

Dated: July 30, 1998.

**John K. Rabiej,**

Chief, Rules Committees Support Office.

[FR Doc. 98-20917 Filed 8-4-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

### Civil Rights Division

#### Agency Information Collection Activities: Extension of a Currently Approved Collection; Comment Request

**ACTION:** Notice of information collection under review; Extension of a currently approved collection; Procedures for the administration of section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, has submitted the following information collection request utilizing emergency review procedures, to OMB for review and clearance in accordance with the 5 CFR 1320.13(a)(1)(ii) and (a)(2)(iii) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The Civil Rights Division has determined that it cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance procedures under this part of the Act because normal clearance procedures are reasonable likely to prevent or disrupt the collection of information.

The information collection is now published to obtain comments from the public and affected agencies. OMB approval has been requested by July 31, 1998. If granted, the emergency approval is only valid for 180 days.

Comments and questions about the emergency information collection request listed below should be forwarded to OMB, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Department of Justice Desk Officer, Washington, DC 20530.

During the first 60 days of this same period a regular review of this information collection is also being undertaken. Comments are encouraged and will be accepted until October 5, 1998. Written comments and suggestions from the public and affected agencies concerning the proposed collection of information should address one or more of the following four points:

1. Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

2. Evaluate the accuracy of the agencies estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

3. Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

4. Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Additionally, comments may also be submitted to the Department of Justice (DOJ), Justice Management Division, Information Management and Security Staff, Attention: Department Clearance Officer, Suite 850, Washington Center, 1001 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20530.

Overview of this information collection:

1. *Type of Information Collection:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

2. *Title of the Form/Collection:* Procedures for the Administration of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

3. Agency form number and applicable component. Form Number = None. Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice.

4. Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as a brief abstract. *Primary:* State, Local, and Trial Government. *Other:* None. Jurisdictions covered under the Voting Rights Act are required to obtain preclearance from the Attorney General (AG) before instituting changes affecting voting. They must convince the AG that voting changes are not racially discriminatory. The procedures facilitate that provision of information that will enable the AG to make the required determination.

5. *An estimate of the total number of respondents and the amount of time estimated for the average respondent to respond:* 10,103 respondents with the average response at 10.021 hours.

6. *An estimate of the total public burden (in hours) associated with the collection:* 47,365 annual burden hours.

If additional information is required contact: Mr. Robert B. Briggs, Department Clearance Officer, Department of Justice (DOJ), Justice Management Division, Information Management and Security Staff, Suite 850, Washington Center, 1001 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20530.

Public comment on this proposed information collection is strongly encouraged.

Dated: July 30, 1998.

**Robert B. Briggs,**

Department Clearance Officer, United States Department of Justice.

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## DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

### National Institute of Justice

[OJP(NIJ)-1189]

RIN 1121-ZB26

#### Announcement of the Availability of the National Institute of Justice Solicitation for "Forensic Document Examination Validation Studies"

**AGENCY:** Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, Justice.

**ACTION:** Notice of solicitation.

**SUMMARY:** Announcement of the availability of the National Institute of Justice solicitation for "Forensic Document Examination Validation Studies."

**DATES:** Due date for receipt of proposals is close of business August 14, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** National Institute of Justice, 810 Seventh Street, NW, Washington, DC 20531.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For a copy of the solicitation, please call NCJRS 1-800-851-3420. For general information about application procedures for solicitations, please call the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center 1-800-421-6770.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Authority

This action is authorized under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, §§ 201-03, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 3721-23 (1994).

##### Background

The National Institute of Justice calls for proposals to determine the scientific validity of handwriting identification. Two major areas of research will be required for each proposal:

(A) Statistical validation of individuality in handwriting—application should include projected data set, measurement tools, statistical analysis;

(B) statistical validation of standard operating procedures for handwriting comparison—application should include projected data set, Standard Operating Procedures, experimental designs, and statistical analysis.

Interested organizations should call the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) at 1-800-851-3420 to