

APPENDIX B
RESPONDENT INVITATION LETTERS

LETTER TO STATE SNAP DIRECTORS

[on FNS letterhead]

[DATE]

[NAME]

[TITLE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [Salutation, NAME],

We are writing to request your participation in a nationwide study on measuring and assessing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) modernization initiatives. Mathematica Policy Research is conducting this important research with funding from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The study is known as Performance Standards and Reporting for (SNAP) Modernization Initiatives and is authorized under 7 USC 2020. The study has four main objectives: (1) create a conceptual framework for measuring performance of SNAP modernization activities, (2) describe each state's SNAP performance measures and standards in detail, (3) provide detailed description of how states and their partners implement SNAP performance measures, what results are observed, and how the results are used, and (4) assess the pros and cons of applying alternative performance measures and standards across states. A more complete description of the study and answers to some frequently asked questions are enclosed.

States vary in the depth and breadth of their modernization initiatives and performance measurement activities. Some have already implemented and begun to measure performance of substantial modernization initiatives, and others are identifying possible ways to do so. We are asking all states to participate, regardless of the status of their modernization efforts. Here, modernization refers to those changes that rely on new technologies; organizational, procedural, and policy changes; and partnering and contracting with outside organizations to create efficiencies in and reduce administrative costs and increase Program access. For the purposes of this study, we focus on initiatives that fall into four categories: application tracking, technology, administrative changes, and policy changes.

Included in this package is information on how to access and complete a survey regarding your performance measurement activities across SNAP modernization initiatives. After you have completed the survey, Mathematica will contact you to schedule a telephone interview (90 minutes, on average), which will be tailored to your state's specific efforts. Feedback from your staff will assist the research team in developing a better understanding of how the performance of ongoing modernization efforts is measured. This information will also contribute to FNS's congressional mandate to track modernization efforts, and the data you provide will help inform performance standards that may eventually be put into place. We also request that you share, with Mathematica, 12 months worth of your performance measurement data for each modernization initiative that your state has implemented in the format that is easiest for you.

Mathematica is also contacting county and local SNAP offices and program partners, such as community based organizations and businesses, that are involved in SNAP modernization activities. You may be asked to provide names and contact information for county or local offices and program partners in your state that will be able to provide Mathematica with detailed

LETTER TO STATE SNAP DIRECTORS

information on performance measurement of SNAP modernization initiatives. If a county or local office or other organization contacts you regarding this study, please encourage them to participate.

No personally identifying information will be disclosed in reports published from this study, though results will be reported by state in aggregate form.

We would like to thank you in advance for your important contribution to this research. If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Laura Castner, the study director, by email at lcastner@mathematica-mpr.com or by phone at 202-484-3282. You can also contact Rosemarie Downer, the FNS Project Officer, by email at Rosemarie.Downer@fns.usda.gov or by phone at 703-305-2129.

Sincerely,

Art Foley
Director
Program Development Division
Food and Nutrition Service

Carol Olander
Director
Family Programs Staff
Office of Research and Analysis
Food and Nutrition Service

cc: Laura Castner

LETTER TO COUNTY AND LOCAL SNAP OFFICE DIRECTORS

[on FNS letterhead]

[DATE]

[NAME]

[TITLE]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [Salutation, NAME],

We are writing to request your participation in a nationwide study on measuring and assessing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) modernization initiatives. Mathematica Policy Research is conducting this important research with funding from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The study is known as Performance Standards and Reporting for (SNAP) Modernization Initiatives and is authorized under 7 USC 2020. The study has four main objectives: (1) create a conceptual framework for measuring performance of SNAP modernization activities, (2) describe each state's SNAP performance measures and standards in detail, (3) provide detailed description of how states and their partners implement SNAP performance measures, what results are observed, and how the results are used, and (4) assess the pros and cons of applying alternative performance measures and standards across states. A more complete description of the study and answers to some frequently asked questions are enclosed.

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Your office was selected based on information we received from the state about your involvement with key modernization initiatives. We are very interested in getting more localized details about your modernization efforts, and your feedback about your specific experiences on the local level. Included in this package is information on how to access and complete a survey regarding your performance measurement activities across SNAP modernization initiatives. After you complete this survey, Mathematica will contact you to schedule a 90-minute telephone interview, which will be tailored to your area's specific efforts. Feedback from county and local office staff will assist the research team in developing a better understanding of how the performance of ongoing modernization efforts is measured. We also request that you share 12 months worth of your performance measurement data, with Mathematica, for each modernization initiative that your state has implemented in the format that is easiest for you.

No personally identifying information will be disclosed in reports published from this study, though results will be reported by state in aggregate form.

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We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your important contribution to this research. If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Laura Castner, the study director, by email at lcastner@mathematica-mpr.com or by phone at 202-484-3282. You can also contact Rosemarie Downer, the FNS Project Officer, by email at Rosemarie.Downer@fns.usda.gov or by phone at 703-305-2129.

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Carol Olander
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cc: Laura Castner

LETTER TO DIRECTORS OF PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

[on FNS letterhead]

[DATE]

[NAME]

[TITLE]

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We are writing to request your participation in a nationwide study on measuring and assessing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) modernization initiatives. Mathematica Policy Research is conducting this important research with funding from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The study is known as Performance Standards and Reporting for (SNAP) Modernization Initiatives and is authorized under 7 USC 2020. The study has four main objectives: (1) create a conceptual framework for measuring performance of SNAP modernization activities, (2) describe each state's SNAP performance measures and standards in detail, (3) provide detailed description of how states and their partners implement SNAP performance measures, what results are observed, and how the results are used, and (4) assess the pros and cons of applying alternative performance measures and standards across states. A more complete description of the study and answers to some frequently asked questions are enclosed.

States vary in the depth and breadth of their modernization initiatives and performance measurement activities. Some states have already implemented and begun to measure performance of substantial modernization initiatives, and others are identifying possible ways to do so. We want to talk with SNAP program partners that are involved in modernization initiatives and performance measurement. Here, modernization refers to those changes that rely on new technologies; organizational, procedural, and policy changes; and partnering and contracting with outside organizations to create efficiencies in and reduce administrative costs and increase Program access. For the purposes of this study, we focus on initiatives that fall into four categories: application tracking, technology, administrative changes, and policy changes.

Your organization was selected based on information about the services you provide that are related to modernization initiatives. We received this information from state or local agency staff, who indicated your organization is important to the success of SNAP. Mathematica will contact you to schedule a telephone interview (60 minutes or less), which will be tailored to the specific efforts of your partnership. Feedback from partners will assist the research team in developing a better understanding of how the performance of ongoing modernization efforts is measured. We also request that you share 12 months worth of your performance measurement data, with Mathematica, for each modernization initiative that your state has implemented in the format that is easiest for you.

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We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your important contribution to this research. If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Laura Castner, the

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