Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Listening Session Question Guide

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A - Justification

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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 for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Listening Session Question Guide which aims to gather information about TANF programs directly from TANF administrators attending the TANF Listening Session at the 2026 Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) in the current year (FY26).

Background

We would like to collect data during the 2026 RECS Conference, a leading forum that convenes researchers, state and local administrators, practitioners, policymakers, and federal officials to discuss cutting-edge research on programs, policies, and services that support families on the path to economic self-sufficiency and well-being. RECS provides a unique opportunity to engage TANF administrators from across the country in a shared setting.

This information collection will support the implementation and improvement of TANF programs nationwide by gathering perspectives from TANF administrators participating in the TANF Listening Session at RECS on key topics, including technical assistance (TA), operational challenges, and policy. ACF seeks to understand administrators' experiences, needs, and challenges to inform program implementation, technical assistance activities, and continuous improvement efforts. Findings will also inform ACF's current priorities, including implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA), program integrity and fraud prevention, and strategies to promote marriage and employment, with the overarching goal of strengthening family self-sufficiency outcomes.

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 proposed information collection is to gather information about TANF programs directly from TANF administrators attending the TANF Listening Session at the 2026 RECS in the current year (FY26) to inform program improvement and implementation towards ACF's current priorities to increase family self-sufficiency. The TANF Listening session will include a facilitated discussion focused on queries in the following fields from participants:

- TANF TA
- Operational concerns
- Policy

The findings from the TANF Listening Session will inform ACF efforts to strengthen TANF program implementation and enhance TA provided to TANF agencies by identifying operational

challenges, clarifying policy needs, and highlighting effective practices to better support program administration and family self-sufficiency outcomes.

Participating in the listening session is voluntary. It is critical to collect this information in the short term to ensure ACF captures timely perspectives on current processes, needs, and challenges to inform guidance that is relevant to TANF staff and provides efficient services for recipients. ACF will use these insights to refine guidance, tailor technical assistance, address operational barriers, and inform policy and implementation priorities (i.e., implementing the FRA, preventing program fraud, promoting marriage and employment strategies) aligned with its goal of improving family self-sufficiency for TANF recipients.

The data collected and reported by the contractor to ACF will be descriptive in nature and will be used to inform TANF program implementation. The data collected in the listening session are not intended to be generalized to a broader universe.

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

- Delivery of TA related to program implementation or the development or refinement of program and grant recipient processes.
- Planning for provision of programmatic T/TA.
- Obtaining feedback about processes and/or practices to inform ACF program development or support.
- Development of learning agendas and research priorities.

Processes for Information Collection

The TANF Listening Session be a structured in-person group discussion during RECS, facilitated by ACF. We will invite TANF administrators and representatives from states, territories, and Washington, D.C., to participate in the discussions and provide qualitative input and perspectives on TANF program policy and improvement.

Up to two TANF administrators from each state will be invited to attend the TANF Listening Session. Participants will be recruited through email invitations and will be asked to voluntarily participate in the in-person listening session lasting approximately 1 hour. Discussion will include a large group format inclusive of all participants with potential for small breakout groups of 5-8 participants.

The primary data collection instrument will include a facilitated discussion guide focused on topics including TANF TA, operational concerns, and policy. Table 1 outlines the TANF Listening Session instrument, respondents, content, and purpose of collection, and mode and duration of collection.

Information will be collected by ACF facilitators. The partnering contractor will provide a note-taker who will take notes during the session and compile a notes summary for the purpose of

informing ACF on topics discussed relevant to develop TANF policy, improve program implementation, and identify needs and strengths towards family self-sufficiency.

Participation is voluntary and anonymous. Respondents will be informed that their input will be used in aggregate and/or deidentified to inform TANF program improvements, technical assistance, and future policy guidance.

Table 1. TANF Listening Session Design

Instrument	*Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection*	*Mode and Duration*
Instrument 1. TANF Listening Session Guide	**Respondents**: TANF administrators and representatives from states, territories and Washington, D.C., **Content**: TANF administrators' perspectives and experiences with current TANF TA, operational concerns, and policy **Purpose**: To gather descriptive information on TANF administrators' experiences and perspectives on TANF program and policy to inform program implementation and improvement	**Mode**: In-person listening session during 2026 RECS. **Duration**: 60 minutes

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

ACF and the partnering contractor plan to use information technology to reduce burden on respondents wherever possible. Information about the study will be emailed to potential respondents including invitations to participate and follow-up messages, as much as possible. The in-depth discussions will be conducted in person.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

The data that will be collected via in-depth discussions with TANF administrators are not available in a comparable format elsewhere and are not being gathered through other sources.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

No small businesses will be involved with this information collection.

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 specifically for this data collection. Conference attendees will receive travel support, which we hope will improve attendance in these sessions.

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.

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

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Explanation of Burden Estimates

We anticipate including 60 participants in the one-hour discussion.

Cost Estimates

The cost to respondents was calculated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) job code for Social and Community Service Managers [**11-9151**] and wage data from May 2024, which is $41.39 per hour. To account for fringe benefits and overhead the rate was multiplied by two which is $82.78.

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
TANF Listening Session Guide	60	1	1	60	$82.78	$4,967

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost for the data collection activities under this current request will be $877.

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

SCHEDULE

Task	Completion date
TANF Listening Session	May 20, 2026 (after OMB approval)
Session Notes Summary submitted to ACF	June 15, 2026
Contractor will submit reimbursement reports	Through early July 2026
Participants will receive reimbursements	Within 30 days of expense report approvals

Under this umbrella generic IC, information is meant to inform ACF activities and may be incorporated into documents or presentations that are made public such as through conference presentations, websites, or social media. In sharing findings, we will describe the study methods and limitations regarding generalizability and as a basis for policy.

The following are some examples of ways in which we may share information resulting from these data collections: technical assistance plans, presentations, or other documents relevant to the field, such as federal leadership and staff, grantees, local implementing agencies, and/or T/TA providers.

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. RECS TANF Listening Session Question Guide