

## **2012 Census of Government: Retirement Systems Surveys Cognitive Interview Protocol**

*(This protocol is a guide – the questions presented here won't necessarily be asked exactly as worded in the protocol or in this order. It is important to note that not all questions will be asked in every interview.)*

### **Background Information**

#### **4. Respondent Background**

- Can you tell me a little about the benefit plans that [public pension name] provides?
- Can you tell me a little about your role at this [pension plan name]?
  - What are you responsible for?
- Have you completed forms (i.e., surveys, censuses) from the Census Bureau for [government name]?
  - If so, which ones?
    - Have you completed any other government forms (i.e., surveys, censuses)?

### **PART 1: PLAN INFORMATION**

#### **Item 1D: Fiscal year ending date (New)**

- What did you think this question was asking?
- How did you arrive at your answer?

### **PART 2: MEMBERSHIP AND BENEFITS**

#### **Item 2A: Inactive Members – vested and non-vested (New breakout)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you arrive at your answer?
- What does the term “vested” mean to you? “Non-vested”?
- How is this information kept in your records?

#### **Item 2D: DROP Retirement Members (New)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answers?
- How is this information kept in your records? Do you classify DROP members as active members or as retirees?
- In your own words, what is the difference between active and inactive members?

### **PART 3: RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS**

#### **Item 3B: Realized and unrealized gains (New breakout)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- What does the term “realized” mean to you (as in, “realized gains” and “realized losses?”)
- What does the term “unrealized” mean to you?
- Probe about how they decided how and where to report gains and losses – column header potentially confusing

### **PART 4: HOLDINGS AND INVESTMENTS**

#### **Item 4A: All other short-term investments (New breakout)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answers?
- What does the term “repurchase agreements” mean to you? Probe other sub-items.

- (If applicable) For 3f: What were you including in investments held in trust funds?

**Item 4B: Federal Agency Securities (New breakout)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- What does the term “securities” mean to you? (If applicable) What were you including in your answer?
- What does the term “federally-sponsored agencies” mean to you?
- How is this information kept in your records?
- (If applicable) What were you including in your answer?

**Item 4C: Corporate Bonds**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- How is this information kept in your records?
- What does the term “corporate bonds” mean to you?
- What were you including in your answer?

**Item 4D: Corporate Stocks**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- What does the term “corporate stocks” mean to you?
- What were you including in your answer?

**Item 4F: Other Securities (new breakout)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- How is this information kept in your records?
- What were you including in your answer?

**Item Part 4G: Other Investments**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- What were you including in your answer?

**Item 4H and 4I: Mutual Funds and Hedge Funds (New categories)**

Mutual funds:

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?

Hedge Funds:

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?

**PART 5: ACTUARIAL INFORMATION**

*(NOTE: For F-11, these will be new items on the survey)*

*(NOTE: These questions only apply to Forms F-11 and F-12)*

**Item 5A: Investment Rate of Return**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?

**Item 5B: Actuarial valuation date (new item)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?

**Item 5C: Actuarial Accrued Liability (AAL)**

- What did you think this item was asking?

- How did you come up with your answer?
- How do you differentiate between active and inactive members?
- (If applicable) What were you including in your answer?

**Item 5D: Employer Normal Cost**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?

**Item 5E: Annual Required Contribution (ARC)**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- How is this information kept in your records?

**For F-12(S) respondents only:**

*(NOTE: Probes for the Defined Contribution sections will repeat for the identical questions in the Postemployment Healthcare sections (Part 7 and Part 8).*

**PART 7: RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS-- POSTEMPLOYMENT HEALTHCARE**

**Item 7C: Payments during fiscal year**

- What did you think this item was asking?
- How did you come up with your answer?
- What information were you including?
- How is this information kept in your records?