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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Administration for Community Living

[OMB #0985-0067]

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Study on the Impact of COVID-19 on Adult Protective Service (APS) Programs

**AGENCY:** Administration for Community  
Living, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice

**SUMMARY:** The Administration for  
Community Living (ACL) is announcing  
an opportunity for the public to  
comment on the proposed collection of  
information listed above. Under the  
Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (the  
PRA), Federal agencies are required to  
publish a notice in the **Federal Register**  
concerning each proposed collection of  
information, including each proposed  
extension of an existing collection of  
information, and to allow 60 days for  
public comment in response to the  
notice.

This notice solicits comments on the  
Proposed Extension with Revisions and  
solicits comments on the information  
collection requirements related to Study  
on the impact of COVID-19 on Adult  
Protective Service (APS) Programs.

**DATES:** Comments on the collection of  
information must be submitted  
electronically by 11:59 p.m. (EST) or  
postmarked by February 1, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit electronic  
comments on the collection of  
information to Stephanie Whittier  
Eliason [Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov). Submit written comments

on the collection of information to  
Administration for Community Living,  
Washington, DC 20201, Attention:  
Stephanie Whittier Eliason.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stephanie Whittier Eliason,  
Administration for Community Living,  
Washington, DC 20201, Phone: (202)  
795-7467, E: Mail  
[Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the  
PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), Federal  
agencies must obtain approval from the  
Office of Management and Budget  
(OMB) for each collection of  
information they conduct or sponsor.  
“Collection of information” is defined  
in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR  
1320.3(c) and includes agency requests  
or requirements that members of the  
public submit reports, keep records, or  
provide information to a third party.  
Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA (44  
U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)) requires Federal  
agencies to provide a 60-day notice in  
the **Federal Register** concerning each  
proposed collection of information,  
including each proposed extension of an  
existing collection of information,  
before submitting the collection to OMB  
for approval. To comply with this  
requirement, ACL is publishing a notice  
of the proposed collection of  
information set forth in this document.

With respect to the following  
collection of information, ACL invites  
comments on our burden estimates or  
any other aspect of this collection of  
information, including:

(1) Whether the proposed collection  
of information is necessary for the  
proper performance of ACL's functions,  
including whether the information will  
have practical utility;

(2) the accuracy of ACL's estimate of  
the burden of the proposed collection of  
information, including the validity of  
the methodology and assumptions used  
to determine burden estimates; (3) ways  
to enhance the quality, utility, and  
clarity of the information to be  
collected; and

(4) ways to minimize the burden of  
the collection of information on  
respondents, including through the use  
of automated collection techniques  
when appropriate, and other forms of  
information technology.

This data collection is an extension of  
ACL's investigation on the impact of  
COVID-19 on APS programs across the  
country. The COVID-19 pandemic is  
causing changes in APS policy and  
practice in several areas, including, but  
not limited to, a reduction of in-person  
interactions with clients, perpetrators,  
and collaterals. As ACL collects  
information on the impact of APS  
during the COVID-19 pandemic, the  
opioid overdose death rates are rising at  
the same time.<sup>1</sup> The opioid epidemic  
affects older adults through opioid  
misuse and is associated with increases  
in elder abuse including physical abuse,  
threatening behavior; emotional abuse;  
and financial exploitation.<sup>2,3</sup>

The revisions to this study includes  
structured individual and group  
interviews with state administrators and  
local field staff to discuss opioid cases  
pre- and during the COVID-19  
pandemic. The study will reveal the  
characteristics of opioid cases in older  
adults and how APS staff are  
responding to these cases. In addition,  
it will compare how these cases are  
handled pre- and during the COVID-19  
pandemic by APS. The findings of the  
study will assist ACL in addressing the  
challenges of opioid cases under normal  
and emergency conditions. In particular,  
it will help to prioritize any policies and  
procedures during and after the COVID-  
19 pandemic to improve APS responses  
to these cases.

The proposed data collection tools  
may be found on the ACL website for  
review at <https://www.acl.gov/about-acl/public-input>.

#### Estimated Program Burden

ACL estimates the burden associated  
with this collection of information as  
follows:

Respondent/data collection activity	Number of respondents	Responses per respondent	Hours per response	Annual burden hours
State Administrator Interviews .....	12	1	.75	9
Local Field Staff Group Interviews .....	60	1	.75	45
Total: .....				54

<sup>1</sup> Haley DF, Saitz R. The Opioid Epidemic During  
the COVID-19 Pandemic. *JAMA*. Published online  
September 18, 2020. doi:10.1001/jama.2020.18543.

<sup>2</sup> Blog Post (March 4, 2019): <https://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/opioids-and-elder-abuse-a-disquieting-connection/>.

<sup>3</sup> Washington Post Article (June 17, 2019): [https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/06/17/how-opioid-crisis-is-leading-elder-financial-abuse/?utm\\_term=.594b4dd84d9d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/06/17/how-opioid-crisis-is-leading-elder-financial-abuse/?utm_term=.594b4dd84d9d).

Dated: November 25, 2020.

**Lance Robertson,**

*Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Administration for Community Living

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Inventory of Adult Protective Services Practices and Service Innovations

**AGENCY:** Administration for Community Living, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Administration for Community Living (ACL) is announcing an opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed collection of information listed above. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (the PRA), Federal agencies are required to publish a notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, and to allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This survey previously ran a 60-day FRN in 83 FR 66276 on 12/26/2018. As required under the PRA we are providing the public an opportunity to comment on any changes or updates applied to this IC since the 2018 publication. We are requesting an abbreviated public comment period for additional 30-days prior to publication of a 30-day FRN and submittal to OMB.

Any changes to the survey from the initial 60-day FRN publication are incorporated into the revised version of the survey. This notice solicits comments on any revisions since the initial publication in 2018. This is a new information collection 0985-New Inventory of Adult Protective Services Practices and Service Innovations.

**DATES:** Comments on the collection of information must be submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. (EST) or postmarked by December 31, 2020.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit electronic comments on the collection of information to Stephanie Whittier Eliason [Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov). Submit written comments on the collection of information to Administration for Community Living, Washington, DC 20201, Attention: Stephanie Whittier Eliason

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stephanie Whittier Eliason,  
Administration for Community Living,  
Washington, DC 20201, Phone: (202) 795-7467, Email:

[Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Stephanie.WhittierEliason@acl.hhs.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Under the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. "Collection of information" is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c) and includes agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)) requires Federal agencies to provide notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, ACL is publishing a notice of the proposed collection of information set forth in this document.

With respect to the following collection of information, ACL invites comments on our burden estimates or any other aspect of this collection of information, including:

- (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of ACL's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (2) the accuracy of ACL's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used to determine burden estimates;
- (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques when appropriate, and other forms of information technology.

#### Authority

The Elder Justice Act of 2009 requires the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to carry out a number of activities related to adult protective services (APS) (42 U.S.C. 1397m-1), including developing and disseminating information on APS best practices and conducting research related to the provision of APS.

Furthermore, the Elder Justice Coordinating Council included as its third recommendation for increasing federal involvement in addressing elder

abuse, neglect, and exploitation: "develop a national APS system based upon standardized data collection and a core set of service provision standards and best practices."

#### Background

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) plans to initiate an Inventory of Adult Protective Services Practices and Service Innovations (APS Practice Survey) in early 2021. Under a contract with ACL, the National Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center (APS TARC) is conducting a national program evaluation of APS programs. As part of this evaluation, the APS Practice Survey will identify barriers to meeting policy mandates, and practice innovations and model programs that address such barriers and community-identified needs. It also seeks to identify practice variations in the way APS programs serve older adults and adults with disabilities.

The results of the survey will serve to advance the field of APS and will be useful to many audiences. It will provide baseline information regarding the status of APS programs and services, and the resulting information will help states and territories compare their program characteristics with those of other states and territories. The survey will provide a context for other researchers examining APS programs. It will inform ACL's efforts to support improvement of APS programs through activities such as innovation grants. Finally, it will inform the APS TARC team's efforts to develop resources to enhance APS programs around the country.

This survey has been developed to gather information on APS practices that is not available from other sources. As part of the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS), ACL collects descriptive data on state and territory agency policies through the Agency Component of that data collection.

Therefore, the proposed survey will not collect any background policy or data items. As part of the APS Program Evaluation, the APS TARC also conducted a detailed examination of state APS policies through development of individual state policy profiles. The profiles were based exclusively on extant information sources obtained without additional data requests from the states. Information on practices gathered in this survey will complement, but will not duplicate, these policy profiles.