

Respondents: 741.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Responses: 3,718.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 2,336.

Total Burden Cost (Operating and Maintenance): \$143,650.

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

Joseph S. Piacentini,

*Director, Office of Policy and Research,
Employee Benefits Security Administration.*

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BILLING CODE 4510-29-P

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employee Benefits Security Administration

Proposed Extension of Information Collection; Comment Request; Employee Benefit Plan Claims Procedures Under ERISA

AGENCY: Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor (the Department), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA 95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the reporting burden on the public and the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. Currently, the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) is soliciting comments on a proposed extension of the current approval of information collection provisions incorporated in the regulation pertaining to employee benefit plan claims procedures under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). A copy of the information collection request (ICR) may be obtained by contacting the office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before January 2, 2007.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Susan G. Lahne, Office of Policy and Research, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room N-5647, Washington, DC 20210. Telephone: (202) 693-8410; Fax: (202)

219-4745. These are not toll-free numbers. Comments may also be submitted electronically to the following Internet e-mail address: ebbsa.opr@dol.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 503 of ERISA requires each employee benefit plan to provide, pursuant to regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor, notice in writing to any participant or beneficiary whose claim for benefits under the plan has been denied. The notice must set forth the specific reasons for the denial and must be written in a manner calculated to be understood by the claimant. Plans must also give a participant or beneficiary whose claim has been denied a reasonable opportunity to obtain a full and fair review of any benefit claim denial by the appropriate named fiduciary.

The Department issued a regulation pertaining to benefit claims procedures in 1977 and amended that regulation in a Notice of Final Rulemaking (NFRM) published on November 21, 2000 (65 FR 70246). The regulation pertaining to benefit claims procedures is codified at 29 CFR 2560.503-1. The regulation requires plans to establish reasonable claims procedures that meet specified standards governing the timing and content of notices and disclosures. EBSA submitted an ICR for the information collections in 29 CFR 2560.503-1 to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in connection with publication of the NFRM, and OMB approved the information collections under OMB control number 1210-0053. That approval is scheduled to expire on February 28, 2007. After considering comments received in response to this notice, the Department intends to submit an ICR to OMB to request continuing approval. The public is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid control number. No change to the existing ICR is being proposed or made at this time.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

The Department of Labor (Department) is particularly interested in comments that

- 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 Action

This notice requests comments on an extension of OMB's approval of the information collections included in 29 CFR 2560.503-1. The Department is not proposing or implementing changes to the existing ICR at this time. A summary of the ICR and the current burden estimates follows:

Agency: Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor.

Title: Employee Benefit Plan Claims Procedures under ERISA.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection of information.

OMB Number: 1210-0053.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions.

Respondents: 6,700,000.

Responses: 118,000,000.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 333,000.

Estimated Total Burden Cost (Operating and Maintenance): \$90,000,000.

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

Joseph S. Piacentini,

*Director, Office of Policy and Research,
Employee Benefits Security Administration.*

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employee Benefits Security Administration

Proposed Extension of Information Collection; Comment Request; ERISA Investment Manager Electronic Registration

AGENCY: Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor (the Department), in accordance with the