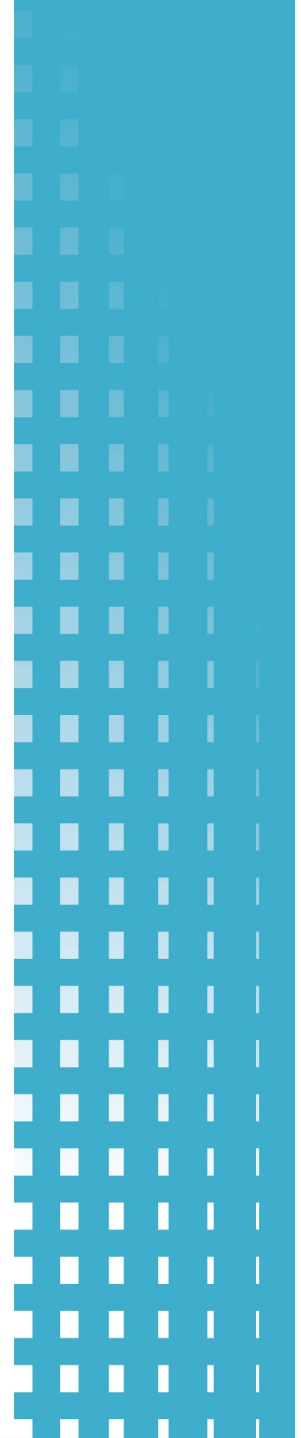


# Appendix B9

## Refusal Conversion Strategy and Script: English



HEALTHY INCENTIVES PILOT – REFUSAH CONVERSION STRATEGY AND SCRIPT: ENGLISH

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 46 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research and Analysis, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302 ATTN: PRA (0584-xxxx). Do not return the completed form to this address.

Telephone Research Center (TRC) and field interviewers will document the verbatim reason for a refusal, as well as the strength of a refusal in the Non-Interview Report Form. TRC and field supervisors will review such refusals and assign these cases to either experienced telephone or field interviewers for a second contact attempt. All interviewers will be trained on answering respondents' questions and concerns and establishing rapport. Often, a respondent's decision to participate or not will be based on how well the interviewer answers the respondent's questions. Some suggested answers for frequently asked respondent questions follow.

- *What is this study about?*

This study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service. Abt Associates and Westat are conducting the study. We're interested in learning how the SNAP program is working in Hampden County. Your answers will help SNAP improve services and better meet the needs of the people who use this program.

- *Why did you pick me?*

You were randomly selected from a list of SNAP households in Hampden County.

- *Why can't you pick someone else to do the interview?*

This is a scientific study which requires special rules for selecting people by chance. If you do not take part in this study the results will be less complete. The rules of this study do not allow us to substitute.

- *How long will the interview take?*

The interview will take between 30 minutes. Participation is voluntary. You may decide to stop at any time, or skip any questions you prefer not to answer. You will be paid \$20 to thank you for your time.

- *What type of questions will you ask me?*

We will ask questions about your family, your diet, how you shop for food, and how you decide what to buy.

- *How do I know you will keep this information confidential?*

Only some people from USDA/FNS and the research team will see your answers. Your name will be kept separate from your answers. Your answers will be combined with answers from the other participants so that no individual's answers will appear alone in the report.

- *What will be done with the information I provide?/ How will the survey results be used? /Why should I participate?*

The information and opinions you share will help us better understand how the SNAP program works. The evaluation team's job is to let the DTA and USDA know how well the program is working and what might help to improve it. In order to do that, we need to get the views and opinions of many different people who know about the program first hand.

- *Who do you work for?*

I work for Westat, a survey research firm in Rockville, Maryland.

- *How do I know this is a legitimate research project?*

This study is being conducted for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition. You can call my supervisor at [XXX-XXX-XXX] to verify the legitimacy of the survey.

## Handling Respondent Refusals

In any survey, there are always some respondents who refuse outright to be interviewed and some who indirectly indicate that they will not participate. Identifying why a person may decline to participate if they do not express it explicitly will help the interviewer gain the respondent's cooperation. Respondents typically refuse or are hesitant to participate for the following reasons:

- Fear of Survey, the Interviewer, Use of the Data

Respondents tend to fear things they don't understand. By having the purpose of the study and what the data will be used for clearly in mind, the interviewer can alleviate the respondent's fears. Some respondents may think an interviewer is trying to sell them something, or "casing their house." For any such situations, the field interviewer should simply show the respondent his/her photo I.D. badge (if at the door) and field and/or TRC telephone interviewers can provide him/her with the supervisor's telephone number, and suggest s/he call to verify the authenticity of the study and the legitimacy of the organization.

- Perceived Invasion of Privacy

It is possible that a respondent is willing to participate in the survey but tells the interviewer that s/he is unwilling to discuss certain subject areas. If this should happen and the respondent is adamant about answering questions dealing with certain subject areas, the interviewer should explain to the respondent that he or she is required to ask every question because they are very important but that if s/he feels very strongly about not answering certain items s/he may refuse when the question is asked.

- Hostility Towards the Sponsor

If the respondent is hostile toward government funded surveys or the DTA, the interviewer should reiterate the general purpose of the survey. The interviewer should tell the respondent that his/her views and experiences may get overlooked if/she decides not to participate in the survey.

It is always helpful to preface a rebuttal to a respondent's objection with a token agreement or understanding of his/her viewpoint, e.g., "I can understand that," or "You certainly have a right to feel that way." That takes the respondent off the defensive and usually works as well as a more detailed rebuttal.

- Cost in Time and Energy

The timing of the interview, may also affect the respondent's participation. Contacts with the respondent immediately before dinner or at the bedtime hour are likely to meet with little success and often be resented. Given the variety of living patterns and habits it is difficult to establish concrete rules about the best hour of contact. Should the interviewer make contact at an inconvenient hour, or if the respondent becomes annoyed as a result of this contact, the interviewer should quickly and apologetically back off and attempt to make contact at a time more convenient for the respondent. It is always a good strategy for the interviewer to reiterate that he or she knows that the respondent has a busy life, we appreciate his/her time and would really like the respondent to participate in this important study.