

service directly. For fiscal year 2022, the USPTO estimates it expended more than \$15 million in incurred costs associated with examiners considering the merits of AFCP 2.0 submissions. This cost is in addition to the time spent by examiners to initially evaluate the AFCP 2.0 request for program compliance, interview time, and any additional consultation with supervisors and primary examiners.

On April 3, 2024, the USPTO proposed a new fee for participation in the AFCP 2.0 when setting and adjusting patent fees for fiscal year 2025 (See Setting and Adjusting Patent Fees During Fiscal Year 2025, 89 FR 23226). The agency proposed to charge fees for filing a request for consideration under the AFCP 2.0 as follows: \$500 for requests filed by undiscounted entities; \$200 for requests filed by entities entitled to the small entity discount; and \$100 for requests filed by entities entitled to the micro entity discount. The proposed fee would have offset the USPTO's costs of administering the AFCP 2.0. The USPTO stated that if there is sufficient public support for the proposed fees, the USPTO would favor continuing the pilot program. However, the USPTO explained that if it was unable to recover the costs of the AFCP 2.0 from participants, the USPTO would consider terminating the program.

In response to the proposed new fee for participation in the AFCP 2.0, commenters expressed concerns about the program and the fee. Because the public is not widely receptive to paying a fee to participate in the AFCP 2.0, the USPTO has decided to terminate the program after a brief extension to December 14, 2024. Accordingly, the USPTO will not consider any request for consideration under the AFCP 2.0 filed after December 14, 2024.

The USPTO is providing the extension of the AFCP 2.0 until December 14, 2024, to provide program users with reasonable time to adjust to the program's upcoming termination should they be in the process of preparing a request for consideration under AFCP 2.0. Applicants still have various options available for after final consideration. For example, under routine examination practice, after the close of prosecution, proposed amendments that will place the application either (1) in condition for allowance or (2) in better form for appeal, may be entered. See 37 CFR 1.116(b). Additionally, an examiner may have an interview with the applicant to advance prosecution. See sections 713.09 and 714.12 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (9th ed., Rev. 07.2022, February 2023) (MPEP),

which may be viewed on, or downloaded from the USPTO website at [mpep.uspto.gov](http://mpep.uspto.gov) or [www.uspto.gov/MPEP](http://www.uspto.gov/MPEP). Moreover, applicants still have the option to file a pre-appeal brief request for review at the time of the filing of a notice of appeal, which provides applicants with the opportunity to have a panel decide if an issue for appeal is, in fact, present in the record. See section 1204.02 of the MPEP.

**Katherine K. Vidal,**

*Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.*

[FR Doc. 2024-22481 Filed 9-30-24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-16-P**

## CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

[Docket No. CFPB-2024-0049]

### Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) requests the revision of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) approval for an existing information collection titled "Making Ends Meet Survey" approved under OMB Number 3170-0080.

**DATES:** Written comments are encouraged and must be received on or before October 31, 2024 to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function. In general, all comments received will become public records, including any personal information provided. Sensitive personal information, such as account numbers or Social Security numbers, should not be included.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information should be directed to Anthony May, Paperwork Reduction Act Officer, at (202) 435-7278, or email: [CFPB\\_PRA@cfpb.gov](mailto:CFPB_PRA@cfpb.gov). If you require this document in an alternative electronic format,

please contact [CFPB\\_Accessibility@cfpb.gov](mailto:CFPB_Accessibility@cfpb.gov). Please do not submit comments to these email boxes.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title of Collection:* Making Ends Meet Survey.

*OMB Control Number:* 3170-0080.

*Type of Review:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 5,500.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 2,060.

*Abstract:* The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act charges the CFPB with researching, analyzing, and reporting on topics relating to the Bureau's mission including consumer behavior, consumer awareness, and developments in markets for consumer financial products and services. To improve its understanding of how consumers engage with financial markets, the CFPB has successfully used surveys under its "Making Ends Meet" program. The "Making Ends Meet" program has also used the CFPB's Consumer Credit Information Panel (CCIP) as a frame to survey people about their experiences in consumer credit markets. The CFPB seeks approval for two yearly surveys under the "Making Ends Meet" program. These surveys solicit information on the consumer's experience related to household financial shocks, particularly shocks related to the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, how households respond to those shocks, and the role of savings to help provide a financial buffer.

The first survey will be a follow-up to respondents from the CFPB's 2024 "Making Ends Meet" survey to better understand household financial experiences dealing with medical debt as well as consumers' interactions with various financial products. The second survey will go to a new sample of consumers from the CCIP and will address several topics of interest to the CFPB, possibly including the impact of natural disasters and other environmental events, credit shopping behavior, additional follow-up regarding debt collection, and the assessment of various fees throughout the financial services ecosystem.

*Request for Comments:* The CFPB published a 60-day **Federal Register** notice on March 26, 2024 (89 FR 20950) under Docket Number: CFPB-2024-0013. The CFPB is publishing this notice and soliciting comments on: (a) Whether the collection of information is

necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the CFPB, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) The accuracy of the CFPB's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methods and the assumptions used; (c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be reviewed by OMB as part of its review of this request. All comments will become a matter of public record.

**Anthony May,**

*Paperwork Reduction Act Officer, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.*

[FR Doc. 2024-22491 Filed 9-30-24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4810-AM-P**

## CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

[Docket No. CPSC-2024-0030]

### Notice of Availability and Request for Comment: Public Playground Handbook Update

**AGENCY:** Consumer Product Safety Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (Commission or CPSC) is announcing the availability of draft updates to its "Public Playground Safety Handbook."

**DATES:** Comments must be received by December 2, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** You can submit comments, identified by Docket No. CPSC-2024-0030, by any of the following methods:

*Electronic Submissions:* Submit electronic comments to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Do not submit through this website: confidential business information, trade secret information, or other sensitive or protected information that you do not want to be available to the public. CPSC typically does not accept comments submitted by email, except as described below.

*Mail/Hand Delivery/Courier/Confidential Written Submissions:* CPSC encourages you to submit electronic comments by using the Federal

eRulemaking Portal. You may, however, submit comments by mail, hand delivery, or courier to: Office of the Secretary, Consumer Product Safety Commission, 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20814; telephone: (301) 504-7479. If you wish to submit confidential business information, trade secret information, or other sensitive or protected information that you do not want to be available to the public, you may submit such comments by mail, hand delivery, or courier, or you may email them to: [cpsc-os@cpsc.gov](mailto:cpsc-os@cpsc.gov).

*Instructions:* All submissions must include the agency name and docket number. CPSC may post all comments without change, including any personal identifiers, contact information, or other personal information provided, to: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Do not submit to this website: confidential business information, trade secret information, or other sensitive or protected information that you do not want to be available to the public. If you wish to submit such information, please submit it according to the instructions for mail/hand delivery/courier/confidential written submissions.

*Docket:* For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to: <https://www.regulations.gov>, and insert the docket number, CPSC-2024-0030, into the "Search" box, and follow the prompts.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Daniel Taxier, Children's Program Manager, Division of Mechanical and Combustion Engineering, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 5 Research Place, Rockville, MD 20850-3213; email: [dtaxier@cpsc.gov](mailto:dtaxier@cpsc.gov); telephone: (301) 987-2211.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission published the first Handbook for Public Playground Safety (the Handbook) in 1981. This original document was a two-volume set containing technical guidance intended to reduce deaths and injuries to children associated with playground equipment. In 1991, the Handbook was revised to a single volume, which contained recommendations based on a COMSIS Corporation report to the CPSC.<sup>1</sup> Also in

<sup>1</sup> The 1990 COMSIS report, *Development of Human Factors Criteria for Playground Equipment Safety*, is available in six parts on the CPSC website. Part 1 is available at: <https://www.cpsc.gov/content/Development-of-Human-Factors-Criteria-for-Playground-Equipment-Safety-Part-1>. Part 2 is available at: <https://www.cpsc.gov/content/Development-of-Human-Factors-Criteria-for-Playground-Equipment-Safety-Part-2>. Part 3 is available at: [https://www.cpsc.gov/content/Development-of-Human-Factors-Criteria-for-](https://www.cpsc.gov/content/Development-of-Human-Factors-Criteria-for-Playground-Equipment-Safety-Part-3)

1991, the first ASTM International (ASTM) standard for playground safety, F1292: *Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment*, was published. In 1993, ASTM F1487: *Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use* was published. CPSC published minor revisions to the Handbook in 1994. In 1997, the Handbook was updated based on ASTM F1487, a playground safety roundtable meeting held in October of 1996, and comments received in response to a May 1997 CPSC request.

Due to the lack of a Commission quorum at the time, 2008 revisions to the Handbook were released as a draft staff document. Later in 2008, members of ASTM's voluntary standards committee on playground equipment and the International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association (IPEMA) identified areas where the voluntary standards and the Handbook did not align. In 2010, CPSC published a revised the Handbook that resolved many of these issues.

Since 2010, ASTM has published new and revised public playground standards,<sup>2</sup> and new materials and equipment have been installed in playgrounds. Additionally, members of ASTM, the National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS), IPEMA, and members of the general public have requested clarifications and recommended an update to the Handbook. Based on the current editions of the relevant ASTM standards, feedback from the public, and comments from ASTM and NPPS, CPSC is publishing a revised draft Handbook with a focus on improvements to safety.

The staff memorandum accompanying the draft Handbook, available at <https://cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/BallotVote-Public-Playground-Handbook-Update-2.pdf?>, summarizes major revisions included in the draft. These changes include updated signage and labeling guidance; updated guidance on common hazards for supervisor awareness; references to new impact attenuation testing for suspended elements in ASTM F1487; an updated warning label on potential

*Playground-Equipment-Safety-Part-3*. Part 4 is available at: <https://www.cpsc.gov/content/development-human-factors-criteria-playground-equipment-safety-part-4>. Part 5 is available at: <https://www.cpsc.gov/content/Development-of-Human-Factors-Criteria-for-Playground-Equipment-Safety-Part-5>. Part 6 is available at: <https://www.cpsc.gov/content/development-human-factors-criteria-playground-equipment-safety-part-6>.

<sup>2</sup> See section 1.4.1 of the draft Handbook for a list of relevant standards.