

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Sandra M. Peay or Parcellena P. Fielding, Contact Representative, Federal Trade Commission, Premerger Notification Office, Bureau of Competition, Room 303, Washington, D.C. 20580, (202) 326-3100.

By Direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark,  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-27939 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6750-01-M

## **GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

### **Federal Acquisition Policy Division, FAR Secretariat; Stocking Change of a Standard Form**

**AGENCY:** General Services Administration.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The General Services Administration/FAR Secretariat is changing the stocking of the following Standard form because of low user demand:

SF 1420, Performance Evaluation—Contracts

Since this form is now authorized for local reproduction, you can obtain the updated camera copy in two ways:

On the internet. Address: <http://www.gsa.gov/forms>, or;

From CARM, Attn.: Barbara Williams, (202) 501-0581.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** FAR Secretariat, (202) 501-4755.

**DATES:** Effective October 31, 1996.

Dated: October 7, 1996.

Theodore D. Freed,

*Standard and Optional Forms Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 96-27932 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820-34-M

### **Office of Acquisition Policy, FAR Secretariat; Creation and Stocking of Standard Form, SF 1448, Proposal Cover Sheet**

**AGENCY:** General Services Administration.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The General Services Administration/Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council issued Standard Form, SF 1448, Proposal Cover Sheet.

This form is authorized for local reproduction. You can obtain the camera copy in two ways:

On the internet. Address: <http://www.gsa.gov/forms>, or;

From CARM, Attn.: Barbara Williams, (202) 501-0581.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Mr. Jerry Olson, General Services Administration, (202) 501-3221. This contact is for information on completing the form and interpreting the FAR only.

**DATES:** Effective October 31, 1996.

Dated: October 2, 1996.

Barbara Williams,

*Deputy Standard and Optional Forms Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 96-27933 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

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## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

### **Administration for Children and Families**

#### **Administration of Native Americans**

[Program Announcement 93612-972]

#### **ANA Environmental Mitigation Program Announcement; Extension of Closing Date for Submittal of Applications**

**AGENCY:** Administration for Native Americans (ANA); Administration for Children and Families (ACF); Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

**ACTION:** Extension of closing date for submittal of applications under the ANA Environmental Mitigation program announcement cited above.

**SUMMARY:** On September 5, 1996, the Administration for Native Americans published a program announcement in the Federal Register (61 FR 46994).

This program announcement solicited applications from eligible applicants to address environmental problems and impacts caused by Department of Defense (DOD) activities to Indian lands. The closing date under this program announcement for submittal of applications is November 8, 1996.

ANA has determined based upon interest being generated by potential eligible applicants under this program announcement that insufficient time is allowed for potential applicants to prepare applications for submittal to ANA to address these environmental

problems and impacts to Indian lands due to DOD activities.

Therefore, ANA will extend the due date for submission of applications under the aforementioned program announcement until March 27, 1997.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 93.612 Native American Programs)

Dated: October 16, 1996.

Martin Koenig,

*Deputy Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans.*

[FR Doc. 96-27979 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4184-01-M

### **Requirements for Group Health Plans for Certain State and Local Government Employees—COBRA Continuation Coverage**

**AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice contains information about the recently enacted amendments to Title XXII of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act. Title XXII requires that certain State and local government employers provide certain individuals and their family members the opportunity to continue health care coverage under a group health plan in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise be terminated. Under the amendments, the group health plans maintained by these employers are required to provide to employees who have elected continuation coverage notice of the changes to the statute by November 1, 1996.

**DATES:** Section 421 of Public Law 104-191, "COBRA Clarifications," enacted amendments which will become effective on January 1, 1997, regardless of when the qualifying event (the event that leads to eligibility for COBRA continuation coverage) occurred.

See section 421(d), "Effective Date." Also, section 421(e), "Notification of Changes," requires that, no later than November 1, 1996, each group health plan covered under Title XXII of the PHS Act shall notify each qualified beneficiary who has elected continuation coverage of the amendments made by this section.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** David Benor, Senior Attorney, Office of the General Counsel, Room 4A-53, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857. Telephone: (301) 443-2006.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On August 21, 1996, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) was signed into law (Pub. L. 104-191). Section 421 of HIPAA makes changes, described below, to three areas in the continuation coverage rules applicable to group health plans under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA), as amended. These three areas relate to the disability extension, the definition of qualified beneficiary and the duration of COBRA continuation coverage. These changes are effective beginning January 1, 1997, regardless of when the event occurs that entitles an individual to COBRA continuation coverage.

Section 421(e) of HIPAA requires group health plans that are subject to COBRA to notify, by November 1, 1996, individuals who have elected COBRA continuation coverage of these changes. The Department is issuing this notice to apprise State and local government employers and plan administrators of the changes in the continuation coverage rules made by HIPAA and to inform them of their obligation under HIPAA to notify qualified beneficiaries of such changes. Such notification must be given by November 1, 1996, to each qualified beneficiary who has elected continuation coverage. The following is a discussion of the specific changes in the continuation coverage rules made by HIPAA.

#### Disability Extension

Under current law, if an individual is entitled to COBRA continuation coverage because of a termination of employment or reduction in hours of employment, the plan generally is only required to make COBRA continuation coverage available to that individual for 18 months. However, if the individual entitled to the COBRA continuation coverage is disabled (as determined under the Social Security Act) and satisfies the applicable notice requirements, the plan must provide COBRA continuation coverage for 29 months, rather than 18 months. Under current law, the individual must be disabled at the time of the termination of employment or reduction in hours of employment. HIPAA makes changes to the current law to provide that, beginning January 1, 1997, the disability extension will also apply if the individual becomes disabled at any time during the first 60 days of COBRA continuation coverage. HIPAA also makes it clear that, if the individual entitled to the disability extension has non-disabled family members who are

entitled to COBRA continuation coverage, those non-disabled family members are also entitled to the 29 month extended period of coverage.

#### Definition of Qualified Beneficiary

Individuals entitled to COBRA continuation coverage are called qualified beneficiaries. Individuals who may be qualified beneficiaries are the spouse and dependent children of a covered employee and, in certain cases, the covered employee. Under current law, in order to be a qualified beneficiary an individual must generally be covered under a group health plan on the day before the event that causes a loss of coverage (such as a termination of employment, or a divorce from or death of the covered employee). HIPAA changes this requirement so that a child who is born to the covered employee, or who is placed for adoption with the covered employee, during a period of COBRA continuation coverage is also a qualified beneficiary.

#### Duration of COBRA Coverage

Under the COBRA rules there are situations in which a group health plan may stop making continuation coverage available earlier than usually permitted. One of those situations is where the qualified beneficiary obtains coverage under another group health plan. Under current law, if the other group health plan limits or excludes coverage for any preexisting condition of the qualified beneficiary, the plan providing the COBRA continuation coverage cannot stop making the COBRA continuation coverage available merely because of the coverage under the other group health plan. HIPAA makes a coordinating change to the COBRA rules so that if a group health plan limits or excludes benefits for preexisting conditions but because of the new HIPAA rules those limits or exclusions would not apply to (or would be satisfied by) an individual receiving COBRA continuation coverage, then the plan providing the COBRA continuation coverage can stop making the COBRA continuation coverage available. The HIPAA rules limiting the applicability of exclusions for preexisting conditions become effective in plan years beginning on or after July 1, 1997 (or later for certain plans maintained pursuant to one or more collective bargaining agreements).

#### Notice to Employees

As indicated above, group health plans maintained by State and local government employers subject to Title XXII of the PHS Act are required to notify their qualified beneficiaries who have elected continuation coverage of

the amendments described above. This notice is required to be given by November 1, 1996. This Department believes that supplying qualified beneficiaries with the information set forth above (or with a copy of this notice) would constitute compliance with the notice requirement of section 421(e) of HIPAA if this information is sent to each qualified beneficiary who has elected continuation coverage by first class mail at the last known address of the qualified beneficiary by November 12, 1996.

This Department published a notice in the Federal Register on January 7, 1987, setting forth guidance on the Title XXII requirements. 52 FR 604-606. Included as an appendix to that notice was a model statement that covered employers (or the group health plans they maintain) could provide their employees about their continuation coverage rights. We also urge these employers to modify the general notice regarding continuation coverage rights to make it consistent with the HIPAA amendments. As provided in section 2206 of the PHS Act, the group health plan maintained by these employers must provide such notice to their employees at the time of commencement of coverage under the plan; in addition, the employer, the employee, and the plan administrator have certain other notice requirements related to specific qualifying events.

Dated: October 25, 1996.

Donna E. Shalala,  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-27964 Filed 10-29-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4150-04-M

#### Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. 96N-0287]

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is announcing that the proposed collection of information listed below has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Submit written comments on the collection of information by December 2, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments on the collection of information to the