

**Re: Church World Service Public Comment on the Proposed Information Collection Activity;
Office of Refugee Resettlement Annual Survey of Refugees (Office of Management and Budget
#0970-0033)**

Church World Service submits this comment in response to the Proposed Information Collection Activity regarding the Office of Refugee Resettlement Annual Survey of Refugees, published in the Federal Register on June 1st, 2023. The information gathered through the Administration for Children and Families' survey of refugee households is valuable and would have even greater practical utility if published more expeditiously after the data is gathered.

Church World Service (CWS) is a 77-year old humanitarian organization that serves as one of the ten agencies resettling and supporting refugees across the country. In the U.S., CWS also provides home study and post release services for unaccompanied children, as well as asylum and border services.

The data provided by the Annual Survey of Refugees has unique practical utility because it offers an overview of key elements of refugees' lives up to five years after their entrance to the U.S., which is a significantly longer time scale than other available data on refugees in the U.S. The information in the survey is valuable because it helps CWS provide more responsive, effective, and long-term services and care to the refugees we resettle and because it supports our advocacy and education efforts about the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. The survey includes data on rates of access to health coverage and employment – as well as barriers to accessing employment – information that provides crucial context on refugees' lives and the possibilities for removing obstacles to their successful integration.

The unique value of this data would be significantly greater if the report were released more quickly after data collection. The survey provides valuable information on various aspects of refugees' lived experiences in their first five years in the U.S. However, the most recent publicly available report references data that was gathered in 2019, which makes it less viable for use as relevant evidence of the importance of USRAP's work or to understand challenges that need to be addressed. More timely release of the data would improve its utility as a tool to advocate for refugees and offer effective services to meet their needs.

Finally, as a refugee resettlement agency that provides direct services to refugees nationwide, CWS would appreciate the opportunity to offer input on the contents of future Annual Survey of Refugees questionnaires to promote the collection of data that is informed by service providers and policy experts.

CWS encourages the Administration for Children and Families to continue the important data gathering that takes place in the Annual Survey of Refugees, publish the data more quickly, and consult with CWS on the creation of its questionnaires in future years.