ecosystem partners, and community organizations, the wage rate for **Social and Community Service Managers (11-9151)** was used. The May 2024 mean hourly wage for this occupation is **$41.72 per hour**. After applying a fringe benefit multiplier of two, the adjusted hourly rate is **$83.44 per hour**.

Refugee Participants
Refugee participants differ from other respondent groups in that they are not participating in a professional capacity and may represent a range of employment situations, including individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, or working in entry-level positions. As a result, a lower proxy wage rate is used to estimate respondent burden.

For this assessment, a conservative estimated hourly wage range of **$15 to $25 per hour** is used to approximate respondent burden for refugee participants. This range reflects variability in employment status and aligns with typical entry-level and early employment wages across participating communities.

Source: BLS, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2024
https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage	Total Annual Cost
State Readiness Survey	50	1	.67	33.5	$124*	$4,154
National Initial Resettlement Program Survey	12	1	.25	3	$83.44	$250.32
Local Provider Survey	50	1	.25	12.5	$83.44	$1,043
Refugee Experience Survey	50	1	.25	12.5	$20	$250
Key Informant Interviews	20	1	1.0	20	$83.44	$1,668
Interdisciplinary Focus Group Guide	150	1	1.75	262.50	$83.44	$21,903
Refugee Focus Group Guide	32	1	1.75	56	$83.44	$4,672.64
Total Burden and Cost Estimates:				400	-	$ 33,940.96

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The estimated total cost for the data collection activities under this request is estimated at **$160,000**, which includes:

- Data collection
- Analysis
- Reporting
- Project management

A15. Change in Burden

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

A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication

Data collection will begin immediately upon approval and is expected to take place over a couple of months. The data will be aggregated to inform ORR about trends and identify necessary technical assistance to support program implementation. The information collected will also be used to share best practices.

A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

1. State Readiness Survey
2. National Initial Resettlement Provider Survey
3. Local Resettlement Provider Survey
4. Refugee Experience Survey
5. Key Informant Interview Guide
6. Interdisciplinary Focus Group Guide
7. Refugee Focus Group Guide