



PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

Proposed Submission of Information Collection for OMB Review; Comment Request; Special Financial Assistance 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 collection of information contained in PBGC's regulation on special financial assistance.

The purpose of the information collection is to gather information necessary for PBGC to operate this special financial assistance program. 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 OMB control number 1212-0074 in the subject line.
- Mail or Hand Delivery: Regulatory Affairs Division, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC, 20024-2101.

Commenters are strongly encouraged to submit comments electronically. Commenters who submit comments on paper by mail should allow sufficient time for mailed comments to be received before the close of the comment period.

All submissions received must include the agency's name (Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or PBGC) and refer to OMB control number 1212-0074. All comments received

will be posted without change to PBGC's website, <http://www.pbgc.gov>, including any personal information provided. Do not submit comments that include any personally identifiable information or confidential business information.

Copies of the collection of information may be obtained by writing to Disclosure Division (disclosure@pbgc.gov), Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20024-2101, or calling 202-229-4040 during normal business hours. If you are deaf or hard of hearing or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

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, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20024-2101; 202-229-3839. If you are deaf or hard of hearing or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Section 4262 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) requires PBGC to provide special financial assistance (SFA) to certain financially troubled multiemployer plans upon application for assistance. Part 4262 of PBGC's regulations, "Special Financial Assistance by PBGC," provides guidance to multiemployer pension plan sponsors on eligibility, determining the amount of SFA, content of an application for SFA, the process of applying, PBGC's review of applications, restrictions and conditions, and reporting and notice requirements.

To apply for SFA, a plan sponsor must file an application with PBGC and include information about the plan, plan documentation, and actuarial information, as specified in §§ 4262.6 through 4262.9. Also, if the plan is changing certain assumptions for purposes of demonstrating its requested amount of SFA, then the plan sponsor may use PBGC's SFA assumptions guidance. PBGC needs the application information to review a plan's eligibility for

SFA and amount of requested SFA. PBGC estimates that over the next 3 years an annual average of 45 plan sponsors will file applications for SFA with an average annual hour burden of 540 (45 x 12) hours and an average annual cost burden of \$1,530,000 (45 x \$34,000).

Under § 4262.10(g), a plan sponsor may, but is not required to, file a lock-in application as a plan's initial application. The lock-in application contains basic information about the plan and a statement of intent to lock-in base data. PBGC needs the information in the lock-in application to ensure that a plan sponsor intends to lock-in the plan's data. PBGC estimates that over the next 3 years an annual average of 6 plan sponsors will file lock-in applications for SFA with an average annual hour burden of 6 (6 x 1) hours and an average annual cost burden of \$4,800 (6 x \$800).

Under § 4262.16(i), a plan sponsor of a plan that has received SFA must file an Annual Statement of Compliance with the restrictions and conditions under section 4262 of ERISA and part 4262 once every year through 2051. PBGC needs the information in the Annual Statement of Compliance to ensure that a plan is compliant with the imposed restrictions and conditions. PBGC estimates that over the next 3 years an annual average of 150 plan sponsors will file Annual Statements of Compliance with an average annual hour burden of 300 (150 x 2) hours and an average annual cost burden of \$360,000 (150 x \$2,400).

Under § 4262.15(c), a plan sponsor of a plan with benefits that were suspended under sections 305(e)(9) or 4245(a) of ERISA must issue notices of reinstatement to participants and beneficiaries whose benefits were suspended and are being reinstated. Participants and beneficiaries need the notice of reinstatement to better understand the calculation and timing of their reinstated benefits and, if applicable, make-up payments. PBGC estimates that over the next 3 years an average of 2 plans per year will be required to send notices to participants with suspended benefits. PBGC estimates that these notices will impose an average annual hour burden of 4 (2 x 2) hours and average annual cost burden of \$4,000 (2 x \$2,000).

Finally, under § 4262.16(d), (f), (g) and (h) a plan sponsor must file a request for a determination from PBGC for approval for an exception under certain circumstances for SFA conditions under § 4262.16 relating to reductions in contributions, transfers or mergers, and withdrawal liability. PBGC needs the information required for a request for determination to determine whether to approve an exception from the specified condition of receiving SFA. PBGC estimates that over the next 3 years, PBGC will receive an average of 4.2 requests per year for determinations. PBGC estimates an average annual hour burden of 13.6 hours and average annual cost burden of \$33,000.

The estimated aggregate average annual hour burden for the next 3 years for the information collection in part 4262 is 863.6 ($540 + 6 + 300 + 4 + 13.6$) hours for employer and fund office administrative, clerical, and supervisory time. The estimated aggregate average annual cost burden for the next 3 years for the information collection request in part 4262 is \$1,931,800 ($\$1,530,000 + \$4,800 + \$360,000 + \$4,000 + \$33,000$) for approximately 4,830 contract hours assuming an average hourly rate of \$400 for work done by outside actuaries and attorneys. The actual hour burden and cost burden per plan will vary depending on plan size and other factors.

The collection of information under the regulation has been approved by OMB under control number 1212–0074 (expires May 31, 2024). PBGC intends to request that OMB extend its approval of the collection of information without change 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.

[FR Doc. 2023-27970 Filed: 12/19/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/20/2023]