



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Medical Clearance Process for Deployment to the Polar Regions

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Submission for OMB review; comment request.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) has submitted the following information collection requirement to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. This is the **second notice** for public comment; the first was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, and no comments were received. NSF is forwarding the proposed submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance simultaneously with the publication of this second notice.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAmain. Find this particular information collection by selecting “Currently under 30-day Review – Open for Public Comments” or by using the search function.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314, or send email to splimpto@nsf.gov.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339, which is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (including federal holidays).

Copies of the submission may be obtained by calling 703-292-7556.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NSF may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

COMMENTS: Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; (d) ways to 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.

Title of Collection: Medical Clearance Process for Deployment to the Polar Regions.

OMB Number: 3145-0177.

Expiration Date of Approval: October 31, 2023.

Type of Request: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection.

Proposed Project: Presidential Memorandum No. 6646 (February 5, 1982) (available from the National Science Foundation, Office of Polar Programs, Office 7100, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314) sets forth the National Science Foundation's overall management responsibilities for the entire United

States national program in Antarctica. Section 107(a) of Public law 98-373 [July 31, 1984; amended as Public Law 101-609-November 16, 1990] [available from the National Science Foundation, Office of Polar Programs, Office 7100, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314] designates the National Science Foundation as the lead agency responsible for implementing Arctic research policy, and the Director of the National Science Foundation shall ensure that the requirements of section 108 are fulfilled.

NSF Form 1700, Medical Clearance Process for Deployment to the Polar Regions furnishes information to the NSF regarding the physical, mental, and dental health status for all individuals (except DoD-uniformed service personnel) who anticipate deploying to Antarctica under the auspices of the United States Antarctic Program or to certain regions of the Arctic sponsored by the NSF/GEO/Office of Polar Programs. The information is used to determine whether an individual is physically and mentally suited to endure the extreme hardships imposed by the Arctic and Antarctic continents, while also performing specific duties as specified by their employers.

Forms 1428-A is for any individual who is determined to be not physically qualified for Polar deployment to request an administrative waiver of the medical screening criteria. This information includes signing a Request for Waiver that is notarized or otherwise legally acceptable in accordance with penalty of perjury statutes, and obtaining an Employer Statement of Support (NSF Form 1429-A). Individuals on a case-by-case basis also may be required to submit additional medical documentation and a letter from the individual's physician(s) regarding the individual's medical suitability for Polar deployment.

Respondents: All non-DoD uniformed personnel planning to deploy to U.S. stations in the Antarctic or to specified regions of the Arctic that are sponsored by the National Science Foundation's Office of Polar Programs.

The number of annual respondents: 3,700.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 37,000 hours.

Frequency of Responses: This form is submitted upon an individual's first deployment to Antarctica (below 60° South) or to specified regions of the Arctic and annually thereafter for the duration of the individual's deployments.

Dated: April 9, 2024.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer,

National Science Foundation.

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