



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Administration for Children and Families

[Office of Management and Budget #: 0970-0422]

Proposed Information Collection Activity; Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)

AGENCY: Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

ACTION: Request for public comments.

SUMMARY: The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is requesting a revision of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) (Office of Management and Budget (OMB) #: 0970-0422, expiration June 30, 2026). Sixty-two data elements have been added to AFCARS, per a December 2024 final rule. This has increased the burden for reporting for state child welfare agencies only.

DATES: *Comments due* **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: In compliance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, ACF is soliciting public comment on the specific aspects of the information collection described above. You can obtain copies of the proposed collection of information and submit comments by

emailing infocollection@acf.hhs.gov. Identify all requests by the title of the information collection.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Description: State and tribal title IV-E agencies are required to report AFCARS case-level information on all children in foster care and children who have been adopted or placed in a guardianship with title IV-E agency involvement. The data includes information about children who enter foster care, their entries and exits, placement details, and foster/adoptive parent information. The data collected will inform policy decisions, program management, and responses to Congressional and Departmental inquiries. Specifically, the data are used for short/long-term budget projections, trend analysis, child and family service reviews, and to target areas for improved technical assistance.

The AFCARS regulation (45 CFR Part 1355.40) recently underwent a revision with a final rule in December 2024 (89 FR 96569), which added 62 data elements to require state title IV-E child welfare agency reporting of more detailed information related to the Indian Child Welfare Act's procedural protections. This increased the reporting burden for states only.

This request is for public comment on the burden calculations. It does not seek comment on the data elements that have been through the rulemaking process.

Respondents: Title IV-E State and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies

Annual Burden Estimates

In the currently approved information collection, burden was displayed in sum for state and tribal recordkeeping activities. To more clearly document estimated burden per respondent type after the recent addition of elements for states, this request breaks the recordkeeping burden out by respondent. The estimated time per response for tribes remains the same while the estimated time per response for states increased from 8,538 to 9,036 hours per response.

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Annual Burden Hours
State Recordkeeping	53	2	9,035.97	957,813
Tribe Recordkeeping	17	2	8,538	290,292
Reporting	70	2	17	2,380
Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:				1,250,485

Comments: The Department specifically requests comments 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) the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents,

including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted within 60 days of this publication.

(Authority: 42 U.S.C. 679; 45 CFR Part 1355.40.)

Mary C. Jones,

ACF/OPRE Certifying Officer.

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