

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request, Job Corps Evidence Building Portfolio, New Collection

AGENCY: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Chief Evaluation Office, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor (DOL), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a preclearance 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 is properly assessed. Currently, the Department of Labor is soliciting comments concerning the collection of data about the Job Corps Evidence Building Portfolio. A copy of the proposed Information Collection Request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the office listed below in the addressee section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the addressee section below on or before March 9, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either one of the following methods:

Email: ChiefEvaluationOffice@dol.gov; *Mail or Courier:* Jessica Lohmann, Chief Evaluation Office, OASP, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-2312, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210. *Instructions:* Please submit one copy of your comments by only one method. All submissions received must include the agency name and OMB Control Number identified above for this information collection. Comments, including any personal information provided, become a matter of public record. They will also be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of the information collection request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jessica Lohmann by email at ChiefEvaluationOffice@dol.gov or by phone at (202)693-5087.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) intends to design and conduct an evaluation to assess the implementation and outcomes of three Job Corps demonstration pilots. The goals of the implementation and outcomes evaluation are to understand who the pilots enroll, what services they provide, how these services are implemented, and how the pilots compare with traditional Job Corps. The evaluation will also assess outcomes of participants in the demonstration pilots, as well as identify any best practices. The project also includes impact feasibility assessments of each of the demonstration pilots to assess the potential for conducting an impact evaluation of the pilot's effectiveness or similar future pilots. This **Federal Register** Notice provides the opportunity to comment on proposed data collection instruments that will be used in the implementation and impact feasibility evaluation: Semi-structured program staff and stakeholder interview topic guide, participant interview or focus group topic guide, program survey of Job Corps centers and demonstration pilot grantees, and impact feasibility topic guide.

1. *Semi-structured interviews with program staff and staff from selected community partner organizations topic guide.* Interviews will be conducted over the phone or video or during in-person site visits in 2022. Each of the pilot demonstration projects draw on a range of staff and partners that deliver services; thus, interviews may include pilot staff, partner staff, employers, and training and education providers. We estimate that approximately 175 interviews will be conducted across all pilots. We will also observe program activities, either in person or virtually via phone or video, to help us describe key program components and participant engagement. The observations will not involve additional burden.

2. *Participant interviews or focus group topic guide.* We will also interview demonstration pilot participants through one-on-one interviews or focus groups. Focus groups or interviews will be conducted with approximately 25 interviewees to 175 interviewees across all pilots. These interviews or focus groups may be conducted in person, online, or over the phone.

3. *Program survey of Job Corps centers and demonstration pilot grantees.* The project will field a program survey to each of the Job Corps centers and

demonstration pilots to gather information about program implementation, service offerings, and staffing. The survey will be fielded to 131 Job Corps centers, and up to 30 pilot demonstration sites in spring 2022.

4. *Impact feasibility assessment interviews with demonstration pilot staff topic guide.* In addition to the implementation and outcome study, the evaluation will gather information from select grantee staff about topics related to feasibility of conducting an impact study of the demonstration pilot. The team will conduct phone, video or in person interviews with grantee staff who are involved in management, enrollment, and program services in fall 2021/winter 2022. The project will conduct 25 interviews across the three pilots.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

Currently, the Department of Labor is soliciting comments concerning the above data collection for the Job Corps Evidence Building Project. DOL is particularly interested in comments that do the following:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- evaluate the accuracy of the agency's burden estimate of the proposed information collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions;
- 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—for example, permitting electronic submissions of responses.

III. Current Actions

At this time, the Department of Labor is requesting clearance for the semi-structured program and partner staff topic guide, participant interview and focus group topic guide, grantee program survey, and impact feasibility study topic guide.

Type of Review: New information collection request.

OMB Control Number: 1290-0NEW.

Affected Public: Job Corp centers and demonstration pilots, partners and participants.

Comments submitted in response to this request 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.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS

Type of Instrument (form-activity)	Number of respondents	Number of responses per respondent	Total number of responses	Average burden time per response (hours)	Estimated burden hours
Semi-structured interview with staff, partners, and stakeholders topic guide	175	1	175	1.5	262.5
Participant interview or focus group protocol	175	1	175	1.5	262.5
Program survey of JC Centers and pilots	161	1	161	2	322
Impact feasibility topic guide	30	1	30	1.5	45
Total	541	541	892

Christina Yancey,
Chief Evaluation Officer, U.S. Department of Labor.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs

[Docket No. WCPO-2020-0002]

Guidance on Black Lung Benefits Act Self-Insurance

AGENCY: Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Labor.
ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) is announcing publication of a preliminary program bulletin titled "DCMWC Self-Insurance Process Guidelines" describing the agency's updated process for evaluating self-insurance applications under the Black Lung Benefits Act (BLBA). The BLBA requires coal mine operators to secure the payment of benefits by either purchasing commercial insurance or obtaining the Department's authorization to self-insure those liabilities. Authorization to self-insure may be granted or denied at the Department's discretion. OWCP is making the programmatic changes and preliminary bulletin available for public comment pursuant to the Department of Labor's PRO Good Guidance Rule.

DATES: The Department invites written comments on the self-insurance program and the bulletin from interested parties. Written comments must be received by February 8, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments electronically by the following method:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions on the website for submitting comments.

Instructions. Include the docket number WCPO-2020-0002 in your comments. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Please do not include any personally identifiable or confidential business information you do not want publicly disclosed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Chance, Director, Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-3464, Washington, DC 20210. Telephone: 1-800-347-2502. This is a toll-free number. TTY/TDD callers may dial toll-free 1-800-877-8339 for further information.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Overview

The BLBA provides benefits to coal miners who are totally disabled by pneumoconiosis (commonly known as black lung disease) and to certain of their survivors. The BLBA requires coal mine operators to secure the payment of benefits by either purchasing commercial insurance or obtaining the Department's authorization to self-insure those liabilities. 30 U.S.C. 933(a). Authorization to self-insure may be granted or denied at the Department's discretion. 20 CFR 726.101(a). When a self-insurer is unable (or unwilling) to meet its payment obligations, the Black Lung Disability Trust Fund (Trust Fund) makes those payments. Although the Trust Fund acts as a backstop, Congress intended "to ensure that individual coal

operators rather than the trust fund bear the liability for [black lung] claims arising out of such operators' mines to the maximum extent feasible." See *Old Ben Coal Co. v. Luker*, 826 F.2d 688, 693 (7th Cir. 1987) (quoting S. Rep. No. 209, 95th Cong., 1st Sess. 9 (1977), reprinted in House Comm. on Educ. and Labor, 96th Cong., Black Lung Benefits Reform Act and Black Lung Benefits Revenue Act of 1977, 612 (Comm. Print 1979)); 20 CFR 725.1(e). To help ensure that self-insured operators' liabilities do not fall on the Trust Fund, OWCP created new forms CM-2017, CM-2017a, and CM-2017b and now seeks to update its process for evaluating the information collected through those forms to determine whether a coal mine operator should be allowed to self-insure and to determine the security amount each operator must provide to guarantee payment of current and future liabilities. OWCP has set forth the updated process in its preliminary bulletin titled "DCMWC Self-Insurance Process Guidelines." OWCP now seeks public comment on the bulletin and the process discussed in the bulletin.

II. Bulletin Publication

Out of an abundance of caution, OWCP is requesting comments on the bulletin and its underlying programmatic changes, in line with the requirements of the Department's PRO Good Guidance Rule, see 29 CFR part 89, and also because OWCP believes the public's input on the self-insurance process could be very helpful to the program's administration. OWCP's request for comments is also consistent with the openness and transparency goals of the Department's guidance regulations; E.O. 13891, 84 FR 55235 (Oct. 15, 2019); and OMB's Final Bulletin for Agency Good Guidance Practices, 72 FR 3432 (Jan. 25, 2007).