

MEMORANDUM

TO: Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

FROM: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) **DATE:** 4/5/2018

SUBJECT: Request for Nonsubstantive Changes to the Evaluation of
Employment Coaching for TANF and Related Populations
OMB Package (OMB Control Number 0970-0506)

This memo summarizes nonsubstantive changes we would like to make to the Evaluation of Employment Coaching for TANF and Related Populations OMB Package (OMB Control Number 0970-0506). We have identified three programs to be included in the evaluation. Knowing the programs leads to three changes: (1) we adjusted the burden estimates to reflect that the total burden of evaluating these three programs is less than described in the original OMB submission for this study because of a reduction in sample size; (2) we made minor revisions to the letters and notifications to tailor them to the selected programs (Attachment I); and (3) we updated the staff reports of program receipt to reflect how these programs will be using the study's program receipt data collection system (Attachment G). We revised Supporting Statements A and B to reflect these changes as well. In addition, we added language to the consent form in response to comments from the New England Independent Review Board (Attachment A).

Identification of Three Programs

The three programs selected for participation in the Evaluation of Employment Coaching for TANF and Related Populations are: MyGoals for Employment Success in Baltimore, MyGoals for Employment Success in Houston, and Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program (FaDSS) in Iowa. We will recruit 1,000 sample members per program for a total of 3,000 sample members. The original OMB submission for this study anticipated 2,000 sample members per program. We updated the burden estimates associated with baseline data collection in the revised Supporting Statement A (Table A.3).

MyGoals for Employment Success in Baltimore and Houston

MyGoals for Employment Success (MyGoals) is a coaching demonstration project designed by MDRC and being funded by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. It is being implemented in Baltimore, Maryland and Houston, Texas in partnership with the cities' housing authorities. Both the Baltimore and Houston programs will be included in this evaluation and evaluated separately. MDRC had previously planned and begun to implement a more limited evaluation of the MyGoals sites based primarily on administrative data available from local housing authorities. By partnering with MDRC, we will be able to expand on our evaluation using evaluation data collected by MDRC and include coaching programs that are closely aligned with evaluation goals. We will collect all of the data collection elements approved for the Evaluation of Employment coaching, such as the follow-up surveys of study participants, staff surveys, and in-depth interviews of study participants.

MyGoals is targeted to unemployed or underemployed adults between the ages of 18 and 56 who are receiving housing support from the housing authority. Its objective is to improve self-regulation skills and help participants find solutions to their problems in the short-term while increasing their overall economic security and decreasing their reliance on public assistance in the long-term.

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The MyGoals programs began enrolling, collecting baseline data using their own instruments, and randomly assigning sample members in February 2017 as part of the separate evaluation conducted by MDRC. As a result, those activities will not be conducted under the Evaluation of Employment Coaching project. Instead, through our partnership with MDRC, we will build on the work completed and therefore prevent redundancy in activities.

In addition, while the MyGoals staff will be recording program receipt data, they will be doing so in their own management information system, rather than the Random Assignment, Participant Tracking Enrollment, and Reporting (RAPTER) system described in the original OMB submission.

Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program (FaDSS)

Iowa's Department of Human Rights implements the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program through contracts with 17 local agencies across the state. This evaluation will include a subset of these local agencies. FaDSS is funded through the TANF block grant and serves only TANF participants. The objective of the program is to help families achieve emotional and economic independence. FaDSS is targeted to TANF recipients with barriers to self-sufficiency. The coaches meet with participants in their homes at least twice in each of the first three months and then monthly starting in the fourth month, with two additional contacts with the family each month. FaDSS expects to be able to enroll 1,000 people.

Updated Letters and Notifications (Attachment I)

We have included updated letters and notifications with language that has been tailored to the three identified programs. The letters pertaining to MyGoals now include language reflecting the collaboration of the MyGoals study and the Evaluation of Employment Coaching.

Updated Staff Reports of Program (Attachment G, Parts 1 and 2)

The use of certain RAPTER screens will vary for the sites selected for the evaluation. The two MyGoals sites will not use RAPTER because evaluation intake and service receipt documentation will take place in a previously developed system already in use by the program. FaDSS will use RAPTER for both evaluation intake and service receipt documentation. However, FaDSS will not use screens that pertain to services that are not offered by the program, such as case management, work experience, and group sessions. We also propose the addition of two questions—one that prompts staff to enter the program-specific ID number (to enable linking to the study ID), and one that asks about the location of participant intake (to account for FaDSS' intake procedures). The revised Attachment G Part 1 lists the RAPTER screens that FaDSS will use and the two new questions. The wireframes presented in Attachment G Part 2 have been revised to include the two new questions (see pages 4 and 7 of attachment).

Updated Consent Form (Attachment A)

We added language to the consent form in response to comments from the New England Independent Review Board (NEIRB). This additional language provides sample members with additional information on who they can contact with questions or concerns and clarifies their statement of consent.