Privacy Impact Assessment Update
for the

National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS)

DHS/FEMA/PIA-014(a)

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Contact Point
Waddy Gonzalez
Mass Care, Unit Chief
Federal Emergency Management Agency
(202) 212-1077

Reviewing Official
Mary Ellen Callahan
Chief Privacy Officer
Department of Homeland Security
(703) 235-0780

Abstract

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates the National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS). The NEFRLS system is a web-based system that, when activated, collects information from individuals to assist in reuniting family that have been displaced as a result of a Presidentially-declared disaster or emergency. An initial Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) was completed and approved for the NEFRLS system on August 27, 2009. This PIA update outlines and analyzes substantive enhancements made to the NEFRLS system including new information collected on law enforcement officers (LEO) for identity verification and authentication purposes. When FEMA is conducting a search on behalf of a displaced individual the collection of cell phone numbers allows the FEMA Disaster Assistance Improvement Program (DAIP) system to use its text messaging functions to notify the individual when an official missing person report has been submitted.

Introduction

FEMA established the NEFRLS system in compliance with section 689c of the DHS Appropriations Act of 2007 to help family members separated after an emergency or major disaster to find and communicate with one another. The NEFRLS system is a nationally accessible and recognized system where adults, including medical patients, who have been displaced by a Presidentially-declared disaster or emergency can voluntarily enter personal information into a database where family can access and help reunify with one another. The system also allows adults who are parents or guardians of displaced children to register and/or locate one another. The system offers a mechanism for voluntary registration of displaced people over the Internet or phone. After registering in the system, displaced individuals can leave a message and/or current contact information for family. The NEFRLS system allows individuals to search for displaced persons via the Internet or phone after they have completed an identity verification and authentication process. A person searching the system is only able to view a displaced person's recorded information if that displaced person has included the searcher on their list of individuals authorized to view the record. FEMA has made several enhancements to the NEFRLS system. The enhancements are designated NEFRLS Version 1.2 and Version 2.0.

Reason for the PIA Update

The original version of the NEFRLS system was developed and deployed in the Agile System Development (ASD) environment at FEMA. ASD was a temporary solution created as part of the implementation of section 689c of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA), Pub. L. 109-295. Updates were planned for the application to improve the existing functionality, add enhancements to the system, and to deploy the system throughout FEMA. This PIA update addresses all system enhancements.

NEFRLS Version 1.2

NEFRLS Version 1.2 did not change or alter the basic operation of the NEFRLS system. NEFRLS 1.2 enhancements were made to update existing functionality to better meet the needs of people displaced by a Presidentially-declared disaster or emergency. Enhancements made to the functional requirements on the Internet and Intranet modules included adding: 1) content to web pages; 2) adding and removing items on the home page; 3) updating the Privacy Policy to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance; and 4) adding and removing buttons to enhance navigation of the NEFRLS system. NEFRLS 1.2 is deployed in FEMA's Enterprise Production Environment (EPE) in operational status should a disaster occur requiring activation. NEFRLS 1.2 is a Certified and Accredited (C&A) system with a 2-year Authority to Operate (ATO).

NEFRLS Version 2.0

NEFRLS Version 2.0 adds: 1) a LEO module; 2) the ability to send Short Message Service (SMS) text messages; and 3) the ability to receive registration information from the FEMA DAIP system.

The LEO module within NEFRLS provides FEMA staff the ability to assist law enforcement in locating missing/displaced survivors of a Presidentially-declared disaster or emergency by linking them to information on missing persons who may have registered in NEFRLS. LEO requests for a survivor's information within the system are only for the purpose of reuniting family and friends who may have contacted their local law enforcement office or submitted a Missing Persons Report via email to FEMA. LEOs do not access or search the system, but rather are provided information on specific requests by FEMA staff. Prior to executing a LEO-requested search for a possible registrant, the FEMA representative requests a copy[1] of the Missing Persons Report and identifying information on the LEO in order to facilitate identity verification and their status as a member of law enforcement. Appendix A contains the LEO information maintained in NEFRLS. The FEMA NEFRLS Administrator contacts the law enforcement agency via telephone to verify the LEO's identity and status. When the officer's identity is verified, FEMA staff searches the NEFRLS system for the possible registrant(s), as specifically identified in the submitted official Missing Person Report(s). Appendix B provides the information in the report to the LEO. If NEFRLS registration information is found for the specifically requested name, access to a report containing that pertinent registrant information will be provided either electronically or by phone to the LEO for review.[2] The report will contain the registrant name (full), gender, address, and disaster incident information (e.g., Hurricane Katrina, Mississippi Flooding etc). FEMA logs the fact that they disclosed a particular record to a specific LEO in NEFRLS. An individual may request a list of who has accessed their information pursuant to the Privacy Act.

The SMS functionality allows registrants to receive a short SMS text message from family with whom they have elected to share information in their record in the NEFRLS system. The collection of SMS information is used exclusively for delivering SMS messages to registrants. Cellular phone numbers are not shared. Messages are sent via Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP). The cellular phone number is collected from the displaced person during the registration process. An individual

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[1] Missing Persons Reports may be submitted in hard copy to a FEMA Field Office or as an electronic copy such as email to a FEMA NEFRLS Administrator.
[2] The PIA and SORN have been reviewed by FEMA's Office of General Counsel and sending text to notify registrants that they are being searched was not considered necessary.

initiates the search for a displaced individual in the NEFRLS system. Once a searcher has gained access to a displaced persons account, the searcher can submit a short message to the displaced individual by typing the text in the designated SMS text box field and clicking submit. The NEFRLS system uses the cellular phone number provided by the displaced person to allow the message to be received on the displaced persons cellular phone.

The DAIP system interface, also known as the Disaster Assistant Console (DAC), is an interface between the DAC to the NEFRLS system via Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) services that allows a disaster registrant who has completed the internet registration process and passed an identity verification and authentication process through third party identity verification provider to register within the NEFRLS system without having to repeat the process a second time as they create their record in the NEFRLS system. Registering in the NEFRLS system is now a referral option from the DAC module. DAC will transfer the following individuals' data that successfully pass the identity verification and authentication process through ChoicePoint, to the NEFRLS system: first name, last name, date of birth, gender, street address, city, state, zip, and county. Data will only be transferred from DAC to the NEFRLS system and will be encrypted using FIPS 140-2 compliant modules, specifically SSLv3. DAC will submit data to the NEFRLS system in real-time by invoking web services hosted by the NEFRLS system over HTTPS, with standards based Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) Extensible Markup Language (XML) payload. An acknowledgement that the record was received is returned to DAC in near-real-time. Any errors encountered during format and business rules validation are returned in a separate callback method.

The DHS/ALL-004 General Information Technology Access Account Records System (GITAARS) of Records (September 29, 2009, 74 FR 49882) provides coverage to LEOs when requesting official missing person information. The DHS/FEMA-001 National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS) System of Records (September 24, 2009, 74 FR E9-23018) SORN will be updated for clarity and to more efficiently share with LEOs.

Privacy Impact Analysis

The System and the Information Collected and Stored within the System

The new NEFRLS system collects the same three categories of information identified in the original NEFRLS system PIA published on August 27, 2009:

- Registrant Information;
- Family/Household Information; and
- Searcher Information.

SMS Messages

The new NEFRLS system collects the following additional information from individuals requesting to receive information via SMS messages:

- Cell Phone Number;
- Cell Phone Carrier; and
- E-mail Address.

Law Enforcement Module

The new NEFRLS system collects the following information from LEOs requesting a search for an individual missing/displaced by a Presidentially-declared disaster or emergency:

- Law Enforcement Official's Title;
- First Name;
- Last Name;
- Gender;
- Badge Number/Law Enforcement License ID Number;
- Agency Name;
- City;
- County/Parish;
- State;
- Zip Code;
- Contact Phone;
- Contact E-mail;
- Supervisor Name;
- Supervisor Contact Number;
- Supervisor Contact E-mail;
- Agency City;
- Agency County/Parish;
- Agency State; and
- Verification Data. (Note: The verification process includes a confirmed box to be checked for successful verification.)

Uses of the System and the Information

The information in the NEFRLS system is used to reunify family members displaced after a Presidentially-declared disaster or emergency. NEFRLS has added LEO verification which allows FEMA to provide specific information on individuals about when an official Missing Persons Report has been submitted. The NEFRLS system allows text message transmissions to be submitted to the missing person's cell phone. DAIP registration information can now be used to auto populate portions of NEFRLS.

Retention

There is no change to retention to the original PIA published on August 27, 2009.

Internal Sharing and Disclosure

There is no change to internal sharing or disclosure to the original PIA published on August 27, 2009.

External Sharing and Disclosure

There is no change to external sharing or disclosure to the original PIA published on August 27, 2009.

Notice

The DHS/ALL-004 General Information Technology Access Account Records (GITAARS) System of Records (September 29, 2009, 74 FR 49882) provides coverage to LEOs when requesting official missing person information. The DHS/FEMA-001 National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS) System of Records (September 24, 2009, 74 FR E9-23018) SORN will be updated for clarity and to more efficiently share with LEOs. Additionally, both the displaced individual registering in the system and the individual searching the system are required to agree to a Privacy Act Statement. If individuals are accessing the system via the website they are provided an electronic copy that they are asked to read and agree to by clicking to accept the notice. Individuals also have the option of printing the statement for their records. For those individuals accessing the system through the toll free number, the Privacy Act Statement is read to them and they are required to agree to the statement before they can proceed with their registration. Upon the individual's request, a hard copy of the statement is sent to them.

Individual Access, Redress, and Correction

There is no change to individual access, redress, or correction to the original PIA published on August 27, 2009.

Technical Access and Security

The system received a 2 year ATO on May 21, 2010. There are no other changes to technical access or security sections regarding the original PIA published on August 27, 2009.

Technology

The technology within the NEFRLS system is designed to prevent: 1) unauthorized individuals from assuming the identity of another person; and 2) individuals from locating a person for the purpose of criminal activities or for purposes other than reuniting families. FEMA instituted strong security controls to ensure that the information collected in the NEFRLS system is protected throughout the process. Protection includes access controls, identity verification, audit trails, encryption, system testing, and documentation. Appropriate security measures are in place to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of PII and to identify current and emerging threats to mitigate any risks associated with the architecture.

Responsible Official

Dr. Lesia Banks
Acting Privacy Officer
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Department of Homeland Security

Approval Signature

Original signed copy on file with the DHS Privacy Office

Mary Ellen Callahan
Chief Privacy Officer
Department of Homeland Security

Appendix A

Law Enforcement Officer Information in NEFRLS

Field Name	Description	Required
Requestor First Name	Alpha	Y
Requestor Last Name	Alpha	Y
Gender	Dropdown	Y
Date of Birth	Dropdown	Y
Badge Number/Law Enforcement License ID Number	Alphanumeric	Y
Agency Name	Alphanumeric	Y
City	Dropdown of Cities	Y
County/Parish	Dropdown of Counties/Parishes	N
State	Dropdown of States and Territories	Y
Zip-code	Alphanumeric	Y
Contact Phone	Alphanumeric	Y
Contact E-mail	Alphanumeric	Y
Supervisor Name	Alpha	N
Supervisor Title	Alpha	N
Supervisor Contact Number	Alphanumeric	N
Supervisor Contact E-mail	Alphanumeric	N
Agency City	Dropdown of Cities	N
Agency County/Parish	Dropdown of Counties	N
Agency State	Dropdown of States and Territories	N

Source: National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS), Release 2.0 Requirements, Version 0.24, April 12, 2010; the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Enterprise Applications Development Integration and Sustainment (EADIS) Task Order HSFEHQ-08-J-2009.

Appendix B

NEFRLS Report to LEO after Search

Field Name	Description	Required
First Name	Alpha	Y
Last Name	Alpha	Y
Permanent Address	Alphanumeric	N
Permanent City	Dropdown of Cities	N
Permanent County/Parish	Dropdown of Counties/Parishes	N
Permanent State	Dropdown of States and Territories	N
Permanent Country	Dropdown of Countries	N
Gender	Dropdown	Y
Date of Birth	Dropdown of Month, Day, & Year	N
Phone Number	Alphanumeric	N
Evacuation City	Dropdown of Cities	N
Evacuation State	Dropdown of States and Territories	Y
Incident	Dropdown of Incidents	N

Source: National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS), Release 2.0 Requirements, Version 0.24, April 12, 2010; the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Enterprise Applications Development Integration and Sustainment (EADIS) Task Order HSFEHQ-08-J-2009.