CRITERIA AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CLEARANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Criteria for Generic Clearance

Customer satisfaction surveys are a tool for learning about agency performance and products from a customer's perspective. These customer satisfaction surveys can be qualitative or quantitative in nature. However, quantitative surveys must be statistically valid and require more stringent documentation than qualitative studies. The surveys conducted under the generic clearance umbrella must meet the following specific criteria:

1. They are strictly voluntary collections;
2. They collect opinion information; and
3. The customers must have experience with the subject of the data collection.

The generic clearance cannot be used in situations: where the respondent may perceive risks to his/her interests, either through potential penalties or loss of benefits; for collecting factual information (other than simple identifying information if needed); for collecting data from the general public; or if the subject matter is of a controversial nature. In addition, the generic clearance process is not to be used if survey results will play a role in developing Agency policy or in program evaluation; e.g., where customer opinions of a pilot program would be used to determine whether to implement nationally.

If there is any question as to whether your activity meets the criteria for generic clearance, please contact the Departmental PRA Officer as early as possible in the development process, since the possibility exists that it may need to be submitted under the normal clearance process, which takes approximately 120 days.

Documentation

You should use the attached format for preparing your submissions. An electronic Word copy of the format is available from calling Lillian Deitzer on extension 8048 or through e-mail to Lillian_L_Deitzer@HUD.gov. Please provide a copy of the documentation in Word format. You should provide specific information on the activity; i.e., date(s) of survey, number of focus groups, locations, etc. Also, if a statistical survey will be conducted, you must provide the information according to instructions on page 2 of the documentation format.

Survey Documents

We will need a copy of your forms, questionnaires, etc. as part of the documentation we must send to OMB. The legend "Approved, OMB Number 2535-0116" must appear in the upper right hand corner of the first page of your survey forms, questionnaires, etc. If you have assigned a form number, it should be typed in the lower left-hand corner of the first page of your form. The form must also contain the "Privacy and Paperwork Reduction Act" (PA/PRA) statements" (see below). If the activity is a telephone survey or a focus group, the OMB Number and, PA/PRA statements must be read to the respondents, or provided to them in some other manner; e.g., enclosed with the notification letter or handed out during the focus group session.

Instructions for Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Statements

The data collection instrument should contain a PA statement, and PRA statement and a time it takes statement (see below). The statements can be included on the data collection instrument, sent with a survey letter, or given or read to the respondent at the time of the information collection, if a face-to-face interview or telephone survey.

Privacy Act Statement - Note that the PA statement is offered merely as a guide and must be tailored for your information collection. To determine whether your data collection instrument needs a PA statement, or for more information in developing a PA statement, contact the Office of Disclosure Policy, OPS, ODDISP on extension 51742.

Sample Privacy Act Statement:

The Privacy Act requires us to notify you that we are authorized to collect this information by section 702 of the Social Security Act. You do not have to provide the information requested. However, the data you provide will allow the Social Security Administration (SSA) to better evaluate the Graduating to Independence materials offered and will enable SSA to provide more comprehensive information in the future. The person(s) completing the form will remain anonymous. SSA will request the name of the organization that forwards the form to us for tracking purposes only.

Your PRA statement should include the following:

1. Cite law and/or regulation, which authorize the collection of information.
2. Explain why the information is being collected and how it will be used.
3. Show whether the customer's obligation to respond is voluntary/mandatory/required to obtain a benefit.
4. Describe the consequences to the person if he/she does not provide all or any part of the required information.
5. Describe the nature and extent of confidentiality and list disclosures to third parties (government agencies, etc.).

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement – This statement should not be changed, except as indicated in the footnote.

This information collection meets the clearance requirements of 44 U.S.C. § 3507, as amended by section 2 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. You are not required to answer these questions unless we display a valid Office of Management and Budget control number. We estimate that it will take you about **[1] to read the instructions, gather the necessary facts, and answer the questions. HUD is collecting this information *** HUD will use to information to **. The information is voluntary.

1 Indicate the number of minutes or hours to provide the information.

DOCUMENTATION FOR THE GENERIC CLEARANCE
OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Provide the following information for qualitative survey activities. If your survey activity is quantitative, complete the following and also provide information on the statistical methodology (see page 2 for instructions). You should also provide the documentation on disk in Word format or forward via e-mail to the Reports Clearance Team.

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:

SSA SUB-NUMBER:

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY *(give purpose of activity, provide specific information; i.e., date(s) of survey, number of focus groups, locations, etc.):*

IF FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE A PAYMENT, INDICATE AMOUNT *(No more the $25 can be authorized under OMB rules):*

USE OF SURVEY RESULTS:

BURDEN HOUR COMPUTATION *(Number of responses (X) estimated response time (/60) = annual burden hours):*

Number of Responses:
Estimated Response Time:
Annual Burden hours:

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

MAILING LOCATION:

MAJOR OFFICE, OFFICE, DIVISION, BRANCH:

Instructions for Documentation of Statistical Surveys

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

    - Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,

    - Estimation procedures,

    - Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,

    - Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and

    - Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with the issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.