Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Heather:

Hello and welcome to today’s presentation. I’m Heather Fleck from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

Heather:

Today’s presentation will cover the proposed Information Collection for the required elements for submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and plan modifications under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Today, we will provide an overview of the materials included in the paperwork reduction act or PRA package for the state plans;

Describe the WIOA requirements for the state plans;

Explain the areas that the Departments are soliciting comments on; and

Describe the process for submitting comments.

Heather:

An interagency workgroup representing the Departments of Labor, Education, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and Housing and Urban Development is working very closely together to implement the WIOA provisions pertaining to the Unified and Combined State Plans.

Heather:

Today’s presenters represent several programs that are included in the Unified or Combined State Plans, including the adult, dislocated worker, and youth formula programs and Wagner-Peyser Employment Service; Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Adult Education; and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

Heather:

Throughout this presentation, you will see remarks from leadership from all federal partner agencies discussing the opportunity of this legislation and coordinated planning.

Here is a quote from ETA Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Portia Wu, on the opportunities presented by state planning.

Heather:

Here is a quote from Acting Assistant Secretary Johan Uvin, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, regarding how the state plans can support coordination across programs.

Heather:

Here is a quote from Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner Janet LaBreck emphasizing the importance of collaboration and coordination and how the development and implementation of the state plans can improve services to youth and adults with disabilities.
Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

- Now, I would like to introduce my colleague Brian Miller from the Rehabilitation Services Administration, who will provide an overview of WIOA requirements for the State Plan.

- Now, I would like to introduce my colleague Brian Miller from the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Brian:

- WIOA was signed into law by President Obama on July 22, 2014.
- WIOA promotes improved services for job seekers, workers, and employers through increased efficiency, program alignment, and integration.
- The Unified or Combined State Plan is required by title I of WIOA. It should articulate the state’s vision for a trained workforce that meets the needs of employers within the state.

Brian:

- States are required to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to DOL to receive funding for core programs.
- The state plan would articulate the state’s four-year workforce development strategies.
- The first plan is due to DOL no later than March 3, 2016.
- States will use the Rehabilitation Services Administration’s online portal to submit the plan.
- Core partners and any affected Combined Plan partners will jointly review the state plans.
- We will issue a joint response to the state regarding whether the plan is approved.

Brian:

- At a minimum, states must submit a Unified State Plan.
- The Unified State Plan must cover the WIOA core programs.

Brian:

- As an alternative, states have the option of submitting a combined state plan that includes one or more of the programs listed on this slide.

Brian:

- As we mentioned earlier, an interagency workgroup has been working closely to implement the WIOA provisions related to the state plans.
- This workgroup is comprised of representatives for each of the programs in Unified and Combined state plans.
- The workgroup is addressing:
  - Regulations
Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

- Identification of Unified or Combined State Plan elements
- The plan submission method
- The process to review and approve state plans
- The process for submitting, reviewing, and approving plan modifications
- Paperwork Reduction Act packages, and
- Sub-regulatory guidance and technical assistance strategy.

Brian:

- Here we have a quote from Acting Assistant Secretary Teresa Gerton about the opportunity, through the state plan, to align services to veterans and focus on employer engagement.
- Now I will turn it back over to Heather to discuss the contents of the ICR.
- Now I will turn it back over to Heather to discuss the contents of the ICR.

Heather:

The paperwork reduction act package includes four parts:

1. Federal Register Notice, published August 6, 2015, which notified the public that the comment period has begun.
2. Draft Supporting Statement – which provides additional background on the state plans and information on the proposed burden.
3. Information Collection Request (ICR) – This identifies the specific proposed planning elements. The ICR is the document for which we are seeking comment.
4. Supplement – This identifies the specific proposed planning elements for the Combined Partner Programs

Heather:

- The supporting statement provides background information on the Unified and Combined State Plan.
- It also provides our estimates for the burden related to responding to the ICR.
- We are seeking comments to the information provided in the supporting statement.

Heather:

- The information collection request is intended to promote joint planning across the programs included in the state plan.
- For each common requirement, states must provide a joint, integrated single answer for all programs that are included in the state plan.
Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

- Additionally, states must address the program specific requirements for each program that is included in the state plan. Because states must submit, at a minimum, a unified state plan, this means that at a minimum, states must address the program specific requirements for all of the core programs.

Heather:

- Now we’re going to go over the overview of the proposed state plan elements.
- The first major content of the State Plan ICR is comprised of the strategic planning elements.
- The strategic planning elements address the state’s strategic vision and goals, economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities.

Heather:

- The next major content section is what we call the operational planning elements.
- The operational planning elements address:
  - how the state will achieve its vision and goals,
  - an analysis of the infrastructure, policies, and activities that are necessary to implement the state’s vision
  - The strategy for implementing the state’s vision
  - State operating systems and policies
  - Program-specific requirements, and
  - Assurances.

Heather:

- Now we are going to walk through a few screen shots of the proposed planning requirements document to get you more familiar with it. We have a few screen shots of the Information Collection Request.
- Here is the cover sheet.
- I would like to note that while this document is what we are seeking comment on, we believe states can begin to use this draft document to help guide their planning efforts now until the final becomes available a few months from now.

Heather:

- Here we have a screen shot of the table of contents just to help you find the pages within the Information Collection Request (ICR), since it is a somewhat lengthy document.

Heather:
Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

- Here is a screen shot of the first question you answer as you’re responding to the plan.
- Here you would select whether your state will submit a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan.
- If you are submitting a Combined State Plan, you must also indicate which programs you intend to include.

Heather:

- As I mentioned before, a major content section is the Strategic Elements Section.
- This screen shot shows the beginning of that information we are requiring in our proposal.

Heather:

- This next screen shot shows the beginning of the operational planning elements.

Heather:

- The next screenshot is a section on common assurances that apply to all of the core programs that are included in the State Plan.

Heather:

- The next section is the program specific requirements for each of the core programs.
- These requirements reflect the unique requirements of those programs, such as unique requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, the Adult Education Programs, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Heather:

- And then finally, a piece of the Information Collection Request includes the targets that states intend to set for their performance accountability measures.
- My colleague, Eileen Friedman, from the Department of Health and Human Services, will speak next and discuss the Supplement to the ICR.
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Eileen:

- The Supplement document identifies all of the program-specific requirements for the combined state partner programs.
- If a state chooses to submit a combined state plan, the state must include the combined partner programs, as well as the core programs, in responses to the common planning elements.
- Additionally, the state must address program specific elements for each of the core programs as well as for the partner programs included in the combined state plan.
Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

• At this time, we are providing the supplement to you for your information. We are not seeking comments to the program specific requirements for the combined partner programs at this time. Many of them exist under separate OMB control numbers or will be seeking public comment through a separate PRA process.

• This is a screen shot of the program-specific requirements for the combined state plan partner programs so you know which document I am referring to.

• Here we have a quote from Acting Assistant Secretary Mark Greenberg about the opportunity for states to coordinate a comprehensive range of employment and training activities through a combined state plan.

• Here is a quote from Under Secretary Kevin Concannon about the opportunity to coordinate with the SNAP E&T programs through the combined state plan.

• Next, we will hear from Cheryl Keenan, from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, who will discuss the process for submitting comments.

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Cheryl:

• At this time, we are seeking comments on the proposed supporting statement and information collection request.

• We are interested in public comments on the following questions:

  1. Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Departments?
  2. Will this information be processed and used in a timely manner?
  3. Is the estimate of burden accurate?
  4. How might the Departments enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?
  5. How might the Departments minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology?

Cheryl:

• The paperwork reduction act package is open for 60 day comment period. It published on August 6, 2015 and closes on October 5, 2015.

Cheryl:

• During this period, Federal staff cannot discuss the proposed materials.

• All comments must be officially submitted in order to be considered.

• We will be accepting comments through the regulations.gov web site.
Cheryl:

- Here are quotes from General Deputy Assistant Secretary Clifford Taffet and General Assistant Secretary Jemine Bryon on the opportunity to coordinate with employment and training activities through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development as part of the combined state plan.

Cheryl:

- This slide provides direction for submitting comments on the state plan paperwork reduction act package – either through the Federal e-rulemaking portal or through certified US mail, courier, or hand delivery as instructed through the Federal Register notice.

Cheryl:

- Notice the search box? This is where you insert the Docket ID number or the title of the ICR to begin searching for the PRA package.

Cheryl:

- Directions for submitting a comment are described on the regulation.gov ‘help page’ and in the box we circled earlier.

- Click on ‘Comment Now’ button on the search results page. This takes you to the Comment Form, ‘Your Information’ screen.

- Be sure to complete all requested information.

- Enter your comment.

- You will hit ‘Enter Comment’ or ‘Edit Comment.’

Cheryl:

- Once you are satisfied with what you have written, you must agree to the disclaimer information and then check the box. This will enable you to submit your comment.

- You will click on “Click Comment Now” to submit the comment.

Cheryl:

- Once you submit your comment there will be a viewable “your receipt” flag.

- When you click on “your receipt” there will be a comment tracking number, which you should be sure to save.

- This is in case you would like to find your comment again.

- You can also receive an emailed copy of your comment receipt. When you request this successfully there will be a message saying, “your email receipt was sent successfully”.

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Cheryl:

- To submit a good comment, identify a citation from the proposed rule (for example 20 CFR 676.100) where your thoughts of support or concern exist.
- State what you support or what you recommend that we change.
- Explain why you support a provision or why you have concerns about a provision.
- Provide a recommendation if you are suggesting a change.
- In the recommendation, explain how to make it work. Be specific, provide research, evidence or examples, where possible.
- Note: Please note that while the speaker uses the process of submitting comments to a proposed rule as an example, her remarks are meant to illustrate the process for submitting comments to the proposed State Plan Information Collection Request (ICR). The process for submitting comments to the proposed ICR closely mirrors the process for submitting comments to a proposed rule. Please reference the corresponding slides for additional information regarding submitting comments to the ICR.

Cheryl:

- Once you submit your comments, we will begin reviewing and analyzing them. We will consider your proposals and make changes to the final rule as appropriate.
- We encourage you to comment early in the available 60 days.
- This provides an opportunity for others to review your ideas, since we post them, and to provide comments in support of your idea or provide a new idea that was sparked by your idea.

Note: Please note that while the speaker uses the process of submitting comments to a proposed rule as an example, her remarks are meant to illustrate the process for submitting comments to the proposed State Plan Information Collection Request (ICR). The process for submitting comments to the proposed ICR closely mirrors the process for submitting comments to a proposed rule. Please reference the corresponding slides for additional information regarding submitting comments to the ICR.

Cheryl:

- Having the government ask for and receive comments on proposed rulemaking for federal regulations is a part of open and transparent government practice.
- Your comments do make a difference
- Public comment is often effective in changing the proposed rules in the final drafting.

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Proposed Information Collection: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

to the proposed ICR closely mirrors the process for submitting comments to a proposed rule. Please reference the corresponding slides for additional information regarding submitting comments to the ICR.

Cheryl:

- Thank you for joining this Webinar today to learn more about commenting on the state plan paperwork reduction act documents.