

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Economic Research Service

Notice of Intent To Seek Approval To Collect Information

AGENCY: Economic Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub.L. No. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Economic Service's (ERS) intention to request Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for a new information collection of the study entitled "Re-engineering the Welfare System."

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by February 22, 1999 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact David M. Smallwood, Deputy Director for Food Assistance Research, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW Room 2130, Washington, DC 20036-5831, 202-694-5466.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Study of Re-engineering the Welfare System.

Type of Request: Approval to collect information on the re-engineering of the welfare system.

Abstract: The proposed data collection will provide the Economic Research Service with descriptive data regarding the nature and extent of States' efforts to "re-engineer" their State Food Stamp programs as a result of enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The study will collect and synthesize information describing State re-engineering efforts.

Categories will include eligibility determination, operating procedures, client tracking and accountability systems, organizational structures, program monitoring, and changes in the role of the caseworker. The information will be collected in three stages. First, descriptive information will be collected from the Food Stamp Agencies in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia through a written request for existing information regarding current and proposed re-engineering efforts occurring in the State. Second, follow-up telephone interviews will be conducted to clarify the documents provided by States and collect additional information, when necessary. Finally, six States will be selected for in-depth case studies to examine processes and methods used to plan and implement re-engineering efforts. These data will be collected for a qualitative analysis of planning and implementation issues, as well as descriptions of specific agency practices.

Estimates of Burden: Public reporting burden is estimated to average 60 minutes per State to review the initial request for materials, collect relevant materials, and mail them to the contractor. An additional 45 minutes will be required for telephone interviews to clarify materials and request additional information. In addition, in the six States selected for case studies, 90 minutes will be required for each key informant, on-site interview.

Respondents: State personnel responsible for overseeing State food stamp policy or their designee will respond to the initial request for written information. The same person will likely be responsible for responding to the follow-up telephone survey. State and local food stamp officials, as well as directors of private agencies involved in assisting the States re-engineering efforts, will respond to in-person interviews.

Estimated Number of Respondents: One or two State Food Stamp Program officials will respond from each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia to the initial request for written information and the follow-up telephone survey. Two State officials will be interviewed in those States where one official does not make policy decisions about all aspects of the Food

Stamp Program's administration. An estimated 24 key informants will respond to the on-site interviews.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 125 hours. Copies of the information to be collected can be obtained from David M. Smallwood, Deputy Director for Food Assistance Research, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW Room 2130, Washington, DC 20036-5831, 202-694-5466.

Comments: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to David M. Smallwood, Deputy Director for Food Assistance Research, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M Street NW Room 2130, Washington, DC 20036-5831 202-694-5466. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: November 30, 1998.

Betsey Kuhn,

Director, Food and Rural Economy Division.
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BILLING CODE 3410-18-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC)

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Request for nominations of people to serve on the California Coast Provincial Advisory Committee.