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[FR Doc. 2020-26397 Filed 11-30-20; 8:45 am]

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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*. 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*.

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.¹ 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.^{2,3}

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

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

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

³ 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.

Dated: November 25, 2020.

Lance Robertson,

Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging.

[FR Doc. 2020-26513 Filed 11-30-20; 8:45 am]

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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. 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.

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- (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.