



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs

[OMB Control No. 1240-0011].

Proposed Extension Without Change of a Currently Approved Information Collection; Application for Approval of Representative's Fee in a Black Lung Claim Proceeding Conducted by The U.S. Department of Labor

AGENCY: Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Labor.

ACTION: Request for public comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor (DOL) is soliciting comments concerning a proposed extension for the authority to conduct the information collection request (ICR) titled, "Application for Approval of a Representative's fee in Black Lung Claim Proceedings Conducted by U.S. Department of Labor." This comment request is part of continuing Departmental efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA).

DATES: All comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments as follows. Please note that late, untimely filed comments will not be considered.

Electronic Submissions: Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal:
<https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments for WCPO-2026-0166. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to <https://www.regulations.gov> will be posted to the docket, with no changes. Because your comment will be made public, you are responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as your or anyone else's Social Security number or confidential business information.
- If your comment includes confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission.

Written/Paper Submissions: Submit written/paper submissions in the following way:

- Mail/Hand Delivery: Mail or visit DOL-OWCP, Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Suite C3520-DCMWC Washington, DC 20210.
- OWCP will post your comment as well as any attachments, except for information submitted and marked as confidential, in the docket at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Anjanette Suggs, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, at suggs.anjanette@dol.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The DOL, as part of continuing efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information before submitting them to the OMB for final approval. This program helps to ensure requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements can be properly assessed.

The CM-972 is sent to and completed by the authorized representative of a black lung claimant whose claim has been approved for benefits. The completed form is then returned to and evaluated by the district director, administrative law judge, or appropriate appellate tribunal before whom the claimed services were performed, and a fee amount is determined. The regulations (20 CFR 725.366) set forth specific requirements for the items of information that must be included on fee applications. The CM-972 was designed to collect this information. 20 CFR 725.366 authorizes this information collection.

This information collection is subject to PRA. A Federal agency generally cannot conduct or sponsor a

collection of information, and the public is generally not required to respond to an information collection, unless the OMB under the PRA approves it and displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. In addition, notwithstanding any other provisions of law, no person shall generally be subject to penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information that does not display a valid Control Number. See 5 CFR 1320.5(a) and 1320.6.

Interested parties are encouraged to provide comments to the contact shown in the ADDRESSES section. Written comments will receive consideration, be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval of the final ICR. In order to help ensure appropriate consideration, comments should mention 1240-0011.

Submitted comments will also be a matter of public record for this ICR and posted on the Internet, without redaction. The DOL encourages commenters not to include personally identifiable information, confidential business data, or other sensitive statements/information in any comments.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

OWCP is soliciting comments concerning the proposed information collection related to the Application for Approval of a Representative's Fee in a Black Lung Claim Proceeding Conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor. OWCP is particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information has practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of OWCP's estimate of the burden related to the information collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used in the estimate;
- Suggest methods to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimize the burden of the information collection 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.

Documents related to this information collection request are available at <https://regulations.gov> and at DOL-OWCP located at 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room C-3520, Washington, DC 20210. Questions about the information collection requirements may be directed to the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION section of this notice.

III. Current Actions

This information collection request concerns Application for Approval of Representatives' Fee in a Black

Lung Claim Proceeding Conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor. OWCP has updated the data with respect to the number of respondents, responses, burden hours, and burden costs supporting this information collection request from the previous information collection request.

Type of Review: Extension without change of a currently approved collection.

Agency: Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

OMB Number: 1240-0011.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 820.

Number of Responses: 820.

Annual Burden Hours: 574 hours.

Annual Respondent or Recordkeeper Cost: \$340.00.

OWCP Forms: CM-972, Application for Approval of a Representative's Fee in a Black Lung Claim Proceeding Conducted by The U.S. Department of Labor.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the proposed information collection request; they will become a matter of public record and will be available at <https://www.reginfo.gov>.

Anjanette Suggs,

Agency Clearance Officer.

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