

ATTACHMENT 15: FDPIR LETTER #5 – TO TRIBAL LEADER FROM URBAN INSTITUTE

Letter # 5 - Urban/NORC letter to Tribal leaders

Dear (name of Tribal leader)

As stated in the letter recently sent from (USDA name and title), USDA has contracted with the Urban Institute, a non-profit policy research organization based in Washington DC, to conduct the *Study of the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations* (FDPIR). This study will provide current, nationally representative information on FDPIR participants and will provide updated information on local program operations across the nation.

As part of the study, Urban has subcontracted with NORC at the University of Chicago, an independent, non-partisan research organization to work with the sites to review case record review a sample of participating households and also to conduct interviews with the selected participants. The other subcontractor is Support Services International, Inc. (SSI), a Native American owned research firm in Silver Spring, MD. SSI will be assisting with the program site visits.

The (name of Tribe) was selected at random from among all federally-recognized tribes participating in the FDPIR program to be part of the in data collection activities for this study. We realize there are specific protocols for entering Tribal lands and doing the study activities on the reservation/Tribal service area, and we fully plan to follow the prescribed protocols before making any contacts. Someone from NORC will be in contact with your office soon to inquire about the required procedures that need to be put into place.

The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in this important study. As mentioned in the letter from (name and title) there are three phases of the study:

The first is the case record review. The purpose of the case record review is to obtain information that will describe current program participants and their characteristics. This will include household composition, income sources, and other available resources or benefits. The case record review will occur with the 25 sampled sites. About 32 records will be reviewed at the sites, with a little more at the larger sites. NORC staff will work with each tribe or ITO to conduct the case review, making sure to respect Tribal procedures. The case review will involve a visit to the FDPIR office by researchers to abstract participant information from the records. All information drawn from the case record reviews will be carefully protected and participants' privacy will be ensured. Households selected for the case record review will be part of the survey sample.

The second phase the study is the survey of participants. For each household sampled from the case records, a 30-minute interview will be conducted. On average, 32 interviews will be conducted per site, with more in the largest programs. Most of the interviews will be conducted by telephone and the remaining in-person. Participants will receive a letter about the study in advance of being contacted. The letter and materials will include a toll free number for any questions they may have. Each participant will receive an incentive worth \$25. NORC field interviewers will conduct the participant survey and work closely with Tribal leaders and FDPIR programs to implement the study procedures.

Alternatively, we can also work with your Tribe to recruit, train, and hire a Tribal member to conduct the interviews.

The third phase is program site visits. Site visits and interviews with Tribal leaders, program staff and others present an opportunity to present richer and more valuable data on the issues that surround food distribution. On-site visits will be conducted with only 17 of the 25 sites. The site visits will include three types of activities: (1) interviews with program administrators, staff and service providers; (2) visits to FDPIR programs to observe facilities related to client enrollment, warehouses, and food distribution; and (3) discussion groups with program clients and potential clients.

Please be assured that we will follow strict rules to protect individual privacy. The information provided in any of the three phases will be combined with information we receive from all others who are surveyed.

If you have any questions or concerns at this time please feel free to contact us at any time. We look forward to working with you and your staff on this important undertaking.

Sincerely,

Nancy Pindus
Principal Investigator
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