

Chapter 25
Paperwork Reduction and Simplification Act of 1976

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4-25-101. Short title. —

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the “Paperwork Reduction and Simplification Act of 1976.”

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 1; T.C.A., § 4-2501.]

4-25-102. Legislative intent. —

The legislative intent of this chapter is declared to be as follows:

Information reporting requirements of the state government have proliferated to the point that they have placed an unprecedented paperwork burden upon citizens and businesses. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to reduce, simplify and minimize these requirements and the forms they necessitate to the fullest extent consistent with the necessity of gathering data sufficient to assure the efficient and effective operation of the necessary programs of state government. It is essential that there be a comprehensive and ongoing examination of the policies and procedures of the state government that have produced this paperwork burden in order to assure that this policy is fully implemented on a continuing basis.

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 2; T.C.A., § 4-2502.]

4-25-103. Chapter definitions. —

As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(1) “Agency” means any administrative unit within state government that utilizes one (1) or more printed forms for information reporting by citizens or businesses;

(2) “Department” means the department of general services;

(3) “Director” means the commissioner of the department;

(4) “Form” means a printed or otherwise mass-duplicated document of standard format distributed by an agency for the purpose of gathering information from citizens or businesses; and

(5) “Program” means the forms reduction and management program.

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 3; T.C.A., § 4-2503; Acts 1982, ch. 563, § 1.]

4-25-104. Forms reduction and management program. —

The director shall establish and implement a forms reduction and management program in the department that shall apply to every agency of state government. In so doing, the director is authorized and directed to:

(1) Make an inventory of all forms used by every agency, together with a brief statement of the authorization, need and use for each;

(2) Assign a number to each form determined to be properly authorized, needed and used;

(3) Direct the destruction and prohibit the further use of each form determined not to be properly authorized, needed and used;

(4) Establish basic state design and specification criteria to effectuate the standardization of all forms to which numbers are assigned. The revised design and specification criteria shall become effective with respect to each form as the current inventories of each form are exhausted;

(5) Design and require the use of composite forms by agencies seeking and needing the same or similar information from individuals or businesses;

(6) Deny the use by any agency of a form to obtain information from individuals or businesses that can be obtained from another agency already gathering that information;

(7) Provide assistance to all agencies in determination of the need for and design of new forms;

(8) Develop procedures for the most efficient, economical and timely procurement, receipt, storage and distribution of forms by all agencies;

(9) Coordinate the program with the existing state archives and records management programs; and

(10) Develop and promulgate rules, regulations and standards necessary to implement the foregoing authority and the legislative intent of this chapter, in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in chapter 5 of this title.

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 4; T.C.A., § 4-2504.]

4-25-105. Forms require director's approval — Elimination or redesign of forms — Agency compliance. —

(a) No agency shall issue, cause to be printed or otherwise duplicated or distributed any form that does not have the prior approval of the director and to which the director has assigned a number.

(b) Each agency shall comply immediately and fully with directives of the director for the elimination or redesign of any form in use on July 1, 1976, and shall provide the director with whatever personal or staff assistance is required to carry out those directives.

(c) Compliance with the provisions of this chapter and rules, regulations and standards promulgated by the director pursuant to the director's authority is mandatory upon the chief executive officer of each agency, although such chief executive officer may delegate the authority to act in such chief executive officer's behalf in so doing to a subordinate official within the agency.

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 5; T.C.A., § 4-2505.]

4-25-106. [Repealed.]

4-25-107. Reports. —

(a) The director shall make a written report to the governor, the speaker of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives and the chairs of the senate and house state and local government committees at least once each year, such report to be made no later than December 1.

(b) The director shall include in the report:

(1) Proposals for legislative action needed to improve forms reduction and management;

(2) A summary of accomplishments and planned initiatives to reduce the number of forms used by agencies;

(3) A statement of targeted areas of reduction of paperwork within agencies of state government;

(4) A tabulation of areas of duplication in agency forms identified during the preceding year and efforts made to preclude the collection of duplicate information; and

(5) A summary of procedures developed to improve efficient procurement, receipt, storage and distribution of forms by all agencies.

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 7; T.C.A., § 4-2507; Acts 1985, ch. 216, § 1.]

4-25-108. Liberal construction. —

This chapter shall be liberally construed to carry out its purposes and objectives of reducing the paperwork burden of state government and to achieve the statement of legislative intent contained in this chapter.

[Acts 1976, ch. 757, § 8; T.C.A., § 4-2508.]