



**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Office of Workers' Compensation Programs**

**Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation; Proposed Extension of Existing Collection; Comment Request**

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95). This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is soliciting comments concerning the proposed collection: **Certification by School Official (CM-981)**. A copy of the proposed information collection request can be obtained by contacting the office listed below in the addresses section of this Notice.

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the addresses section below on or before **[INSERT 60-DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments by mail, delivery service, or by hand to Ms. Anjanette C. Suggs, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Room S-3323, Washington, D.C. 20210; by fax (202) 354-9660; or by Email to suggs.anjanette@dol.gov. Please use only one method of transmission for comments (mail/delivery, fax, or Email). Please note that comments submitted after the comment period will not be considered.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

*I. Background:* The Certification by School Official information collection mandates that in order to qualify as an eligible dependent for black lung benefits, a child aged 18- to 23-years must be a full-time student as described in the Black Lung Benefits Act, 30 U.S.C. 901 et. seq., and regulations 20 CFR 725.209. A school official completes a Certification by School Official (Form CM-981) to verify whether a Black Lung beneficiary's dependent between the ages of 18 to 23 years qualifies as a full-time student. Black Lung Benefits Act section 426 authorizes this information collection. See 30 U.S.C. 936.

This information collection is being classified as an extension of an existing collection. 30 U.S.C. 902(g); 20 CFR 725.209, 725.218 require that all relevant medical evidence be considered before a decision can be made regarding a claimant's eligibility for benefits. By signing the CM-981 form, the claimant authorizes physicians, hospitals, medical facilities or organizations, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to release medical information about the miner to the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs. The form contains information required by medical institutions and private physicians to enable them to release pertinent medical information. This information collection is currently approved for use through September 30, 2019.

*II. Review Focus:* The Department of Labor is particularly interested in comments which:

- \* evaluate 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;

- \* evaluate 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;

\* enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and

\* 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, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

*III. Current Actions:* The Department of Labor seeks approval for the extension of this currently-approved information collection in order to obtain claimant consent for the release of medical information for consideration by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs in their claim for benefits. Failure to gather this information would inhibit the adjudication of black lung claims because pertinent medical data would not be available for consideration during the processing of the claim.

*Agency:* Office of Workers' Compensation Programs

*Type of Review:* Extension

*Title:* Certification by School Official

*OMB Number:* 1240-0031

*Agency Number:* CM-981

*Affected Public:* State, Local and Tribal Governments

*Total Respondents:* 100

*Total Annual Responses: 100*

*Average Time per Response: 10 minutes*

*Estimated Total Burden Hours: 17 hours*

*Frequency: On occasion*

*Total Burden Cost (capital/startup): \$0*

*Total Burden Cost (operating/maintenance): \$0*

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they will also become a matter of public record.

***Anjanette C. Suggs,***

*Agency Clearance Officer,*

*Office of Workers' Compensation Programs,*

*US Department of Labor.*

Billing Code No. 4510-CK-P

[FR Doc. 2019-25362 Filed: 11/21/2019 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/22/2019]