regarding (1) topics that the panel should consider, and (2) names of individuals with applicable expertise that the panel should hear from. Those suggestions should be sent via the CASB Review Panel's web page at http://www.gao.gov or by leaving recorded messages at 202–512–4501.

Ralph C. Dawn,

Staff Director, Cost Accounting Standards Board Review Panel.

[FR Doc. 98–13638 Filed 5–20–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 1610–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collections; Comment Request

The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary will periodically publish summaries of proposed information collections projects and solicit public comments in compliance with the requirements of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. To request more information on the project or to obtain a copy of the information collection plans and instruments, call the OS Reports Clearance Officer on (202) 690–6207.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Proposed Projects 1. Study of Medicare Home Health Practice Variations—NEW—The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation is proposing a study which will examine how patient, provider, agency, market and regulatory factors affect variations in home health practice. A sample of 48 Medicare-certified home health agencies (from eight states) will be studied. Within each of these agencies, 24 patients (with congestive heart failure or diabetes) will be sampled. The results will identify agency characteristics and behaviors that are related to differences in lengths of stay for patients with similar risk factors.— Respondents: For-profit, Non-profit Institutions; Burden Information for the Administrator Questionnaire—Number of Respondents: 48; Burden per Response: 36 minutes: Burden: 29 hours—Burden Information for the Care Provider Questionnaire—Number of Responses: 1152; Burden per Response: 1 hour: Burden: 1152 hours—Total Burden: 1181 hours.

Send comments to Cynthia Agens Bauer, OS Reports Clearance Officer, Room 503H, Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, DC, 20201. Written comments should be received within 60 days of this notice.

Dated: May 11, 1998.

Dennis P. Williams,

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Budget.

[FR Doc. 98–13476 Filed 5–20–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4150–04–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation Notice Inviting Applications for New Award for Fiscal Year 1998

AGENCY: The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), Office of the Secretary (OS).

ACTION: Announcement of the availability of funds and request for applications from states to determine the status of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients after they leave the TANF caseload, eligible families who are diverted before being enrolled, or eligible families who fail to enroll.

SUMMARY: The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), with support from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, announces the availability of funds and invites applications for research into the status of individuals and families who leave the TANF program, who apply for cash welfare but are never enrolled because of non-financial eligibility requirements or diversion programs, and/or who appear to be eligible but are not enrolled (hereafter jointly referred to as welfare leavers). Approximately eight to ten States or counties will receive funding that will enable them to track and monitor how individuals and their families do in the first year after they leave welfare and provide a foundation for longer follow-up. States may choose any method for such tracking, including the linking of administrative data, surveys or other methods as appropriate. We are particularly interested in learning about individuals' ability to obtain employment and the support provided by their earnings, public programs besides TANF, and other sources. The funds could support a newly designed project or could be used to add new data sources and analyses to an existing project.

In addition, ASPE announces the availability of supplementary funding from the Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to track the consequences of welfare reform for low-income families with children who receive housing assistance. These funds will only be available to ASPE Grantees.

CLOSING DATE: The deadline for submission of applications under this announcement is July 6, 1998.

MAILING ADDRESS: Application instructions and forms should be requested from and submitted to: Grants Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 405F, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, D.C. 20201, Telephone: (202) 690–8794. Copies of this program announcement and many of the required forms may also be obtained electronically at the ASPE World Wide Web Page: http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov. Requests for forms and administrative questions will be accepted and responded to up to 10 working days prior to closing date of receipt of applications. Application submissions may not be faxed or submitted electronically.

The printed **Federal Register** notice is the only official program announcement. Although reasonable efforts are taken to assure that the files on the ASPE World Wide Web Page containing electronic copies of this Program Announcement are accurate and complete, they are provided for information only. The applicant bears sole responsibility to assure that the copy downloaded and/or printed from any other source is accurate and complete.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Administrative questions should be directed to the Grants Officer at the address or phone number listed above. Technical questions should be directed to Christopher Snow, DHHS, ASPE, Telephone, 202–690–6888 E-mail, csnow@osaspe.dhhs.gov. Written technical questions may also be faxed to 202–690–6562 or may be addressed to

Mr. Snow at the following address. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 404E, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, D.C. 20201.

Part I Supplementary Information

Legislative Authority

This grant is authorized by Section 1110 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1310) and awards will be made from funds appropriated under PL 105–78 Department of Health and Human Services Appropriations Act, 1998.

Eligible Applicants

Given the nature of the research involved, competition is open only to State agencies and counties that administer TANF programs with populations greater than 500,000. Consortia of States are also encouraged to apply, as long as a single State agency is identified as the lead and agrees to handle grant funds and sub-granting. Public or private nonprofit organizations, including universities and other institutions of higher education, may collaborate with States in submitting an application, but the principal Grantee will be the State. Private for-profit organizations may also apply jointly with States, with the recognition that grant funds may not be paid as profit to any recipient of a grant or subgrant.

Available Funds

Approximately $2,350,000 is available from ASPE, in funds appropriated for fiscal year 1998. ASPE anticipates providing approximately eight to ten awards of between $200,000 and $250,000 each. If additional funding becomes available in fiscal years 1998 or 1999 additional projects may be funded or some projects may receive second year funding to allow extended tracking of families who left the TANF caseload or were diverted from the roles.

The Economic Research Service (ERS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has provided a portion of the total funding in order to support analyses of outcomes for families in rural areas, particularly rural areas with historically high concentrations of poverty. ERS funding under this ASPE announcement is separate from the ERS grant program—''Status of Households who Leave the Food Stamp Program.'' If applicant is applying to both grant programs (ASPE and ERS) the application should specify how the projects will be coordinated. The U.S. Department of Labor has also provided a portion of the total funding, in order to support greater use of in-depth, in-person interviews.

Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) expects to make available up to $350,000 over and above the ASPE awards through supplemental grants for analyses including assisted housing recipients.

Background

Since 1993, AFDC caseloads have seen unprecedented declines. A portion of the decline can be attributed to increasing numbers of former recipients leaving the rolls. The remainder is comprised of fewer families entering the rolls than in previous periods. While it is likely that a strong economy has enabled many people to move in to the workplace, or to remain there, there is little beyond anecdotes to indicate for certain what has happened to them. Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), with its time limits and emphasis on employment, the trend in caseload declines may continue.

The studies funded under this announcement build on previous ASPE sponsored data-linkage and research projects. In FY 1996 and 1997, ASPE awarded grants to five states (and one county) for the purpose of linking administrative databases from multiple programs in order to study the interactions between programs and the use of multiple sources of assistance by recipients. Also in FY 1997, ASPE and ACF sponsored a study on the effects of formal and informal TANF diversion programs on recipients and on participation in other public programs, particularly Medicaid.

Administrative records provide a reliable estimate of individuals receiving benefits. Historically, however, AFDC administrative records have only tracked the status of individuals and families while they were receiving welfare. Examining the situation of recipients once they leave, or of applicants who never receive cash welfare, takes additional efforts by welfare agencies, such as linking public assistance databases to those that store earnings data (e.g. unemployment insurance records) and data on other public programs (e.g. Food Stamps, Medicaid, Child Care).

A number of issues may be identified using linked administrative data, including whether the adults are employed, how long they are employed, how much they are earning, whether their earnings have increased, and whether they have returned to TANF. It may also be possible to provide an indication whether family well-being has improved, worsened or been maintained, by examining families' involvement with the child welfare system, whether they continue to receive Medicaid and child care subsidies, have any food or housing insecurity, and receive other federal, state or community sources of support they have, etc. (See suggested topical areas below).

Many states have begun planning or implementing efforts to track welfare reform outcomes on recipients. These efforts have employed a range of methods, which include linking administrative databases, telephone or in person interviews or surveys, and focus groups—Maryland and South Carolina, for example, have recently released preliminary reports tracking some characteristics of families who have left their public assistance programs, using very different methodologies.

Maryland's report relied on linked administrative data from TANF, Child Welfare and the Unemployment Insurance system to look at: history of welfare receipt; reasons for case closure, including sanctions; employment and earnings over time both before and after case closure; the industries in which welfare leavers were employed; and the incidence of child welfare investigations and foster care placements among children in families who had left welfare.

Although the Maryland study was not intended to attribute cause and effect, it allowed cross-tabulations of workforce success and recidivism against length of last welfare spell and months of lifetime welfare receipt, and against work history before, during and after welfare. In the summer of 1998, Maryland plans to supplement and enrich these results with a survey to explore outcomes that cannot be measured with administrative data.

South Carolina tracked welfare leavers who had been subject to work requirements or who had voluntarily sought work using two state-designed and administered sample surveys. An important feature of South Carolina's approach was the great effort made to achieve a high response rate and therefore reduce response bias. Surveyors attempted to contact former welfare families several times by telephone, and if still unsuccessful, sent out interviewers for in person interviews. These techniques resulted in 77% and 78% response rates for the two surveys.

Because survey instruments were used rather than administrative data,

South Carolina has been able to gather rich information on former welfare recipients and their families. For example, they were able to determine whether the recipients' perceived reasons for case closure corresponded to the administrative record. When they examined employment outcomes, they gathered a much richer set of employment outcomes than is typically available through administrative data (e.g. Unemployment Insurance wage records). They were also able to get reasons for unemployment and barriers to work, wages and work hours, rather than aggregated earnings, and to determine the actual jobs held by former recipients, rather than simply the industry in which they worked.

Another area that South Carolina examined through their surveys was child care, including availability, type and location (family, neighbors, commercial centers, etc.), costs and funding sources, and the barrier that lack of child care or child care problems presented in finding and maintaining employment. Other areas included medical insurance coverage, transportation, children's educational status, and use of and knowledge of other public services, including Medicaid, Food Stamps, child care subsidies, rent subsidies or public housing, adult education, mental health and substance abuse services.

Finally, South Carolina asked recipients about deprivations that they had encountered, whether while on welfare or since exit, including inability to pay for rent, utilities or food, homelessness, car repossessions, lack of needed medical treatment and changes in children's schools or living arrangements.

Part II Purpose and Responsibilities

Purpose

The purpose of this announcement is to partner with States and support State efforts to track former TANF recipients and their families, families who apply for cash welfare but are never enrolled because of non-financial eligibility requirements or diversion programs, and/or families who appear to be eligible but are not enrolled. In particular, ASPE would like to support State efforts to ascertain the sources of support used by these families, including employment, their use of public programs, their well-being, the extent of any resource insecurity or deprivation and the circumstances of children.

A proposed study should include at least two cohorts. For example, the first cohort of families could be those who left the roles or were diverted at least one full year before the second calendar quarter of 1998. This would allow the Grantee to immediately look retrospectively at a full year of families' experiences, and to complete their initial analysis of this cohort in time for the interim report. The Grantee should record the characteristics of families at the point of closure, including the reason for closure. The former recipients and their families should then be identified and tracked in administrative records from multiple programs and/or through other data-gathering techniques for the subsequent 12 months. In the interest of cross-State comparability, ASPE would prefer that if possible this cohort be drawn from families who left or were diverted during the last quarter of calendar year 1996 and tracked during the full calendar year 1997.

The data sources and analysis used for the second cohort may be more extensive than those used for the first, since more time is available. For example, applicants may propose to enrich their administrative data by linking individual records with survey data or other data sources. Additionally, the Grantee would be able to follow this cohort during the term of the project, at least in part, rather than looking solely retrospectively. Richness of data will be an important criterion under which proposals are evaluated.

ASPE understands that there is a great degree of variation in State programs and in the amount and scope of data available to states. It is therefore highly unlikely that every applicant would be able to address all of the issues and questions raised in the following section. It is also unlikely that every applicant can propose a study that includes both welfare leavers and families diverted from the rolls.

However, subgroup analyses contrasting cases that close due to earnings, sanctions and time limits, as well as those which are never enrolled due to formal or informal diversion practices are strongly encouraged. Comparisons of characteristics and outcomes of rural versus urban populations and analyses special populations (e.g. the disabled, substance abusers) are also of interest.

One type of possible subgroup analysis would involve HUD assisted families. Approximately 1.1 million households receiving AFDC benefits before the enactment of PRWORA were also receiving HUD housing assistance. Because of this substantial overlap in populations served, PD&R wishes to obtain reliable evidence about the interaction of welfare reform with housing programs. Grantees receiving supplementary funding from PD&R will receive, subject to satisfactory execution of confidentiality agreements, a file containing identifiers of families with children, (or a more narrowly targeted group, as defined by the Grantee) living in public and assisted housing in the state as of a month designated by the Grantee. PD&R is interested in the experience of these families relative to families not assisted; it is also interested in the experience of families living in public housing relative to the experience of families receiving tenant-based assistance or families receiving Section 8 project-based assistance.

Because the focus of TANF is moving families to work, and because employment and earnings levels are such important precursors to well-being, the one required focus will be on the employment and earnings status of the affected individuals. All applicants must describe how they intend to address employment issues. Examples of questions of interest regarding employment and earnings include:

- How long does it take recipients and former recipients to find jobs? What types of jobs do they hold? How long do they stay in their jobs? If they are not employed, why not? What level of wages do they receive and how much do they receive in total earnings? What sort of work schedules do they have? What, if any, employer provided fringe benefits and training are available to them? What fringe benefits do they actually receive? Are there any significant barriers to accessing these fringe benefits?

Additional policy relevant topical areas which States may wish to address include child care usage, medical insurance coverage, receipt of other public benefits and child and family well-being. While each of the topical areas presented below present a range of issues, the suggested questions are in no way meant to be exhaustive. If prospective applicants have additional questions which they feel are relevant within the context of welfare reform, they are encouraged to raise them in their proposal. Again, richness of data is strongly encouraged and will be an important criterion under which proposals are evaluated.

Topical areas which applicants may wish to address, with examples of potential questions.

- *Food Stamps*—What role do food stamps play in supporting welfare leavers?
- *Family support*—What role do family resources and support play? What role do child support payments play?

• *Health insurance*—Do families have access to health insurance? From what source (employer provided, Medicaid, CHIP)? Are premiums or copays are required? Which family members are covered?

• *Child care*—To what extent is child care available to welfare leavers and what are the most common arrangements? What is the source of payment for childcare? What is the quality of these arrangements? To what extent are eligible child care recipients taking advantage of services? How do child care arrangements change once people leave welfare, either via work or due to sanctions and time limits?

• *Child Welfare/Foster Care*—What is the incidence of children found to have been neglected or abused, or to enter foster care, following the elimination of financial assistance to a family? How does this compare with their experiences while on welfare?

• *Child living arrangements/Kinship Care*—Do we observe changes in child living arrangements that are correlated with the imposition of time limits, sanctions and work requirements? For instance, do we find that increasing numbers/proportions of children are being cared for by relatives other than parents (either as assistance units headed by relatives or as child-only assistance units)?

• *Diverted cases*—What types of families are diverted and for what reasons? Of cases diverted, how many later come onto welfare? What alternative sources of support do they have?

• *Awareness of benefits*—To what extent are families aware of the availability of transitional and other benefits available to welfare leavers and those diverted from ongoing cash assistance? To what extent do they avail themselves of these benefits?

• *Recidivism*—How many families return to welfare, when and why? What effect do other issues listed here appear to have on recidivism?

• *Attitudes*—What are former recipients attitudes toward work, TANF, leaving TANF, and their situation?

• *Health Insecurity*—What is the health status of each family member? Do they have difficulties accessing health care?

• *Food Insecurity*—Do families report having enough money for food? Do they rely on food pantries?

• *Housing Insecurity*—Have families been forced to double-up or move in with relatives? Do they report not always having enough money to pay the rent? Have they experienced periods of homelessness?

• *Barriers to self-sufficiency*—Do former recipients appear to face any of the following barriers to employment: disability, illiteracy, limited English proficiency, domestic violence, mental illness or substance abuse.

• *Reasons for case closure*—What reason is recorded in the case record? What reason is reported by the recipient?

Grantee Responsibilities

1. Prior to completion of the final work plan (analysis plan), the Grantee should meet with relevant federal personnel, other Grantees and invited experts in Washington, D.C., to discuss the preliminary methodology and design of the research project including what research questions will be answered and what methodology the Grantee will employ to answer the questions.

As part of this process, all the Grantees will take part in a joint discussion of their proposed study designs. This will encourage a level of comparability of issues to be addressed and data created across the various projects, as well as allow for peer-to-peer contacts and technical assistance among Grantees.

2. No later than 30 days after this meeting and consultation the Grantee should submit an outline progress to date, if any, and a final work plan that is based on and updates the work plan submitted in the original application.

3. A second meeting will be planned later in the grant period in Washington, D.C., to discuss preliminary findings and the format for the interim and final reports (for Grantees outside the Washington, D.C. area this may take place by telephone). A preliminary draft of the interim report, including initial results, if any, and a plan for any further data collection and analysis, should be delivered to the Federal Project Officer within 90 days of submission of the final work plan. The Federal Project Officer will return comments on the draft interim report to the Grantee and a minimum of three (3) copies of an interim report should be delivered to the Grants Officer within 30 days. One of these copies must be unbound, suitable for photocopying; if only one is the original (has the original signature, is attached to a cover letter, etc.), it should not be this copy.

4. After completing their analysis, the Grantee will prepare a final report describing the procedures used to conduct the analysis, barriers encountered in completing the project and the results of the analysis. A draft of this report should be delivered to the Federal Project Officer before the completion of the project. The Federal Project Officer will return comments on the draft report to the Grantee and at least three (3) copies of a final report should be delivered to the Grants Officer before the completion of the project. One of these copies must be unbound, suitable for photocopying; if only one is the original (has the original signature, is attached to a cover letter, etc.), it should not be this copy.

5. To encourage wider analysis, Grantee will make all data available to the research community. ASPE prefers that this result in a public-use data file. In preparing the public-use data file, data should be edited as appropriate to ensure confidentiality of individuals. If the applicant feels that provision of a public-use data file is impossible, the application should explain why and should fully articulate how the applicant will make the data available to qualified researchers and to ASPE. In either case, the plan for data dissemination will be evaluated and scored during the evaluation of proposals.

ASPE Responsibilities

1. ASPE will convene one to two meetings of Grantees, federal personnel, and relevant experts in the areas the Grantees choose to address. The first meeting will take place within 60 days of award and will allow for technical assistance and peer-to-peer contacts before final research design decisions have been made, as well as assuring that data constructs meet some standard of validity and comparability. A second meeting may be held approximately 6 to 8 months into the grant period to provide Grantees the ability to meet and discuss their progress to date, and assess and receive assistance with any problems that have arisen.

3. ASPE will provide consultation and technical assistance in planning, and operating grant activities.

4. ASPE will assist in information exchange and the dissemination of reports to appropriate Federal, state and local entities.

Part III Application Preparation and Evaluation Criteria

This section contains information on the preparation of applications for submission under this announcement, on the forms necessary for submission, and on the evaluation criteria under which the applications will be reviewed. Potential applicants should read this section carefully in conjunction with the information provided above. The application must contain the required Federal forms, title page, table of contents, and the sections

listed below. All pages of the narrative should be numbered.

The application should include the following elements:

1. *Abstract:* A one page summary of the proposed project.

2. *Goals and objective of the project:* An overview that describes (1) the project, (2) the specific research questions to be investigated, (3) proposed accomplishments, and (4) knowledge and information to be gained from the project by the applicant, the government, and the research community. If the applicant is also applying for a grant to study the outcomes of welfare reform on Food Stamp Program leavers through the Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, then the applicant should specify here how the two activities would be coordinated. If the planned project builds on any current project, the application should describe how funding under this announcement will enhance, not substitute for, current state or local efforts.

3. *Methodology and Design:* Provide a description and justification of how the proposed research project will be implemented, including methodologies, chosen approach, data sources, and a research plan consistent with a descriptive, tabular analysis. The proposed research plan should:

(a) Describe in detail how the applicant plans to define welfare leavers, families who apply for cash welfare but are never enrolled because of non-financial eligibility requirements or diversion programs, and/or families who appear to be eligible but are not enrolled.

(b) Identify how the proposed datasets and variables will be used by the Grantee to answer each of the research questions described in the proposal.

(c) Identify important questions/issues for which data currently are not available, and strategies for dealing with this lack of data when it pertains to the research questions in the proposal.

(d) Describe in detail the methodology the applicant will use to extract samples of all families who leave the TANF program, families who apply for cash welfare but are never enrolled because of non-financial eligibility requirements or diversion programs, and/or families who appear to be eligible but are not enrolled. Applicants are encouraged to use a full population sample, but at minimum, a successful application will use a scientifically acceptable probability sampling method in which every sampling unit in the population has a known, non-zero chance to be included in the sample and a sample size large enough to make statistically reliable comparisons between planned subgroups.

(e) If administrative data-linking is planned, describe the criteria for the selection of existing data sets, as well as the methods used to clean, standardize and link the case level data from the different sources. Applicants should discuss thoroughly how they intend to match case records from different data sources, and what internal validity checks will ensure the accuracy of the matches. The architecture for the resulting data set should also be discussed in detail.

(f) If survey data collection is planned, identify and describe the methodology used to gather survey data. In particular, identify the sampling plan, the survey mode (e.g. telephone, in-person, mail), and the steps that will be taken to address any biases inherent in each. This should include steps planned to ensure a high response rate, such as a mixed mode design, multiple attempts to contact sample members, or respondent payments. Because of the importance of a high response rate in ensuring reliability, these procedures will be an important part of the evaluation of proposals.

(g) If qualitative research or focus groups are planned, the application should include a complete plan for data collection procedures and analysis, including the planned composition of groups, planned discussion topics or facilitator's questions, a plan for summarizing and organizing the results, and what this part of the project is expected to add to the interim and final reports. The application should demonstrate a familiarity with the difficulties and potential biases of this approach, and plans to avoid or resolve them.

(h) Identify the methodology the Grantee will use to analyze the data and organize the interim and final reports. Complex data analysis is neither expected nor preferred. Simple tabular analysis and descriptive statistics are appropriate. The description should include subgroup analyses planned, report organization and proposed tabulations, including table shells illustrating how the results will be presented.

To the extent that the analysis uses data on individuals from multiple, separate sources, such as administrative databases from several State agencies, the proposal should discuss measures taken to maintain confidentiality, as well as demonstrate that the Grantee has obtained authorized access to those data sources. The preferred form of proof is a signed interagency agreement with each of the relevant agencies/departments. Though not preferable, letters of support from the appropriate agencies are acceptable, provided that the letter clearly states that the proposing agency has the authorization to access and link all necessary data. Applicants must assure that the collected data will only be used for management and research purposes, and that all identifying information will be kept completely confidential, and should present the methods that will be used to ensure confidentiality of records and information once data are made available for research purposes.

4. *Experience, capacity, qualifications, and use of staff:* Briefly describe the applicant's organizational capabilities and experience in conducting pertinent research projects. If the proposal involves linking administrative databases from multiple programs the proposal should detail the applicant's experience in conducting relevant projects using linked administrative program data or identify key subcontractors with such experience. If the proposal involves survey work, the proposal should describe the applicant's experience in conducting relevant surveys or identify key subcontractors with such experience. Similarly, if the proposal involves qualitative data collection or analysis, the experience of the applicant or key subcontractors with this type of research and with these populations must be described in detail. If the applicant plans to contract for any of the work (e.g. data-linking, survey design or administration, qualitative analysis), and the contractors have not been retained, describe the process by which they will be selected. Identify the key staff who are expected to carry out the project and provide a résumé or curriculum vitae for each person. Provide a discussion of how key staff will contribute to the success of the project, including the percentage of their time which will be devoted to the project.

Applicants should demonstrate access to computer hardware and software for storing and analyzing the data necessary to complete this project.

5. *Work plan:* A work plan should be included which describes the start and end dates of the project, the responsibilities of each of the key staff, and a time line which indicates the sequence of tasks necessary for the completion of the project. It should identify other time commitments of key staff members such as other projects and/or teaching or managerial responsibilities in absolute and percentage terms. The work plan should

include a discussion of plans for dissemination of the results of the study, e.g., articles in journals and presentations to the State legislature or at conferences. It should also discuss in detail how resulting data and analysis will be made available to qualified researchers and to ASPE. As noted above, ASPE prefers that the data be edited as appropriate for confidentiality and issued as a public-use data file. If the applicant believes that provision of a public-use file would be impossible, the application should explain why and should fully articulate how the applicant will make the data available to qualified researchers and to ASPE.

6. *Budget:* Applicants must submit a request for federal funds using Standard Form 424A and include a detailed breakdown of all Federal line items. A narrative explanation of the budget should be included which explains fund usage in more detail. The applicant should clearly state how the funds associated with this announcement will be used and describe the extent to which these funds will be used for purposes that would not otherwise be incorporated within the project. The applicant should also document the level of funding from other sources, if any, and describe how these funds will be utilized.

All applicants must budget for two trips to the Washington, D.C., area, for at least two people on each trip. As part of this grant, ASPE will schedule one to two meetings for all funded projects. The first meeting will be for planning purposes, where applicants will have the opportunity to meet, discuss their projects, and receive feedback from both the other Grantees and from ASPE staff and invited experts. This meeting will occur not more than 60 days after the proposals are funded. The second meeting will be approximately 6 to 8 months into the grant period, and will provide Grantees the ability to meet and discuss their progress to date, and assess and receive assistance with any problems that have arisen.

Optional PD&R supplement: Applicants who wish to be considered for the PD&R supplement should attach an appendix to the main proposal. The appendix must contain a proposal to analyze the experience of families assisted by the different HUD programs relative to families not assisted and relative to each other, using state agency files matched with the file provided by HUD. The supplementary proposal should identify the subsets of low-income families with children in the state that the applicant considers of greatest policy interest. The elements of this supplementary proposal should be the same as the elements of the main proposal, i.e., abstract; goals and objectives; methodology and design; experience, capacity, qualifications, and use of staff; work plan; and budget.

Review Process and Funding Information

Applications will be initially screened for compliance with the timeliness and completeness requirements. Three (3) copies of each application are required. One of these copies must be in an unbound format, suitable for copying. If only one of the copies is the original (i.e. carries the original signature and is accompanied by a cover letter) it should not be this copy.

A Federal panel will review and score all applications that are submitted by the deadline date and which meet the screening criteria (all information and documents as required by this Announcement.) The panel will review the applications using the evaluation criteria listed below to score each application. These review results will be the primary element used by the ASPE in making funding decisions. The Department reserves the option to discuss applications with other Federal or State staff, specialists, experts and the general public. Comments from these sources, along with those of the reviewers, will be kept from inappropriate disclosure and may be considered in making an award decision.

As a result of this competition, between 8 and 10 grants are expected to be made from funds appropriated for fiscal year 1998. Additional awards may be made depending on the policy relevance of proposals received and the available funding, including funds that may become available in FY99. The Department reserves the right to make fewer awards. The average grant is expected to be between $200,000 and $250,000.

After ASPE has decided to fund a proposal from a particular state, PD&R will decide whether to fund the optional proposal related to HUD-assisted families, if there is one. In making this determination, PD&R will use all of the criteria listed below except item 5 (ability to sustain project after funding).

Reports

As noted in the Grantee Responsibilities, three substantive reports are required under the grant. (1) A final work plan is due 30 days after the initial consultation meeting. (2) An interim report including initial results, if any, and a plan for any further data collection and analysis is due 90 days later. (3) A final report including all results and analysis is due before the end of the project.

In addition, Grantees shall provide concise quarterly progress reports. The specific format and content for these reports will be provided by the project officer.

State Single Point of Contact (E.O. No. 12372)

DHHS has determined that this program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, ''Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.'' Applicants are not required to seek intergovernmental review of their applications within the constraints of E.O. 12372.

Deadline for Submission of Applications

The closing date for submission of applications under this announcement is July 6, 1998. Hand-delivered applications will be accepted Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays during the working hours of 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the lobby of the Hubert H. Humphrey building located at 200 Independence Avenue, SW in Washington, D.C. When hand-delivering an application, call (202) 690–8794 from the lobby for pick up. A staff person will be available to receive applications. Application submissions may not be faxed or submitted electronically.

An application will be considered as meeting the deadline if it is either (1) received at, or hand-delivered to, the mailing address on or before July 6, 1998, or (2) postmarked before midnight five days prior to July 6, 1998 and received in time to be considered during the competitive review process (within two weeks of the deadline date).

When mailing applications, applicants are strongly advised to obtain a legibly dated receipt from a commercial carrier (such as UPS, Federal Express, etc.) or from the U.S. Postal Service as proof of mailing by the deadline date. If there is a question as to when an application was mailed, applicants will be asked to provide proof of mailing by the deadline date. When proof is not provided, an application will not be considered for funding. Private metered postmarks are not acceptable as proof of timely mailing.

Applications which do not meet the deadline will be considered late applications and will not be considered or reviewed in the current competition. DHHS will send a letter to this effect to each late applicant.

DHHS reserves the right to extend the deadline for all proposals due to natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes, or

earthquakes; or if there is a widespread disruption of the mail; or if DHHS determines a deadline extension to be in the best interest of the government. However, DHHS will not waive or extend the deadline for any applicant unless the deadline is waived or extended for all applicants.

Application Forms

Copies of applications should be requested from and submitted to: Grants Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 405F, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, D.C. 20201, Telephone: (202) 690–8794. Requests for forms and questions (administrative and technical) will be accepted and responded to up to 10 working days prior to closing date of receipt of applications.

Copies of this program announcement and many of the required forms may also be obtained electronically at the ASPE World Wide Web Page *http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov*. You may fax your request to (202) 690–6518 to the attention of the Grants Officer. Application submissions may not be faxed or sent electronically.

The printed **Federal Register** notice is the only official program announcement. Although reasonable efforts are taken to assure that the files on the ASPE World Wide Web Page containing electronic copies of this Program Announcement are accurate and complete, they are provided for information only. The applicant bears sole responsibility to assure that the copy downloaded and/or printed from any other source is accurate and complete.

Also see section entitled ''Components of a Complete Application.'' All of these documents must accompany the application package.

Length of Application

Applications should be as brief as possible but should assure successful communication of the applicant's proposal to the reviewers. In no case shall an application for the primary ASPE grant (excluding the resumes, appendices and other appropriate attachments) be longer than 30 single spaced pages. Applications should be neither unduly elaborate nor contain voluminous supporting documentation. Applications for the supplemental PD&R grant should be no longer than 12 single-spaced pages, and should make frequent reference to the primary application for purposes of brevity.

Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria

Selection of the successful applicant will be based on the technical and financial criteria described in this announcement. Reviewers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each application in terms of the evaluation criteria listed below, provide comments and assign numerical scores. The review panel will prepare a summary of all applicant scores and strengths/weaknesses and recommendations and submit it to the ASPE for final decisions on the award.

The point value following each criterion heading indicates the maximum numerical weight that each section will be given in the review process. An unacceptable rating on any individual criterion may render the application unacceptable. Consequently, applicants should take care to ensure that all criteria are fully addressed in the applications. Applications will be reviewed as follows:

1. *Goals, Objectives, and Potential Usefulness of the Analyses* (25 points). The potential usefulness of the objectives and how the anticipated results of the proposed project will advance policy knowledge and development. If the proposed project builds on previous work the application should explain how. Applications will be judged on the quality and policy relevance of the proposed questions. Applications which do not address employment and earnings factors will not be considered fundable.

2. *Quality and Soundness of Methodology and Design* (30 points). The appropriateness, soundness, and cost-effectiveness of the methodology, including the research design, selection of existing data sets, data gathering procedures, statistical techniques, and analytical strategies. Richness of policy relevant data will be an important scoring factor in this criterion.

If administrative data-linking is planned, a critical scoring element will be the proposal's discussion of the methods used to clean, standardize and link the case level data from the different sources, including any proposed links between administrative data and surveys. Applicants should discuss thoroughly how they intend to match case records from different data sources, and what internal validity checks will ensure the accuracy of the matches. The architecture for the resulting data set should also be discussed thoroughly. Other design considerations include whether the agency applying has already obtained authorization to obtain and use data from the state or local agencies whose data would be linked, and how confidentiality of the records and information will be ensured. If applicants are unable to ensure the security of information included in the project, then it is highly unlikely that they will receive funding.

If survey data collection is planned, reviewers will evaluate the methodology proposed to gather survey data. In particular, reviewers will evaluate the sampling plan, the survey mode (e.g. telephone, in-person, mail), and the steps that will be taken to address any biases inherent in each. This will include evaluating steps planned to ensure a high response rate, such as a mixed mode design, multiple attempts to contact sample members, or respondent payments. Because of the importance of a high response rate in ensuring reliability, these procedures will be an important part of the evaluation of proposals containing surveys.

If qualitative research or focus groups are planned, reviewers will evaluate the plan for data collection and analysis, including the planned composition of groups, planned discussion topics or facilitator's questions, a plan for summarizing and organizing the results, and what this part of the project is expected to add to the interim and final reports. The extent to which the application demonstrates a familiarity with the difficulties and potential biases of this approach, and plans to avoid or resolve them, will also be a scoring factor.

3. *Qualifications of Personnel and Organizational Capability*. (20 points). The qualifications of the project personnel for conducting the proposed research as evidenced by professional training and experience, and the capacity of the organization to provide the infrastructure and support necessary for the project. Reviewers will evaluate the applicant's principal investigator and staff on research experience and demonstrated research skills. Proposals which involve linking of administrative data and assembling of large databases will also be evaluated in terms of the experience of the applicant's or subcontractor's experience with such linking efforts. Proposals which involve survey work will be evaluated in terms of the applicant's or subcontractor's's experience in conducting relevant surveys. Similarly, if the proposal involves qualitative data collection or analysis, it will be evaluated in terms of the experience of the applicant or key subcontractors with this type of research and with these populations. If the applicant plans to contract for any of the

work (e.g. data-linking, survey design or administration, qualitative analysis), and the contractors have not been retained, reviewers will consider the process by which they will be selected. Ratings may consider references on prior research projects. Principal investigator and staff time commitments also will be a factor in the evaluation. Reviewers will rate the applicant's pledge and ability to work in collaboration with other scholars or organizations in search of similar goals. Reviewers also will evaluate the applicant's demonstrated capacity to work with a range of government agencies.

4. *Ability of the Work Plan and Budget to Successfully Achieve the Project's Objectives.* (20 points). Reviewers will examine if the work plan and budget are reasonable and sufficient to ensure timely implementation and completion of the study and whether the application demonstrates an adequate level of understanding by the applicant of the practical problems of conducting such a project. Adherence to the work plan is particularly important because it is necessary in order to produce results in the time frame desired; demonstration of an applicant's ability to meet the schedule will be an important part of this criterion. Reviewers will also examine the use of any additional funding and the role that funds provided under this announcement will play in the overall project. The proposed strategy for dissemination of analysis results and data will also be considered. It should also discuss in detail how resulting data will be made available to qualified researchers and to ASPE. As noted above, ASPE prefers that the data be edited as appropriate for confidentiality and issued as a public-use data file. If the applicant believes that provision of a public-use file would be impossible, the application should explain why and should fully articulate how the applicant will make the data available to qualified researchers and to ASPE.

5. *Ability to Sustain Project After Funding* (5 points). Reviewers will consider whether the proposal adequately addresses the following questions: How will the tracking of outcomes for these populations become an institutionalized function within the agency once the grant funding expires? Where will the newly created data set reside? What agency(ies) will have responsibility for and jurisdiction over the resulting data? What are the sources of financial and staff support for maintaining the database? How will the data be used for future policy planning, research and evaluation?

Disposition of Applications

1. *Approval, disapproval, or deferral.* On the basis of the review of the application, the Assistant Secretary will either (a) approve the application as a whole or in part; (b) disapprove the application; or (c) defer action on the application for such reasons as lack of funds or a need for further review.

2. *Notification of disposition.* The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation will notify the applicants of the disposition of their applications. If approved, a signed notification of the award will be sent to the business office named in the ASPE checklist.

3. *The Assistant Secretary's Discretion.* Nothing in this announcement should be construed as to obligate the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation to make any awards whatsoever. Awards and the distribution of awards among the priority areas are contingent on the needs of the Department at any point in time and the quality of the applications which are received.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number is 93–239.

Components of a Complete Application

A complete application consists of the following items in this order:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424);
2. Budget Information—Non-construction Programs (Standard Form 424A);
3. Assurances—Non-construction Programs (Standard From 424B);
4. Table of Contents;
5. Budget Justification for Section B Budget Categories;
6. Proof of Non-profit Status, if appropriate;
7. Copy of the applicant's Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if necessary;
8. Project Narrative Statement, organized in five sections addressing the following topics:
(a) Abstract,
(b) Goals, Objectives and Usefulness of the Project,
(c) Methodology and design,
(d) Background of the Personnel and Organizational Capabilities and
(e) Work plan (timetable);
9. Any appendices or attachments;
10. Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace;
11. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, or other Responsibility Matters;
12. Certification and, if necessary, Disclosure Regarding Lobbying;
13. Supplement to Section II—Key Personnel;
14. Application for Federal Assistance Checklist.

Dated: May 13, 1998.

Margaret A. Hamburg,

Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Program Announcement 98090]

Evaluation of Health-Care Worker Glove Protection During Surgery and Effects of Storage, Chemicals, Disinfectants on Glove Integrity; Availability of Funds

A. Purpose

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announces the availability of fiscal year (FY) 1998 funds for a cooperative agreement program for the evaluation of health-care worker glove protection during surgery and the effects of storage, chemicals, and disinfectants on glove integrity. This program addresses the ''Healthy People 2000'' priority area(s) area of Occupational Safety and Health.

The purpose of the program is to evaluate gloves (non-latex polymer e.g., nitrile, vs natural latex rubber (NLR)) in surgery; (veterinary surgery is suggested as a surrogate for human surgery) and to evaluate the effects of storage conditions, disinfectants, detergents, other chemicals, and blood and body fat on vinyl, NLR, and non-latex polymer examination gloves and latex and non-latex polymer surgical gloves.

B. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by public and private nonprofit and for-profit organizations and by governments and their agencies; that is, universities, colleges, research institutions, hospitals, other public and private nonprofit and for-profit organizations, State and local governments or their bona fide agents.

Note: Pub. L. 104–65 states that an organization described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to receive Federal funds constituting an award, grant, cooperative agreement, contract, loan, or any other form.

C. Availability of Funds

Approximately $600,000 is available in FY 1998 to fund approximately three awards, preferably at least one in each category (A and B). It is expected that