Addressing Administrative Burden in the Supplemental Security Income Program

Pamela Herd
Georgetown University
Distinguished Professor of Public Policy
Administrative Burden

• The experience of difficult interactions with the state, such as trying to access benefits.

• Learning, Compliance, and Psychological Costs
Burdens in SSI: Learning Costs

- Awareness of the program
Burdens in SSI: Compliance Costs

• Access to field offices
• Proving disability (for non-aged)
• Complicated application (especially asset documentation)
Biden Administration has made Reducing Burdens a Priority
Reducing administrative burden in government

Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government

DECEMBER 13, 2021 • PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

Through its Equity Learning Community, OMB has developed resources to guide agencies on how to begin to consider reducing administrative burden as a key tool to improve equity and experience for all Americans. Preliminary considerations are outlined in the table below. In some cases, there may be a strong body of evidence and research to support a particular means of easing burden. In other cases, agencies may need to undertake research and evaluation in order to identify whether particular strategies are effective means of easing burdens while also maintaining program integrity.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Opportunity Area to Improve Equity</th>
<th>Known Burden Drivers</th>
<th>Potential Solutions</th>
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| Reducing form complexity and improving comprehensibility | • Lengthy forms and instructions driven by legal design requirements.  
• Questions that cannot be answered based purely on an applicant’s own memory or knowledge about themselves.  
• Multiple or supplemental forms during a single application experience. | • Ensure that all instructions and notices are written in plain language and translated into multiple languages.  
• Adopt principles of human-centered design (e.g., early and routine user interviews and A/B testing to continually refine design and language).  
• Provide step-by-step examples of process involved in claiming benefits, |
Solutions:
Documenting Burden
White House takes aim at administrative burdens

AUGUST 13, 2022

The Office of Management and Budget wants agencies to cut down on administrative burdens people have to endure to get government benefits. It's using the 1995 Paperwork Reduction Act to do it.

By Natalie Alms, Staff Writer

The Office of Management and Budget is directing agencies to decrease the time, costs and even psychological burdens that citizens go through when applying for social services programs, tax credits and other government benefits.
Estimating Burden

Burden hours and cost

One of the goals of the PRA is for the federal government to consider and account for the impact on the public when asking for information. This impact is called burden, and includes the value of both the time and the effort required to fulfill a collection along with the financial cost.

The PRA requires that agencies estimate burden to understand what is involved for the public to comply with a request.

Some common burden activities include:

- Reviewing instructions.
- Compiling materials necessary for collection.
- Acquiring, installing, and utilizing technology and systems.
- Adjusting existing ways to comply with previous instructions and requirements.
Solutions: Internal
“beginning to end experience”
Outreach to beneficiaries

- Additional experiments to mine existing potential eligible pool within Social Security to reduce learning costs.
Improve the Application Process : Reducing Compliance Costs

• Reduce documentation requirements, in part by drawing on existing administrative data where possible
• Simplify forms
• Capacity issues at field offices
Solutions: Outsourcing
Outreach: Reducing Learning and Compliance Costs

- Community settings (e.g. non-profits, healthcare settings)
- But you need:
  - Experts in enrollment
  - Incentives for these actors to facilitate enrollment
Executive Order on Transforming Customer Service Experience

• The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs must propose ways to reduce paperwork burdens on the public

• The leaders of 35 “High Impact Service Providers” who engage with the public must designate specific areas for improvement, and report back to OMB each year with results and new targets

• Agencies are required to embed customer improvement efforts into existing strategic planning and performance reporting processes
Outreach

• Cross program linkages
Type of Linkage

- Mandatory
- State or local option
- Pilot or waiver

Automatic
Streamlined
Automatic/streamlined

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SNAP
Pell
LIHEAP
Lifeline
Medicaid
LIS
Conclusions

- Better estimate the costs
- Test possible interventions to improve applications and outreach.
That’s it!