

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR
ELECTRONIC RECORDS EXPRESS (ERE) REGISTRATION PROCESS**

OMB No. 0960-NEW

A. Justification

1. Background and Authorization

As part of the Social Security Administration (SSA)'s disability application and benefits continuance processes, the State Disability Determination Services (DDSs) collect several categories of information about disability claimants, including medical evidence and other claimant data. The information collected by the DDSs is currently cleared under OMB No. 0960-0555, "State Disability Determination Services."

To date, beneficiaries' medical providers who must submit information under the auspices of 0960-0555 must manually copy and fax or mail large patient files. This represents a significant amount of time and effort for the medical providers, and increases the time it takes for SSA to receive the information and process the disability claimant's file. To decrease time and costs for medical providers and reduce disability processing time, SSA has developed Electronic Records Express (ERE). Developed under the aegis of the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (P. L. 105-277), ERE is an Internet-based system which allows anybody who must provide information about disability claimants to SSA to do so quickly and efficiently online. This system will be used both by medical providers covered under 0960-0555, and later perhaps by other third parties who must submit information about disability applicants and recipients.

This ICR covers the brief ERE registration process and the small amount of time medical providers and other users will take to consult the ERE reference manual, if necessary. The actual burden reductions effected by ERE are discussed in the recent ICR for 0960-0555. Please note that although third parties may also use parts of ERE, they use a different registration process which will be submitted to OMB as its own unique ICR.

2. How, By Whom, and for What Purpose the Information is Used

As is the case for its existing paper-process counterparts (see above), ERE information will be used by SSA to complete disability application files. An explanation of the ERE registration process follows.

ERE users are medical providers, medical facilities, and other third parties (ex: teachers/school administrators covered under collection OMB No. 0960-0646, the Teacher Questionnaire) who already have a relationship with SSA and whose information is on file with the DDSs. However, to access the ERE website, the requestor must first register by providing minimal information to SSA.

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The DDSs will collect the information required by phone in response to inquiries by individuals or entities expressing interest in this service. The new accounts will be set up at the time of the conclusion of the call. Identity proofing and licensure checks, are part other SSA processes that must be completed to permit individuals or entities to do business with SSA; e.g., MER and CE source credentials covered under OMB No. 0960-0555. Therefore, we need not collect information related to these activities again for the Electronic Records Express website access.

The website is accessed by “User ID” [Personal Identification Number (PIN)] and password. All registrants will have already submitted the information needed to register for the website when they submitted professional and payment information, for example, when medical providers became CE or MER vendors. Therefore, with the exception of selecting a PIN (User ID) and, occasionally, an email address, there is no need for additional information from requestors.

Receiving a PIN (User ID) and temporary password permits only first access to the SSA Electronic Records Express website. Upon successful registration and issuance of a temporary password, the provider will be able to access the website. Then the password must be changed to one of the user’s choosing prior to first use to perform uploads of files and/or images of CE reports, documentation and/or MER from the user’s Electronic Health Records (EHR) systems via the registered user’s browser to the secure SSA Electronic Records Express website.

3. Use of Information Technology to Collect the Information

Although the PIN and password are assigned following a phone conversation with SSA, ERE itself is a completely electronic process which was created under the Agency’s Government Paperwork Elimination Act plan.

4. Duplicate Information

The nature of the information being collected and the manner in which it is collected preclude duplication. There is no other collection instrument used by SSA that collects data similar to that collected here.

5. Impact on Small Businesses

This collection may impact small businesses or other small entities (i.e. medical practices), but only in a positive way, since it enables them to save time and resources by electronically submitting information to SSA. The actual registration time for ERE is minimal and as such is not considered to significantly impact small businesses or other small entities.

6. Impact of Not Collecting Information/Collecting Less Frequently

If this information collection were not conducted, SSA would have no means of enabling medical providers, teachers, administrators, and other third-party users to electronically submit information to the Agency. Since ERE registration is a one-time process, the information cannot be collected less frequently.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances that would cause this information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Federal Register Notices/Communication with the Public

The 60-day advance Federal Register Notice was published on February 14, 2007, at 72 FR 7107, and no public comments were received. The 30-day Federal Register Notice was published on May 21, 2007 at 72 FR 28543. We will forward any public comments we receive in response to the 30-day Notice to OMB.

There have been no outside consultations with members of the public.

9. Payment to Respondents

SSA provides no payment or gifts to the respondents.

10. Assurances of Confidentiality

The information requested is protected and held confidential in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 1306, 20 CFR 401 and 402, U.S.C. 552 (Freedom of Information Act), 5 U.S.C. 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), and OMB Circular No. A-130.

11. Sensitive Questions

The information collection does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Burden Hour Estimates

We anticipate that an estimated 20,000 respondents will complete this survey annually. Although this number may appear small relative to the amount of respondents who use the paper versions of the collections covered by ERE, we believe it to be accurate because 1) while ERE is in its early stages, we expect the percentage of people who switch over to be relatively small; and 2) in many cases large medical centers may contain many medical providers who contract with SSA, but only one PIN/password is needed for the entire center. The estimated response time, including the time to read the brief instructional screens online, is 5 minutes total, for a total burden of 1,667 hours. The total burden is reflected as burden hours, and no separate cost burden has been calculated. Please note that this is a one-time burden, since those using the system will only have to register and (presumably) consult the guidebook once. Since we hope the number of ERE users will increase, we will revise send revised user estimates to OMB as burden data become available.

13. Cost to Respondents

There is no known cost burden to the respondents.

14. Federal Government Cost

We estimate the design, development, testing, and marketing of the website screens required 10 work years. That initial cost to SSA for 10 work years for a GS-12 Step 1 (\$35.51 in the Baltimore-Washington locality) is \$650,480. The cost to contact and sign up medical providers and representatives to use the ERE website at GS-12 Step 1,

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(\$35.51 in the Baltimore-Washington locality) the projected time required to make 20,000 contacts would be 10 minutes each. That equals 3,334 hours which when multiplied by the pay rate equals \$118,390. Therefore, the total cost to the Federal Government for this collection is **\$768,870**.

The actual cost of payment to providers who submit the medical information is included in the Supporting Statement for OMB Clearance of State Disability Determination Services Forms, OMB No. 0960-0555.

15. Change to Public Reporting Burden

This is a new information collection that will increase the public reporting burden by 1,667 hours per year.

16. Publication of the Results of the Information Collection

The results of the information collection will not be published.

17. Displaying OMB Expiration Date

Since this is an electronic display, we are not seeking an exemption to publishing the OMB expiration date.

18. Certification Requirements

SSA is not requesting an exception to the certification requirements at 5 CFR 1320.9 and related provisions at 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3).

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Method

Statistical methods are not used for this information collection.