



# Privacy Impact Assessment

for the

## Family Reunification Task Force (FRTF)

DHS Reference No. DHS/ALL/PIA-091

September 8, 2021



Homeland  
Security



## Abstract

On February 2, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14011<sup>1</sup> and ordered the formation of the President's Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families. The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS or the Department) is the Chair and is joined by the Department of State (DoS), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Department of Justice (DOJ) (collectively known as the Task Force). The Executive Order instructs the Task Force to identify and implement comprehensive strategies that will bring families back together, ensuring that the children and parents who were intentionally separated from each other at the United States/Mexico border are provided support. This Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is being conducted to analyze the privacy risks associated with the personally identifiable information (PII) collected as part of this effort and document the mitigation strategies implemented to ensure adequate protection of those individuals' privacy.

## Introduction

The overall reunification process is a multi-Departmental effort of the United States government spearheaded by the Department of Homeland Security and conducted in close coordination with the Departments of State, Health and Human Services, and Justice, and other relevant stakeholders. Each Department member of the Task Force plays a role tied to their respective missions. The Department of Homeland Security is involved with locating families, parole adjudication, travel and application support, reunification services, and legal support services. The Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice are involved with case management and child welfare determinations, reunification services, mental and behavioral health services, and legal support services. The Department of State's purview includes locating families, travel and application support, and reunification services.

In 2017, President Trump's Administration began discussing the separation of parents from their children at the United States-Mexico border as a way to deter unauthorized migration. On April 6, 2018, the Department of Justice formally announced the "Zero-Tolerance Policy," which was implemented through a memorandum to all United States Attorney's Offices along the Southwest border. Under this policy, the Department of Justice would prosecute all referrals of individuals for 8 U.S.C. § 1325 (unauthorized entry), to the extent practicable, even though it meant the separation of parents and children.<sup>2</sup>

On May 5, 2018, based on guidance from the Department of Homeland Security United

<sup>1</sup> See Executive Order 14011, *Establishment of Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families*, 86 Fed. Reg. 8273 (February 5, 2021), available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/05/2021-02562/establishment-of-interagency-task-force-on-the-reunification-of-families>.

<sup>2</sup> See Office of the Attorney General, "Zero-Tolerance for Offenses Under 8 U.S.C. § 1325(a)," (April 6, 2018), available at <https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/1049751/download>.



States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) began to refer an increased number of individuals to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution for entering the United States without authorization, including parents who entered with their minor children. When parents were referred for criminal prosecution under 8 U.S.C. § 1325, they were remanded to the custody of the United States Marshals Service for the duration of their criminal proceedings. Their accompanying children were classified as unaccompanied children (UC) and transferred to the care and custody of the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS-ORR).

No comprehensive, interagency system was in place at the time to track separated parents and their minor children to ensure that families could promptly and successfully be reunited once the parents were released from detention. Further, the Department of Homeland Security did not coordinate with other affected agencies in implementing this policy. The practice of parent-child separations for immigration deterrence was challenged in federal court, and on June 26, 2018, a federal district court ordered the reunification of a certified class of parents with their children.<sup>3</sup> Task Force members are involved in multiple active litigation cases involving separated families. Most of the families are represented in the *Ms. L. v. United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (Ms. L.)* class action lawsuit.

Executive Order 14011 established the Task Force to identify separated children, facilitate reunification with their families, and provide recommendations with respect to associated services and legal requirements necessary to achieve these goals. Executive Order 14011 identifies the Task Force's key functions as the following:

- Identify all children who were separated from their families at the United States-Mexico border between January 20, 2017, and January 20, 2021, as a result of Zero-Tolerance policies or related initiatives;
- Facilitate and enable the reunification of those children with their families; and
- Provide recommendations regarding the provision of additional services and support for the children and their families.

Since its inception, the Task Force has focused on setting up a reliable process to fulfill these three core functions. Part of the Department's role has been to identify the eligible separated children and their parents, which has required the collection and reconciliation of overlapping data sets from multiple federal departments and the non-governmental organization (NGO) community working with these families. Thus, the Department has itself established the Family

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<sup>3</sup> See *Ms. L. v. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement*, 310 F. Supp. 3d 1133, 1139 n.5 (S.D. Cal. 2018).



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Reunification Task Force (FRTF).<sup>4</sup>

As a result of a preliminary injunction in the *Ms. L* case, the United States government was ordered to identify separated parents and children, with parents being the class members. A number of initial identifications occurred through this litigation prior to the establishment of the Task Force. However, the Task Force also needed to reconcile conflicting records, statuses, and terminology between Department of Health and Human Services child data and Department of Homeland Security apprehension data to support further identifications and eventual reunification.

As such, the Family Reunification Task Force has been primarily responsible for collecting and reconciling the necessary data sets to enable identifying the eligible separated children and their parents. Because no comprehensive, interagency system was in place at the time to track separated parents and their minor children, and because initial identifications occurred through litigation prior to the establishment of the Task Force and the Family Reunification Task Force's involvement, pinpointing the best data sets has proven challenging. However, through continued engagement with Task Force partners and other stakeholders, the Family Reunification Task Force and the Task Force have solidified a much better understanding of appropriate data sources and limitations.

In order to identify the bulk of the separated families, the Family Reunification Task Force, with subject matter expertise assistance from the Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS), uses data it receives from the Task Force. This data is the product of an interagency process in which the Department of Health and Human Services identified all of the children in its custody on or within certain dates: 1) those in Department of Health and Human Services custody on June 26, 2018, and 2) those who were no longer in Department of Health and Human Services custody on June 26, 2018, but who had been transferred to Department of Health and Human Services custody after June 31, 2017, and discharged before June 26, 2018.

The Department of Homeland Security then reviewed the data internally. First, United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) examined the records of the children and determined whether they had been separated or had truly not been accompanied by their parent(s) when crossing the border between the United States and Mexico. Next, United States Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) examined the refined list of separations and added additional contextual comments regarding circumstances. Upon receipt of this further refined data set, the Family Reunification Task Force processed the information to de-duplicate children's records, ensuring a data set that contained only one record for each unique child. Fields include the child's,

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<sup>4</sup> The Family Reunification Task Force (FRTF) is used when referring specifically to the work performed by the United States Department of Homeland Security as part of the Task Force and is the focus of this Privacy Impact Assessment.



and in most cases one or more parents', A-number; apprehension/separation date; first and last names; certain custody information; and selected law enforcement sensitive comments that provide additional context about the separation and in some cases reference criminal or medical information.

The Family Reunification Task Force used several additional data sets to incorporate additional information necessary in the Task Force's work; in each case matching records by unique child A-numbers. These additional data sets have included information on expanded and recategorized class members, completed reunifications, and sponsoring relative information as a result of coordination between members of the Task Force, non-governmental organizations, and plaintiffs. The Family Reunification Task Force has also used additional data, including CBP encounter information and returns and ICE removal data, in order to pull additional demographic and operational information about separated children and parents to assist with the identifications.<sup>5</sup> This data set, known as the "Streamlined Data Set," is only available to those Family Reunification Task Force individuals with a need-to-know and maintained in a secure Microsoft Teams channel.<sup>6</sup> The data the Family Reunification Task Force used was originally collected under the following systems of records notices (SORN):

- DHS/USCIS/ICE/CBP-001 Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records;<sup>7</sup>
- DHS/CBP-007 Border Crossing Information;<sup>8</sup>
- DHS/CBP-023 Border Patrol Enforcement Records (BPER);<sup>9</sup>
- DHS/CBP-011 TECS;<sup>10</sup>
- DHS/ICE-011 Criminal Arrest Records and Immigration Enforcement Records (CARIER) System of Records;<sup>11</sup> and
- HHS/SORN 09-80-0329 - ORR Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Records.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> DHS has used this data to report on general patterns of those separated under the Zero Tolerance Policy, as well as provide information on the progress made to date in reunifying the families. The FRTF has also incorporated logistical information related to ongoing reunification efforts, such as whether the Task Force has been in contact with members of families.

<sup>6</sup> The Streamlined Data Set only maintains the necessary data elements for FRTF to adjudicate an individual's eligibility. That process is outlined below.

<sup>7</sup> See DHS/USCIS/ICE/CBP-001 Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records; , 82 Fed. Reg. 43556 (September 18, 2017), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/system-records-notices-sorns>.

<sup>8</sup> See DHS/CBP-007 Border Crossing Information, 81 Fed. Reg. 89957 (December 13, 2016), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/system-records-notices-sorns>.

<sup>9</sup> See DHS/CBP-023 Border Patrol Enforcement Records (BPER), 81 Fed. Reg. 72601 (October 20, 2016), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/system-records-notices-sorns>.

<sup>10</sup> See DHS/CBP-011 TECS, 73 Fed. Reg. 77778 (December 19, 2008), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/system-records-notices-sorns>.

<sup>11</sup> See DHS/ICE-011 Criminal Arrest Records and Immigration Enforcement Records (CARIER) System of Records, 81 Fed. Reg. 72080 (October 19, 2016), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/system-records-notices-sorns>.

<sup>12</sup> See 09-80-0329 ORR Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Records, 81 Fed. Reg. 46682 (August 18, 2016), available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/07/18/2016-16812/privacy-act-of-1974-system-of-records-notice>.



Once these children and families could be identified, the Family Reunification Task Force then focused on facilitating their reunification. The Family Reunification Task Force is leveraging Department of Homeland Security' authority under section 212(d)(5)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) to temporarily allow certain parents and additional family members to enter the United States to facilitate reunification with their children. Parole allows noncitizens who may be inadmissible or otherwise ineligible for admission to enter the United States on a temporary basis. The Secretary of Homeland Security has authority under section 212(d)(5) of the INA to grant parole on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or for significant public benefit. The Secretary also has authority to determine the appropriate length of the parole period. The individuals who may apply for parole are those separated parents and children who were repatriated to their home country post separation, and certain additional family members.

The Family Reunification Task Force worked to remove any potential barriers to the reunification process by eliminating the fee associated with the Form I-131, *Application for Travel Document* (Form I-131). United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the agency responsible for adjudicating parole requests, also waived the Form I-131 signature requirements for separated parents, legal guardians, or children who self-petition for parole into the United States. The Department of Homeland Security is also reusing individuals' previously submitted fingerprints, if available, for submission to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for background check purposes as part of the parole process.<sup>13</sup>

In order to assist with the reunification process, the Department of Homeland Security has entered into an agreement with a non-governmental organization.<sup>14</sup> The non-governmental organization will fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Assist with the parole application process and subsequent actions required for entry into the United States. (e.g., Form I-131);
- Assist with acquiring documentation and subsequent actions required for country exit;
- Assist with forms and subsequent actions required for documentation for entry into the United States;
- Assist with scheduling any necessary appointments (e.g., fingerprint collection, interview) at the beneficiaries' closest Embassy;

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<sup>13</sup> For more information about the parole process that USCIS administers, see U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES, PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE CASE AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS (CAMINO), DHS/USCIS/PIA-051 (2015 and subsequent updates), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/uscis-pias-and-sorns>.

<sup>14</sup> DHS is currently working with the International Organization for Migration. See <https://www.iom.int/>.



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- Initiate pre-reunification plan and travel planning;
- Prepare and book all international travel reservations;
- Provide special assistance request arrangements for transiting from the home country to the United States;
- Provide pre-departure briefing, pre-embarkation health check, and assistance at the airport of departure; and
- Provide beneficiaries with information on post-reunification services.

To facilitate the non-governmental organization's assistance and expedite the reunification process for individuals, the Department of Homeland Security is developing a new website application (Together.gov) which will allow for self-disclosure of the necessary information to start the reunification process. Individuals will submit information directly through Together.gov. Once an individual is determined to be eligible for this process by the Department of Homeland Security through its internal determination process of eligible candidates, the Department of Homeland Security will share the individual's information with the non-governmental organization. The non-governmental organization will then provide a case worker, who will contact the individual or their legal representative, to assist with the reunification process and fulfill the responsibilities listed above.

The public-facing website application, which is being developed with assistance from the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), will employ various cloud-based services (e.g., ServiceNow<sup>15</sup> and Akamai<sup>16</sup> for cloud security and content delivery) to effectively and efficiently manage the receipt, creation, assignment, tracking, and storage of the self-disclosure of the necessary information to start the reunification process. Together.gov is hosted in the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP)-certified cloud and provides accessibility and functionality restrictions to define specific user roles through its ServiceNow infrastructure. Each user role has defined and limited access authority to view and edit data sets by Office of the Chief Information Officer master administrators. Other user roles include:

- Family Reunification Task Force Users – user accounts directly assigned to work on the reunification project. These users will have permission to view and edit any information

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<sup>15</sup> ServiceNow specializes in the delivery of applications to commercial and government customers. It has an array of applications and functionalities that allow for workflow automation and incident management, thus making the management of service requests more efficient. ServiceNow uses its request management function to streamline service delivery for user requests, eliminates the duplication of efforts, ensures information accuracy, and reduces operational costs, all driven by automated workflows, approval rules, and service level agreements.

<sup>16</sup> Akamai cloud security defends against a wide range of multi-vector attacks and boosts resilience against the most complex threats with multi-layer defense across an IT ecosystem.



that is collected through Together.gov. Family Reunification Task Force Users do not have administrative rights over the system; and

- Auditor/Executive – auditor/executive accounts are similar to Office of the Chief Information Officer master administrators but have read-only access. Executive accounts are intended for users who need to monitor progress, compliance, and risk levels.

## **Family Reunification Task Force Workflow**

When an individual submits information through Together.gov, they are notified of their submission via email or text message (whichever the individual chooses as their method of communication). The submission is routed through internal logic to determine if all the appropriate information has been included and whether or not the individual is eligible for the reunification process. To determine an individual's eligibility, the Family Reunification Task Force will use the information the individual submitted through Together.gov and compare it to the Streamlined Data Set. If the individual is determined to be eligible through this initial comparison, the individual's information is shared with the non-governmental organization to further assist the individual with the return and reunification process. This information is sent via encrypted email to the non-governmental organization. The individual also receives another notification via email or text message that they are eligible.

When the initial comparison does not match to the Streamlined Data Set, the Family Reunification Task Force will conduct additional checks in the source system of records to ensure no errors were made and the individual is in fact ineligible. If this secondary check determines the individual is eligible, the individual's information is shared with the non-governmental organization and a notification of eligibility is sent to the individual. If the individual is determined to be ineligible, the individual is sent a notification of ineligibility.

The Department of Homeland Security is also assisting with making travel arrangements for those families eligible for reunification and parole through creation of the Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire. The Department of Homeland Security will use the travel plan information submitted on the Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire to determine the travel path for the individuals, and coordinate with the non-governmental organization to find the appropriate travel path for that individual and any other family members that may be eligible for travel and parole through this initiative.

## **Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs)**

The Privacy Act of 1974<sup>17</sup> articulates concepts of how the federal government should treat individuals and their information and imposes duties upon federal agencies regarding the collection, use, dissemination, and maintenance of personally identifiable information. The

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<sup>17</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 552a.



Homeland Security Act of 2002 Section 222(2) states that the Chief Privacy Officer shall assure that information is handled in full compliance with the fair information practices as set out in the Privacy Act of 1974.<sup>18</sup>

In response to this obligation, the Department of Homeland Security Privacy Office developed a set of Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs) from the underlying concepts of the Privacy Act to encompass the full breadth and diversity of the information and interactions of the Department.<sup>19</sup> The Fair Information Practice Principles account for the nature and purpose of the information being collected in relation to the Department's mission to preserve, protect, and secure the Homeland.

Department of Homeland Security conducts Privacy Impact Assessments on both programs and information technology systems, pursuant to the E-Government Act of 2002, Section 208<sup>20</sup> and the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Section 222.<sup>21</sup> Given that the Family Reunification Task Force is a program rather than a particular information technology system, this PIA is conducted as it relates to the Department of Homeland Security construct of the Fair Information Practice Principles.

## 1. Principle of Transparency

**Principle:** The Department should be transparent and provide notice to the individual regarding its collection, use, dissemination, and maintenance of personally identifiable information. Technologies or systems using personally identifiable information must be described in a SORN and PIA, as appropriate.

Executive Order 14011 established the Task Force and provided notice of its responsibilities. The Department of Homeland Security has also provided a significant amount of information about the Task Force and Family Reunification Task Force on its public-facing website: <https://www.dhs.gov/family-reunification-task-force>. This PIA also provides notice of this effort and the type of information used to fulfill the responsibilities laid out in the Executive Order. The System of Records Notices associated with the original collection of the data and the new collections (i.e., the Together.gov website application and Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire) also provide notice. The Family Reunification Task Force has also developed a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for individuals to reference: <https://www.dhs.gov/family-reunification-task-force>.

The reunification process largely started because of the lawsuit brought forth by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf on these individuals. As a result of the litigation, the

<sup>18</sup> 6 U.S.C. § 142(a)(2).

<sup>19</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, PRIVACY POLICY GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM 2008-01/PRIVACY POLICY DIRECTIVE 140-06, THE FAIR INFORMATION PRACTICE PRINCIPLES: FRAMEWORK FOR PRIVACY POLICY AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (2008), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/privacy-policy-guidance>.

<sup>20</sup> 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note.

<sup>21</sup> 6 U.S.C. § 142.



Department of Homeland Security (and the Task Force as a whole) is required to conduct reunification efforts which involve identification of all affected individuals. While some individuals may not have been part of the litigation, Department of Homeland Security is making every effort to identify all affected individuals and facilitate reunification.

The Family Reunification Task Force has also established Together.gov, which outlines the purpose of the Task Force, qualifications for eligible individuals, and the benefits for those individuals, as well as an online registration portal for individuals to submit an application to determine eligibility. This registration process also includes a Privacy Notice indicating the authority to collect the information, the purpose of collecting the information, how the information may be used and shared, and whether or not providing the information is voluntary. Information on this site is collected directly from individuals, their family members or other representatives, or their legal representation.

The Family Reunification Task Force has also created the Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire to enable the Family Reunification Task Force to assist with travel plans for those individuals who are granted parole. This form also includes a Privacy Notice.

**Privacy Risk:** There is a risk that an individual will not know how their eligibility is being determined.

**Mitigation:** This risk is mitigated. Although the website application and other Family Reunification Task Force materials provided to the public may not go into the level of detail of the types of records checks the Family Reunification Task Force conducts to determine eligibility, this PIA provides a measure of notice. The Website Application will also link to this PIA.

The Privacy Notice on Together.gov and the consents required to be signed by the individual provide information on how the Department of Homeland Security may generally use and share this information.

## 2. Principle of Individual Participation

**Principle:** The Department should involve the individual in the process of using personally identifiable information. The Department should, to the extent practical, seek individual consent for the collection, use, dissemination, and maintenance of personally identifiable information and should provide mechanisms for appropriate access, correction, and redress regarding the Department's use of personally identifiable information.

Through Together.gov and the Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire, the Department of Homeland Security explicitly asks individuals for the information collected. Individuals who are submitting this information have consented to the Department's collection of their personally identifiable information by voluntarily providing it as part of the eligibility application or travel questionnaire. The website application has its own Individual Consent and Waiver section that individuals are required to review and affirmatively certify if they wish to move forward. The other data used as part of the reunification efforts, collected prior to or during the child separation, is



generally collected directly from individuals as well. The System of Record Notices associated with this collection provide additional information about the sources of information that are part of those system of records.

The Task Force's mission is to provide redress to those families that were separated under the Zero-Tolerance Policy. The website application was specifically created to facilitate reunification. For those individuals determined to be eligible, they are linked with the non-governmental organization to assist them through the necessary process to complete reunification. This includes assistance with the parole application process, with forms and subsequent actions required for documentation for exit from home country and entry into the United States, with scheduling and travel planning, and with post-reunification services.

Further, any individual seeking access to or amendment of their records may submit a request in writing to the Department of Homeland Security Chief Privacy and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Officer at the address below, or to the respective Component's FOIA officer, which can be found at <https://www.dhs.gov/foia-contact-information>. The Department of Homeland Security also accepts Privacy Act and FOIA requests submitted electronically at <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-foia-privacy-act-request-submission-form>.

Chief Privacy Officer and Chief Freedom of Information Act Officer  
Privacy Office, Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Additionally, travelers who wish to file for redress can complete an online application through the Department of Homeland Security Traveler Redress Inquiry Program (DHS TRIP) at <https://trip.dhs.gov>, or mail or email a completed copy of DHS Form 591, Travel Inquiry Form (TIF). For more information about the types of services the Department of Homeland Security Traveler Redress Inquiry Program can provide, please visit <https://www.dhs.gov/step-1-should-i-use-dhs-trip>.

### 3. Principle of Purpose Specification

Principle: The Department should specifically articulate the authority which permits the collection of personally identifiable information and specifically articulate the purpose or purposes for which the personally identifiable information is intended to be used.

The information collected, used, and maintained as part of this effort aligns with the requirements of Executive Order 14011, which established the Task Force and outlined its functions. Executive Order 14011 directs that the Task Force shall, consistent with applicable law, perform the following functions:



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- Identify all children who were separated from their families at the United States-Mexico border between January 20, 2017, and January 20, 2021, in connection with the operation of the Zero-Tolerance Policy;
- To the greatest extent possible, facilitate and enable the reunification of each of the identified children with their families by:
  - providing recommendations to heads of agencies concerning the exercise of any agency authorities necessary to reunite the children with their families, including:
    - recommendations regarding the possible exercise of parole under section 212(d)(5)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, as amended (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5)(A)), or the issuance of visas or other immigration benefits, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law;
    - recommendations regarding the provision of additional services and support to the children and their families, including trauma and mental health services; and
    - recommendations regarding reunification of any additional family members of the children who were separated, such as siblings, where there is a compelling humanitarian interest in doing so;
  - providing recommendations to the President concerning the exercise of any Presidential authorities necessary to reunite the children with their families, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law; and
  - for purposes of developing the recommendations described in this subsection, and in particular with respect to recommendations regarding the manner and location of reunification, consulting with the children, their families, representatives of the children and their families, and other stakeholders, and considering the families' preferences and parental rights as well as the children's well-being.

The website application and Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire both include Privacy Act Statements which include the authority that permits the collection of this information: Executive Order 14011 and 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A).



## 4. Principle of Data Minimization

**Principle:** The Department should only collect personally identifiable information that is directly relevant and necessary to accomplish the specified purpose(s) and only retain personally identifiable information for as long as is necessary to fulfill the specified purpose(s). Personally identifiable information should be disposed of in accordance with Department of Homeland Security records disposition schedules as approved by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

The reunification effort is a multi-step process that requires data collection and sharing throughout. The Family Reunification Task Force has worked with data from the Task Force to ensure it has the necessary information to facilitate reunifications.

In order to initially determine the individuals who may be eligible for reunification, the Family Reunification Task Force used information from the following System of Record Notices:

- DHS/USCIS/ICE/CBP-001 Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records;
- DHS/CBP-007 Border Crossing Information;
- DHS/CBP-023 Border Patrol Enforcement Records (BPER);
- DHS/CBP-011 TECS;
- DHS/ICE-011 Criminal Arrest Records and Immigration Enforcement Records (CARIER) System of Records; and
- HHS/SORN 09-80-0329 - ORR Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Records.

The website application Together.gov collects the following information:

- Preparer Email;
- Preparer Phone Number;
- Preparer Relationship to Applicant;
- Preparer Legal Agreement;
- Applicant First, Middle, Last;
- Applicant alias/Nickname;
- Applicant preferred language;
- Applicant A-number;
- Applicant Date of Birth;
- Applicant Relationship to Child;



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- Applicant in Contact with Child;
- Applicant knows Child Location;
- Applicant Physical Address;
- Applicant Country of Citizenship;
- Applicant County of Birth;
- Applicant Email Address;
- Applicant Phone Number; and.
- Applicant consent.

The Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire collects the following information:

- Name;
- Date of Birth;
- Gender;
- A-number;
- Passport Number and Expiration;
- Phone Number;
- Email Address;
- United States Address Location;
- Language(s) spoken;
- Representative/Attorney name and contact information;
- Date of Embassy Appointment to obtain travel document;
- Identification of Special Assistance Requests such as Transportation and Lodging Assistance, Special Needs Assistance (e.g., Wheelchair), Traveling with an Infant/Infant Care assistance, Pre-arranged non-government escort, In-transit Government Arranged Escort, and Reunification Assistance at Airport;
- Departure Airport;
- Final Airport;
- Traveling requested time frame; and
- Names, dates of birth, and citizenship of others in the traveling party.



## **These new collections are covered by:**

- DHS/USCIS/ICE/CBP-001 Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records; and
- DHS/USCIS-007 Benefits Information System.<sup>22</sup>

**Privacy Risk:** There is a risk that the Family Reunification Task Force will maintain information it receives and uses for longer than necessary.

**Mitigation:** This risk is not mitigated. The Family Reunification Task Force currently does not have an approved records retention schedule from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). DHS has proposed records retention DAA-0563-2019-0003: Committees, Task Forces, and Working Groups, to the National Archives and Records Administration for review and approval. Once approved, the proposed schedule will provide retention and disposition authorities for the records of mission-related FRTF materials and require cut-off of documents upon termination or conclusion of the FRTF, and transfer to the National Archives and Records Administration 15 years after such cut-off.

However, until that time, the records will be maintained as permanent. Once the records retention schedule is approved, the Family Reunification Task Force and the administrators of the ServiceNow and Microsoft Teams platforms will ensure that the retention requirements are followed.

## **5. Principle of Use Limitation**

**Principle:** The Department should use personally identifiable information solely for the purpose(s) specified in the notice. Sharing personally identifiable information outside the Department should be for a purpose compatible with the purpose for which the personally identifiable information was collected.

Information collected and maintained is only used for purposes of the Task Force and reunification efforts. These purposes are outlined in the Executive Order, this PIA, the Privacy Notices that accompany the website application and the Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire, and other public-facing information about the Task Force and Family Reunification Task Force.

Any information sharing is done so in accordance with the Privacy Notices on the above-mentioned collection instruments and the applicable System of Record Notices. The website application also explains how information will be shared with the non-governmental organization to facilitate reunification.

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<sup>22</sup> See DHS/USCIS-007 Benefits Information System, 84 Fed. Reg. 54622 (October 10, 2019), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/system-records-notices-sorns>.



**Privacy Risk:** There is a risk that information collected for the purposes of reunification will be used inappropriately.

**Mitigation:** This risk is mitigated. This PIA and Executive Order 14011, the Privacy Notices that accompany the website application and the Family Reunification Travel Questionnaire, and other public-facing information about the Task Force and Family Reunification Task Force document the types of the information being collected and the purposes for which it will be used. Only those individuals with a need-to-know will have access to this information. All have been trained on how to use and share the information as necessary, in addition to receiving annual privacy and security awareness training that is required for all Department of Homeland Security employees.

Further, the Family Reunification Task Force has developed internal guidance on how information is to be used. For example, individuals who submit information through the website application will not be referred to ICE for removal from the United States based solely on information provided to the Task Force through the website application. The information may be shared with national security and law enforcement agencies, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection, for purposes other than removal, such as to identify or prevent fraudulent claims, for national security purposes, or for the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense. Any attempts to use this information for purposes outside the scope of reunification is prohibited must be reported to the DHS Privacy Office.

## 6. Principle of Data Quality and Integrity

**Principle:** The Department should, to the extent practical, ensure that personally identifiable information is accurate, relevant, timely, and complete, within the context of each use of the personally identifiable information.

One of the chief reasons for the Task Force's creation was because no comprehensive, interagency system was in place at the time to track separated parents and their minor children. The disparate systems impacted the ability of the Department to have accurate data to conduct reunifications. The Family Reunification Task Force used the available information to consolidate data sets in order to ensure the most accurate and up-to-date information was being used for identification and reunification.

As part of the website application workflow, when an individual submits an eligibility application, the Family Reunification Task Force checks that individual's information against the Streamlined Data Set. This process ensures that the Family Reunification Task Force is using the most accurate information to make the eligibility determination about the individual. This workflow includes both automated and manual validation processes.



**Privacy Risk:** There is a risk that inaccurate information will be used to determine an individual is ineligible.

**Mitigation:** This risk is mitigated. The Family Reunification Task Force has developed a two-step workflow to ensure that the most accurate information is used to determine an individual's eligibility. After a submission through the website application determines an individual initially does not match the Streamlined Data Set, the Family Reunification Task Force will conduct additional checks in the source system of records to ensure no errors were made and the individual is in fact ineligible. Individuals also have additional avenues for redress as outlined in Section 2 above.

## 7. Principle of Security

Principle: The Department should protect personally identifiable information (in all forms) through appropriate security safeguards against risks such as loss, unauthorized access or use, destruction, modification, or unintended or inappropriate disclosure.

All the information the Department of Homeland Security uses as part of this effort is maintained on the Department of Homeland Security network and all systems have been accredited in accordance with the requirements of DHS 4300A, Sensitive Systems Policy Directive.<sup>23</sup>

The Department of Homeland Security implements appropriate administrative and technical safeguards, such as privileged or administrator accounts that restrict access to authorized personnel with a valid need-to-know to perform official duties. The website application is made available only to those individuals with a need-to-know. Together.gov data is walled-off from any other ServiceNow content; thus, ensuring that only those individuals who are provisions access to the Family Reunification Task Force site have access. System administrators set user roles to ensure appropriate access and use.

To access the website application, the Department will grant users unique usernames and require strong passwords, which will be used to ensure that proper authentication is practiced for each user account in the system. In the event a username and password are forgotten, the applicant will be required to set up a new password for future use.

The Department of Homeland Security conducts regular audits of the website application users and maintains audit logs of activity in the system in accordance with DHS 4300A. These logs provide information on which files have been accessed, the date/time they were accessed, who accessed them, and whether any records were updated or modified.

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<sup>23</sup> See U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, DHS SENSITIVE SYSTEMS POLICY DIRECTIVE 4300A (2017), available at <https://www.dhs.gov/privacy-policy-guidance>.



The use of Microsoft Teams to manage portions of the Family Reunification Task Force responsibilities also allows for strict access controls to ensure only those personnel with a need-to-know receive access to the data.

**Privacy Risk:** There is a risk of improper access to Family Reunification Task Force data.

**Mitigation:** This risk is mitigated. All of the systems and processes that the Family Reunification Task Force uses ensure that only those with a need-to-know will have access to the data. Personnel must be provisioned specific access to ServiceNow and the Family Reunification Task Force site within. Only those individuals invited to the Family Reunification Task Force Microsoft Team channel have access to the data. All Family Reunification Task Force-related emails that contain personally identifiable information are encrypted or password-protected. When an individual is transferred off the Family Reunification Task Force team, their access is removed from all platforms that contain Family Reunification Task Force data.

## 8. Principle of Accountability and Auditing

**Principle:** The Department should be accountable for complying with these principles, providing training to all employees and contractors who use personally identifiable information, and should audit the actual use of personally identifiable information to demonstrate compliance with these principles and all applicable privacy protection requirements.

All website application users and those personnel that access the Department of Homeland Security network or the website application must complete annual privacy and security training to include signing and acknowledging Rules of Behavior, which outline appropriate uses of system data, uploading records, disclosure and dissemination of records, and system security. The website application users receive a notice reminding them that unauthorized or improper use or access may result in disciplinary action, as well as civil and criminal penalties. Additionally, all Department of Homeland Security personnel who have access to the website application or any of the personally identifiable information associated with the Task Force are required to take annual privacy and security training. The annual privacy and security training emphasize the importance of appropriate and authorized use of personal data in government information systems.

The website application technical safeguards (e.g., role-based access controls) ensure that only authorized users with a valid need-to-know have access to the information to accomplish their assigned tasks. The website application accessibility and functionality restrictions are defined by user roles. Each user role has defined and limited access authority to view and edit data set by a master administrator. The user roles are determined on a need-to-know to perform official duties. The master administrators also monitor all account and user activity to the information system. The master administrators use automated tools (e.g., Splunk) to assist them in monitoring, analyzing, and reporting activities in the system.



Furthermore, Executive Order 14011 requires the Task Force to provide regular reports to the President, including an initial progress report no later than 120 days after the Executive Order; interim progress reports every 60 days thereafter; and a final report when the Task Force has completed its mission.

## Responsible Official

Heather M. Santiago  
Senior Advisor, Family Reunification Task Force  
Office of the Secretary  
United States Department of Homeland Security

## Approval Signature

Original, signed copy on file at the DHS Privacy Office.

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