

Appendix F11

Round 2

Local Office Interview Guide

## Round 2: Early Operations

The Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) has three local offices in Hampden County, the location of the Healthy Incentives Pilot (HIP). Two local offices are located in Springfield and the third in Holyoke. The purpose of Round 2 interviews with local office staff is to document early operations of the HIP. The interviews will take place approximately 2-3 months after all HIP participants have begun earning incentives. It is anticipated that interviews for all three offices will occur over a two-day period.

A staffing breakdown by full time equivalent (FTE) of local Hampden County offices is provided below<sup>1</sup>:

Hampton County DTA Office	Management	Supervisors	SNAP-only Case Managers	SNAP and Cash Case Managers	Support Staff
Holyoke	1 Director 2 Assistant Directors	9	16	18	10
Springfield State	1 Director 2 Assistant Directors	7	16	20.6	10.6
Springfield Liberty	1 Director 2 Assistant Directors	11.8	23.4	26.4	13

Interview times will be scheduled at least two weeks in advance of the interview.

It is anticipated that for each round of interviews, three interview sessions will be held at each local office (or combined across offices). During these sessions the following groups will be interviewed:

1. Management
2. Supervisors
3. Case Managers/Clerks (staff that have participated in HIP activities. May require more than one interview session per office)

Interviews will include the following questions. Additional, follow-up questions are anticipated, to clarify or expand responses.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 85 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.

<sup>1</sup>

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Date and Time of Interview
2. Location of Interview
3. Name(s) of Respondent(s)
4. Describe your role in HIP since the previous interview. Check all that apply.
  - HIP Management
  - Participation in the HIP Steering Committee
  - Retailer Recruitment/Retailer Support
  - Participant Notification/Participant Support
  - Technical Support
  - Training
  - Retailer System Testing/Certification
  - Other (please define)
5. Have your job description and/or HIP responsibilities changed since the last interview? If no, skip to question 6.

## **HIP MANAGEMENT**

6. Do you have a role in managing activities between HIP team members or stakeholders? If no, please skip to question 7.
  - 6.a. Please describe your role, since the previous interview, in managing HIP activities, including the HIP team members and stakeholders that you interact with.
  - 6.b. How frequently do you interact with other HIP team members or stakeholders and how do interactions take place (e.g., e-mails, calls, conference calls, meetings)?
  - 6.c. Since the previous interview, what issues, if any, have you encountered in managing HIP activities and how have these issues been resolved?
  - 6.d. Describe any process or staffing changes that you have had to make due to HIP and why the changes were necessary.
  - 6.e. Do you have any suggestions to improve HIP management at the local office level?
7. As a stakeholder, how you have been provided with information or updates concerning HIP, including meetings, conference calls, or e-mails and what has been the frequency of these interactions since the previous interview?
  - 7.a. What issues, if any, have you encountered with receiving adequate information concerning HIP and how have these been resolved?
  - 7.b. Do you have any suggestions to improve HIP communications?

## **HIP COORDINATION**

8. If you've been involved with the HIP Steering Committee, what has been your role since the previous interview? If not participating in the HSC, skip to question 9.
  - 8.a. Describe what the HSC has been tasked to do during HIP operations (such as retailer support, suggestions for procedures/policies, or suggestions for HIP and nutrition training) and whether it is accomplishing these tasks.
  - 8.b. Describe how often the HSC meets and whether this has changed since the previous interview.
  - 8.c. Describe the ability to provide insight into the community or to influence processes or procedures.
9. Describe the level and type of coordination that has occurred between you and the applicable stakeholder group(s) since the previous interview.
  - 9.a. Describe how this coordination has impacted HIP.
  - 9.b. Describe the coordination activities that were most and least time consuming.
  - 9.c. Describe the coordination activities that were most and least effective.
  - 9.d. What was the biggest challenge in coordinating with stakeholders and how was this addressed?
  - 9.e. In retrospect, what changes would you make to stakeholder coordination that would improve HIP or HIP implementation?

## **HIP RETAILER RELATIONSHIPS**

10. Since the previous interview, have you been involved in the recruitment of HIP retailers or other retailer management and support activities? If not, please skip to question 12.
  - 10.a. Please describe your role in retailer recruitment, management, and support.
  - 10.b. Have you received any inquiries about HIP from non-participating retailers since HIP operations started?
  - 10.c. Have any retailers dropped out since HIP began? If so why?
  - 10.d. What were the biggest challenges in recruiting and supporting retailers and how were these challenges addressed?
11. Describe any issues that have been encountered surrounding HIP, such as lack of sufficient retailer participation, misuse of incentive funds, impacts of the incentive ceiling (cap), etc.
  - 11.a. Describe the impacts of retailer participation levels and any suggestions you may have for improving participation.
  - 11.b. Are policies needed to mitigate misuse of incentive funds?
12. In retrospect, what changes would you make to improve the retailer recruitment and support process?

## **HIP TRAINING**

13. Since the prior interview have you received any formal training on HIP? If not, skip to question 15.
  - 13.a. Describe the training and training materials that you received.
  - 13.b. Describe the areas of HIP that were the most difficult to understand, for example, how participants are selected, what items are eligible for HIP, how HIP-eligible items are purchased, or how incentives are provided to SNAP accounts.
  - 13.c. What could be done to improve local office staff training or training materials?
14. Since the previous interview have you provided participants with training or support? If not, skip to question 16.
  - 14.a. Describe your role in HIP participant training and the development or distribution of training materials.
  - 14.b. What issues, if any, have you encountered with HIP participant training or training materials and how were they resolved?
  - 14.c. Describe the areas of HIP that were the most difficult for HIP participants to understand, for example the amount of the incentive, the reason for the incentive, how incentives are provided, or what items are HIP-eligible, such as fresh, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables.
  - 14.d. Describe the training materials, if any, provided to HIP participants.
  - 14.e. Was any nutrition education provided specifically to HIP participants? By whom? Please describe.
  - 14.f. Describe ways that participant training or training materials were successful in providing information and ways that they could be improved.
  - 14.g. In retrospect, what changes would you make to improve training or training materials?

## **HIP PARTICIPANTS**

15. Since the previous interview, have you had any involvement in HIP participant notification? If not, skip to question 17.
  - 15.a. Describe your role in HIP participant notification.
  - 15.b. What issues, if any, were encountered during HIP participant notification and how were they resolved?
  - 15.c. In retrospect, what changes would you make, if any, to the HIP participant notification process?

16. Since the previous interview, have you received any questions from HIP participants (outside of training)? If not, skip to question 18.
  - 16.a. Describe the questions that you have received from HIP participants and how frequently you received them.
  - 16.b. Based on questions received, what areas are the most difficult for participants to understand, for example, the amount of the incentive, the reason for the incentive, how incentives are provided or what items are HIP-eligible, such as fresh, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables.
  - 16.c. Describe comments received from HIP participants, if any, on retailer participation in HIP (how well retailers have implemented, the impact of SNAP retailers not participating in HIP, etc.).
  - 16.d. Can you make recommendations for providing responses or information to HIP participants?
17. Since the previous interview, have you received any questions from non-HIP participants? If not, skip to question 19.
  - 17.a. Describe any questions that you have received from SNAP participants that have not been selected to participate in HIP and how frequently you receive them.
  - 17.b. Can you make recommendations for providing responses or information to non-participants?

#### **ISSUES/LESSONS LEARNED**

18. Looking back, is there anything you would have changed about the implementation process?
19. Other than previously discussed, what issues, if any, have you encountered during early operations and how were these issues resolved?
  - 19.a. What impact did they have on HIP operations or the HIP evaluation?
20. What key lessons have you learned from your experiences to date?