

Supporting Statement Part B

**Supporting Statement (Part B: Statistical Methods) of the
Request for OMB Review and Approval of
Environmental Health Specialists Network (EHS-Net) Program**

NEW

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2B. Statistical Methods

The results of EHS-Net data collections will not be used to generalize to the population. Thus, we will use this section of the supporting statement to describe, generally, how the data will be collected.

B.1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

As CDC will not be using data collection results to generalize to the population, the respondent universe and statistical methods for determining sample size are not a factor. However, CDC will strive to obtain samples representative of the population, and will do so, when possible, through random sampling. For example, for EHS-Net retail food service establishment data collections, data is collected in retail food service establishments in each state, and data collectors in each state are required to collect data in a pre-determined number of establishments (this number is based on the number needed to identify significant differences). Each state is provided with a sample of food service establishments that was randomly selected from a list of *all* the food service establishments within that state's catchment area. Additionally the sample is inflated to account for establishments which are not reachable and for establishments that refuse to participate. For example, a sample may contain 75 restaurants and the state EHS-Net data collector will have to contact all 75 in order to be able to collect data in the required 50.

B.2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

All data collected for EHS-Net data collections will be collected by environmental health specialists funded by EHS-Net and employed by environmental public health regulatory programs. These specialists are located in the nine EHS-Net states, and are experienced and knowledgeable in environmental health and food and/or water safety. For some EHS-Net research projects, all nine EHS-Net states will collect data. For other EHS-Net research projects, only one or a few EHS-Net states will collect data.

EHS-Net program data collections may involve three data collection methods: 1) surveys (interviews and/or questionnaires), 2) observations of human behaviors and environments, and 3) food, water, and environmental sampling.

Surveys. Surveys may include in-person or telephone interviews or written questionnaires. For example, food service establishment managers may be interviewed in person about their restaurants' food handling policies and practices, water system managers may be interviewed over the telephone about their water handling policies and practices, or food and water safety program regulators may be asked to complete a questionnaire on paper or on line about their food and water safety regulatory practices.

Observations of human behaviors and environments. Some EHS-Net data collections may involve the use of systematic observations. For example, in food service establishments, data collectors may observe and record data on how raw chicken is stored, prepared and

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cooked, and observe and record data on the types of equipment used to store, prepare and cook chicken.

Food, water, and environmental sampling. Some EHS-Net data collections will involve food, water, and environmental sampling. For example, data collectors may collect environmental samples in food service establishments (e.g., from floor drains, food contact surfaces, etc.) to determine levels of pathogen contamination in the establishment environment, or data collectors may collect water samples from water systems to determine levels of pathogen contamination in the water systems.

Quality Control Procedures

All data collectors will be trained for each data collection. Data collection instruments will be pre-tested before data collection begins. Data entry will be double-checked by the EHS-Net administrator in each state.

B.3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Nonresponse

We will engage in several activities designed to maximize response rates. First, all respondent recruiters will be trained in recruiting. Second, multiple attempts will be made to contact potential respondents. Third, recruiting scripts will emphasize two issues that have been shown to increase response rates—the anonymous nature of the data collection (when applicable) and the importance of the respondents’ participation in the study. The most recent EHS-Net data collection, conducted in food service establishments, used these techniques and yielded a substantial response rate.

When feasible, we will attempt to determine if respondents to EHS-Net data collections differ from nonrespondents in any systematic ways. To do this, we will collect data from both respondents and nonrespondents on pertinent variables, and compare the data. This comparison will allow us to determine if those who participate in EHS-Net data collections differ in any important ways from those who do not participate.

B.4. Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken

All data collection materials will be reviewed and evaluated by EHS-Net specialists familiar with collecting data from the population of interest. Additionally, all data collection materials will be evaluated in pretests. The pretests will be used to improve the data collection materials. We would like to pretest the data collections with a larger sample than nine; however, we expect the pretests to result in only minor changes to data collection materials. Thus, we are seeking combined approval for pretests and data collections.

B.5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

The following persons will be responsible for designing data collections and analyzing data. Those designated as data collectors will be responsible for collecting and analyzing

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the data. Due to employee turnover, data collectors may change over the three-year approval period.

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