



4184-41

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Administration for Children and Families

Proposed Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

Proposed Projects:

Title: Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC)

OMB No.: 0970-NEW

Description:

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is proposing data collection activity as part of the Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt Demonstration (PJAC). In September 2016, OCSE issued grants to six child support agencies to provide alternative approaches to the contempt process with the goal of increasing parents' compliance with child support orders by building trust and confidence in the child support agency and its processes. PJAC is a five-year project (the first year of which is dedicated to planning) that will allow grantees to learn whether incorporating principles of procedural justice into child support business practices increases reliable child support payments. In addition to increasing reliable payments, the PJAC intervention aims to reduce arrears, minimize the need for continued enforcement actions and sanctions, and reduce the inefficient use of contempt proceedings.

The PJAC evaluation will yield information about the efficacy of applying procedural justice principles via a set of alternative services to the current contempt process. It will generate extensive knowledge regarding how PJAC programs operate, the effects the programs have, and whether their benefits exceed their costs. The information gathered will be critical to informing future policy decisions related to contempt.

The PJAC evaluation will include the following three interconnected components or “studies”:

1. **Implementation Study.** The goal of the implementation study is to provide a detailed description of the PJAC programs--how they are implemented, their participants, the contexts in which they are operated, and their promising practices. The implementation study will also assess whether the PJAC interventions are implemented as intended (implementation fidelity) as well as how the treatment implemented differed from the status quo (treatment contrast). The detailed descriptions will assist in interpreting program impacts and identifying program features and conditions necessary for effective program replication or improvement. Key activities of the implementation study will include: (1) a Management Information System (MIS) for collection and analysis of program participation data to track participant engagement in PJAC activities; (2) semi-structured interviews with program staff and staff from selected community partner organizations; (3) semi-structured interviews with program participants to learn about their experiences in PJAC; and (4) a staff questionnaire to gather broader quantitative information on program implementation and staff experiences.

2. Impact Study: The goal of the impact study is to provide rigorous estimates of the effectiveness of the six programs using an experimental research design. Program applicants who are eligible for PJAC services will be randomly assigned to either a program group that is offered program services or to a control group that is not offered those services. The random assignment process will require child support program staff to complete a brief data entry protocol. The impact study will rely on administrative data from state and county child support systems, court records, criminal justice records, and data from the National Directory of New Hires. Administrative records data will be used to estimate impacts on child support payments, enforcement actions, contempt proceedings, jail stays, and employment and earnings. The impact study will also include a follow-up survey of participants that will be administered approximately 12 months after random assignment to a subset of the sample. The survey will gather information on participant experiences with the child support program and family court, family relationships, parenting and co-parenting, informal child support payments, and job characteristics. In an effort to enhance response rates, the PJAC survey firm will attempt to track survey sample members at a few points over the 12-month follow-up period in order to stay in touch with them and gather updated contact information from them.

3. Benefit-Cost Study: The benefit-cost study will estimate the costs and benefits associated with the implementation and impact of the PJAC interventions. The study will examine the costs and benefits from the perspective of the government, noncustodial parents, custodial parents and their children, and society. Once measured, particular impacts or expenditures will constitute benefits or costs, depending on which analytical perspective is considered. For each of the perspectives, pertinent benefits and costs will be added together to determine the net value of the

program. Key hypothesized benefits and costs to be assessed include increased PJAC intervention costs, reduced costs for contempt actions, increased payments from non-custodial parents, reduced court costs, and reduced jail time, among others. The benefit-cost study will rely on the results of the impact study, analysis of participation data from the MIS, and results of a staff time study in order to quantify various PJAC-related costs and benefits.

This 60-Day Notice covers the following data collection activities: (1) Staff data entry for random assignment; (2) Study MIS to track program participation; (3) Staff and community partner interview topic guide; (4) Participant interview topic guide; and (5) Participant survey tracking letter.

Respondents:

Respondents for the first information collection phase include study participants and grantee staff and community partners. Specific respondents per instrument are noted in the burden table below.

ANNUAL BURDEN ESTIMATES

Instrument	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden Hours per Response	Total Burden Hours	Total Annual Burden Hours
Staff data entry for random assignment	120	150	0.05	900	300
Study MIS to track program participation	120	150	1.00	18,000	6,000
Staff and community partner interview topic guide	150	2	1.00	300	100
Participant interview topic guide	180	1	1.00	180	60
Participant survey tracking letter	3,000	3	0.10	900	300

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 6,760

In compliance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. Chap 35), the Administration for Children and Families is soliciting public comment on the specific aspects of the information collection described above. Copies of the proposed collection of information can be obtained and comments may be forwarded by writing to the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, 330 C

Street SW, Washington D.C. 20201. Attn: ACF Reports Clearance Officer. E-mail address: infocollection@acf.hhs.gov. All requests should be identified by the title of the information collection.

The Department specifically requests comments on: (a) whether the proposed collection of the information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) 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. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted within 60 days of this publication.

Robert Sargis

Reports Clearance Officer

[FR Doc. 2017-08740 Filed: 4/28/2017 8:45 am; Publication Date: 5/1/2017]