



PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

Proposed Submission of Information Collection for OMB Review; Comment Request; Survey of Multiemployer Pension Plan Withdrawal Liability Information

AGENCY: Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

ACTION: Notice of intent to request extension of OMB approval of information collection.

SUMMARY: The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) intends to request that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) extend approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act, of a survey of terminated and insolvent multiemployer pension plans to obtain withdrawal liability information. PBGC needs the withdrawal liability information to estimate its multiemployer program liabilities for purposes of its financial statements. This notice informs the public of PBGC's intent and solicits public comment on the collection of information.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

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

- Email: paperwork.comments@pbgc.gov. Refer to withdrawal liability survey in the subject line.

- Mail or Hand Delivery: Regulatory Affairs Division, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005-4026.

Commenters are strongly encouraged to submit public comments electronically. PBGC expects to have limited personnel available to process public comments that are submitted on paper through mail. Until further notice, any comments submitted on paper will be considered to the extent practicable.

All submissions received must include the agency's name (Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or PBGC) and refer to withdrawal liability survey. All comments received will be posted without change to PBGC's website, <http://www.pbgc.gov>, including any personal information provided.

Copies of the collection of information may be obtained by writing to Disclosure Division, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005-4026, or calling 202-326-4040 during normal business hours. TTY users may call the Federal Relay Service toll-free at 800-877-8339 and ask to be connected to 202-326-4040.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Hilary Duke (duke.hilary@pbgc.gov), Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005-4026, 202-326-4400, extension 3839. (TTY users may call the Federal relay service toll-free at 1-800-877-8339 and ask to be connected to 202326-4400, extension 3839.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: When a contributing employer withdraws from an underfunded multiemployer pension plan, the plan sponsor assesses withdrawal liability against the employer. The plan sponsor is required to determine and collect withdrawal liability in accordance with section 4219 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). The plan sponsor assesses withdrawal liability by issuing a notice to an employer, including the amount of the employer's liability and a schedule of payments. PBGC's regulation on Notice, Collection, and Redetermination of Withdrawal Liability (29 CFR part 4219) requires the plan sponsor to file with PBGC a certification that notices have been provided to employers.

PBGC collects information about withdrawal liability that is owed by withdrawn employers of terminated¹ and insolvent² multiemployer pension plans. PBGC distributes annual surveys that newly insolvent plans receiving financial assistance and newly terminated plans not yet receiving financial assistance are required to complete and return to PBGC. Smaller plans with less than 500 participants are not required to complete the survey. PBGC needs the information from the survey about withdrawal liability payments and settlements, and whether employers have withdrawn from the plan but have not yet been assessed withdrawal liability, to estimate with more precision PBGC's multiemployer program liabilities for purposes of its financial statements.³ PBGC also uses the information for its Multiemployer Pension Insurance Modelling System assumptions on collection of withdrawal liability. Information provided to PBGC is confidential to the extent provided in the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act.

PBGC estimates that the survey will be sent to about 6 newly terminated and insolvent plans per year. PBGC estimates that each survey would require approximately 20 hours to complete by a combination of pension fund office staff (50%) and outside professionals (attorneys and actuaries) (50%). PBGC estimates a total hour burden of 60 hours (based on 10 hours of pension fund office time per plan). The estimated dollar equivalent of this hour burden, based on an assumed hourly rate of \$75 for administrative, clerical, and supervisory time is \$4,500. PBGC estimates a total cost burden for the withdrawal liability survey of \$24,000 (based on a 60 attorney and actuary hours (10 hours x 6 plans) assuming an average hourly rate of \$400).

¹ Under section 4041A(f)(2) of ERISA, PBGC may prescribe reporting requirements for terminated multiemployer pension plans, which PBGC considers appropriate to protect the interests of plan participants and beneficiaries or to prevent unreasonable loss to the corporation.

² Under section 4261(b)(1) of ERISA, PBGC provides financial assistance under such conditions as the corporation determines are equitable and are appropriate to prevent unreasonable loss to the corporation with respect to the plan.

³ Section 4008 of ERISA requires the corporation, as soon as practicable after the close of each fiscal year, to transmit a report to the President and the Congress, including financial statements setting forth the finances of the corporation at the end of the fiscal year and the result of its operations (including the source and application of its funds) for the fiscal year.

The existing collection of information was approved under OMB control number 1212–0071 (expires November 30, 2021). PBGC intends to request that OMB approve PBGC’s use of this survey for 3 years. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

PBGC is soliciting public comments to—

- 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 methodologies 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 submission of responses.

Issued in Washington, DC.

Hilary Duke,

Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs,

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.