

# Appendix C

## PIAAC National Supplement Contact Letters and Brochures

## **Letters and Contact Scripts for the Household Sample**

The materials described below are for use during the efforts of recruiting and contacting households and sampled participants in the household sample. (Materials for use in recruiting and contacting sampled participants in the prison sample are described on page C-9). These parties include the household respondent, the sampled participants as well as gatekeepers in locked buildings who may block an interviewer's entry to a building with sampled addresses. Each document is described below along with a description of the target recipient.

The PIAAC household sample letters are:

1. Initial Contact Letter – This letter is sent to all sampled households at the start of data collection to notify the residents (a) that their household has been sampled for the PIAAC National Supplement and (b) that an interviewer will be visiting their house in the near future. The letter provides information about the study as well as a telephone number and the study website, if the recipient wants more information. Interviewers also carry copies of this letter with them and will give another copy of the letter to the screener respondent if he or she does not remember receiving the letter in the mail.
2. Household Refusal Letter – Locked Building – This letter is sent to sampled households if the household resides within a locked building or community and the interviewer is unable to enter the building or community when attempting to contact the sampled household for screening.
3. Household Refusal Letter – No Selling – This letter is sent to sampled households who will not open the door when initially approached by interviewer because they are suspicious about the reason for the interviewer's visit.
4. Household Refusal Letter – Refusal After Initial Contact – This letter is sent to sampled households who refuse to participate when initially approached by interviewer.
5. Household Refusal Letter – Too Busy – This letter is sent to sampled households who refuse to participate when initially approached by interviewer because they are too busy.
6. PIAAC Brochure Text (Household Sample) – This brochure is given to the sampled respondent and serves as the informed consent for the study.

Materials for use in recruiting and contacting sampled participants in the prison sample are described on page C-9.

Initial Contact Letter

**NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo**

[date]

Dear Sir or Madam:

Your household has been selected to participate in the **Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies** being conducted by the **United States Department of Education**. This study will provide information about the education, work experiences, and skills of adults in this country and around the world.

Since we cannot conduct an interview in every household in this country, we use scientific methods to randomly select addresses throughout the United States. Your household has been selected to represent thousands of others similar to yours in the United States.

In the next few weeks, one of our field representatives will visit your home. She or he will show you photo identification issued by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and ask some short, simple questions about you and other household members to see who qualifies to participate. In most households, only one person will be selected for the study. **The selected person will receive \$50 after completing the study.** Your household participation is entirely voluntary; however, we ask you to give serious consideration to the importance of this study.

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543). Under that law, the data provided by you may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups.

If you have additional questions, our field representative will be glad to answer them. You may also call the study's toll free number (1-888-xxx-xxxx), or visit the study's website at <http://xxxxxx>.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Your participation is a service to our country.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley  
Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

## Household Refusal Letter - Locked Building

### NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo

[date]

Dear Sir or Madam:

Recently your household should have received a letter like this one, from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), explaining that it has been selected to participate in an important international study called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. We sent one of our field representatives to contact your household, but without success.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since we cannot conduct an interview in every household in this country, we use scientific methods to randomly select addresses throughout the United States, and your household has been selected. Please help us determine if anyone in your household qualifies to participate in the study. If an adult in the household is selected to participate and **completes the study, that person will receive \$50.00 as a thank you**. Participation is entirely voluntary and is a service to the community and the nation.

Please take a moment and call our study's toll free number (1-888-xxx-xxxx) to arrange a time to meet with our field representative.

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543). Under that law, the data provided by you may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley  
Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

Enclosure

## **Household Refusal Letter - No Selling**

### **NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo**

[date]

Dear Sir or Madam,

Recently a field representative contacted your household on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), explaining that your household has been selected to participate in an important international study called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. It is understandable that you may have suspicions these days when a stranger knocks on the door. Therefore, as the Commissioner of the National Center of Education Statistics, I want to assure you that this is a legitimate nationwide study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. We are NOT advertising or selling anything, and at no time will we attempt to collect money from you.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since we cannot conduct an interview in every household in this country, we use scientific methods to randomly select addresses throughout the United States. Your household has been selected to represent thousands others similar to yours across the country. Please help us determine if anyone in your household qualifies to participate in the study. If an adult in the household is selected to participate and **completes the study, that person will receive \$50.00 as a thank you.**

Our field representative will contact your household again shortly to schedule a time to meet with you. Our field representative will be wearing a photo ID badge, will provide you with a brochure describing the study, and can address any concerns or questions you may have. Please help us to complete this study. If you still have questions, please call our toll free number (1-800.xxx-xxxx). Your participation is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation.

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543). Under that law, the data provided by you may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley  
Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

Enclosure

## **Household Refusal Letter - Refusal After Initial Contact**

### **NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo**

[date]

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME, SIR OR MADAM],

Recently one of our field representatives contacted you about representing the United States in the international study called Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, which is being conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. You were reluctant to begin the study, so I am writing to give you more information and ask for your help.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Therefore, we have used statistical methods to randomly select several thousand adults who can represent the entire nation. If you do not participate, adults like you across the country will not be accurately represented in this study.

I understand that you are very busy and that time can be hard to come by. Your participation is entirely voluntary. But I would not ask you for your time if it were not so important to include every selected adult in the study. **If you complete the study, you will receive \$50.00 as a thank you for your time and participation.**

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543). Under that law, the data provided by you may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups.

If you have additional questions, our field representative will be glad to answer them. You may also call the study's toll free number (1-888-xxx-xxxx), or visit the study's website at <http://xxxxx>.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley  
Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics



## Household Refusal Letter - Too Busy

### **NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo**

[date]

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME],

Recently a field representative contacted you on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, explaining that you have been selected to represent the United States in an important international study called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. At that time you were unable to begin the study. I am writing now to tell you a little more about why this study is important and why we have contacted you.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Your participation is important because you represent thousands of other individuals who are like you across the country. Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Therefore, we have used statistical methods to randomly select several thousand adults who can represent the entire nation. I understand that you are very busy and that time can be hard to come by. But please see if you can make time for this study because if you do not participate, adults like you who have busy lives will not be accurately represented in this study.

I have taken the liberty of asking our field representative to contact you again shortly to schedule a time to meet with you. Your participation is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation. **If you complete the study, you will receive \$50.00 as a thank you for your time and participation.**

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543). Under that law, the data provided by you may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley

Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

## **PIAAC Brochure Text (Household Sample)**

### **What is the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies?**

It is an international study designed to measure a range of skills among the adult population in the more than 30 countries that are participating worldwide. Specifically, this study looks at adults' reading and math skills as well as how they use computers and the Internet in their daily lives to locate information and solve problems. This study also collects information from participants about their background, work, and educational experiences.

In the United States, the National Center for Education Statistics, a part of U.S. Department of Education, is conducting this international study.

### **Why is this study important?**

The results of this study will provide a snapshot of U.S. adults' skills and help us as a country develop the educational and training programs to help prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For example, this study will be the first national study in the United States to give us an accurate picture of how often and how effectively U.S. adults use computers in their work and daily lives. Such information is important for policymakers, educators, and researchers trying to develop educational and training policies and programs to improve adults' skills in the United States.

### **How was I chosen?**

Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Thus, the National Center for Education Statistics uses statistical methods to randomly select several thousand individual adults who can represent the entire nation.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

You will be asked to respond to a questionnaire read to you by a field representative who comes to your home. The questionnaire asks you about your education, work experiences, use of computers, and other information. After the questionnaire, you will be asked to complete a series of tasks that represent common everyday activities, such as figuring out the expiration date on a food product, using a map to give directions, following instructions on a prescription label, using a bus schedule, or interpreting a chart in a newspaper article. You will be asked to complete these tasks with a computer or with paper and pencil.

### **How much time will it take?**

The study takes around two hours to complete.

**Why should I participate?**

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation. You represent thousands of other adults throughout the country. And, because of the statistical methods used to select you, we cannot substitute anyone else for you if you do not participate. If you do participate, you will help us get an accurate picture of the variety and range of adult skills in the United States. In addition, you will receive \$50.00 as a thank you for completing the study.

**I haven't been in school in years, and I don't work. I don't think I can help.**

Yes, you can! The success of this study depends on having an accurate representation of U.S. adults between the ages of 16 and 74. Thus, we need information from:

- adults who are retired or work at home; as well as those currently in the workforce or looking for work;
- adults who attended school many years ago; as well as those currently in school, and
- adults who went to school for only a few years; as well as those who have gone to school for many years.

**I don't use a computer in my day-to-day life. I don't think I can participate in this study.**

Yes, you can! Not everyone uses a computer in his or her daily life. One of the purposes of this study is to find out how often people actually use computers. If you do not use a computer on a regular basis or are not comfortable using one, you can receive a printed version of the tasks.

**How do I know my answers will be kept confidential?**

Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information you provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents. As soon as the survey is completed, all personal information that links data to respondents is removed.

**How will I recognize the field representative?**

The field representative who contacts you will be carrying a study photo identification issued by the National Center for Education Statistics.

**What if I have more questions?**

The field representative who visits your home will be able to answer questions you may have about this study. You may also call the study toll-free number or visit the study web site below.

[study toll-free phone number]

[study website]

Thank you in advance for participating in this important study.

## **Letters and Contact Scripts for the Prison Sample**

The materials described below are to be used for recruiting and contacting all parties involved in the prison sample. These parties include the Federal Bureau of Prisons, State Department of Corrections, wardens in selected prisons, the warden-identified prison coordinator, and the sampled inmate within the prison. Each document and script is described below and included in the description is the target recipient and expected sender of the letter or script. These materials are listed in the order in which they are typically used during the recruitment process. Note that the brochure is used in several points throughout the process.

The PIAAC prison sample letters and contact scripts are as follows (numbering continued from above):

7. Introduction Letter Sent to State Department of Corrections or Federal Agency - This letter is sent to the state department of corrections and relevant federal agencies that have authority for one or more prisons in the PIAAC sample. In addition to the letter, the mailing will include a list of sampled facilities within their jurisdiction, a sample letter to be sent to each of these facilities from the state or federal agency, endorsement letters, and a study brochure.
8. Introduction Letter to Warden from Agency - This letter is sent by the approving federal or state official to the warden indicating their agreement for the selected facility participate in the study.
9. Introduction Letter to Warden from Westat - This letter is sent by Westat if the approving federal or state official asks Westat to contact the warden of the facility directly.
10. Facility Confirmation Letter - This letter is sent by Westat to facilities that have agreed to participate to confirm the date, time, number of interviewers and other information about the interview process within the specific facility.
11. Letter Sent to the Prison Coordinator - This letter is sent to the designated person at the facility to describe the structure of the interview; it outlines the materials that the interviewer will bring during the visit.
12. Sampling Confirmation Script - Two days prior to the start of interviewing in a facility, a Westat representative will call the facility to confirm both the visit and the preparation of the sample list.
13. Introduction Letter for Sampled Inmates - This is the introductory letter that the interviewer gives to the sampled inmates when they initially meet and the interviewer begins to introduce the study. If needed, the interviewer reads this letter to the respondent.
14. PIAAC Brochure Text - Prison Sample - This brochure is given to the sampled respondent along with the Introduction Letter and serves as the informed

consent for the study except if the specific facility Institutional Review Board has specific consent requirements.



**Introduction Letter Sent to State Department of Corrections or Federal Agency**

Date

[Director Name]  
[Title]  
[Organization]  
[Street 1]  
[Street2]  
[City], [State], [Zip]

Dear [Director Name]:

The U. S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is currently participating in an international study of adult skills that will provide information about the education, work experiences, and skills of adults in this country and around the world. We are writing you to ask for your assistance in expanding this study in the United States to include a sample of adult inmates in federal and state correctional facilities, as was done for the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) study.

In order to get a complete picture of adult skills in the United States, NCES will assess the skills of over 8,800 adults in randomly selected households across the country and about 1,200 adult inmates at randomly selected federal and state correctional facilities. This size sample of inmates will allow NCES to estimate the literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skill levels for the prison population and compare it with the rest of the U.S. adult population. This information will help this country develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

NCES has contracted with Westat, a research firm located in the Washington, D.C. area, to help NCES conduct the study, officially called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). {# of facilities} under the authority of your agency have been selected to participate in the study. The names of the facilities are listed on the enclosed attachment. NCES seeks your cooperation in encouraging the participation of these facilities. The completeness and accuracy of the study depends on the participation of each sampled facility as the randomly selected inmates represent many others in the nation.

Within each sampled facility, NCES would like to interview about 12 randomly selected inmates, age 16 to 74. The study's interview takes about two hours during which participants will be asked to complete a brief background questionnaire and a

series of tasks that represent common everyday activities, such as figuring out the expiration date on a food product, using a map, following instructions on a prescription label, using a bus schedule, or interpreting a chart in a newspaper article. Inmates who complete the interview could receive a certificate of appreciation (as was done in the 2003 study) to recognize their participation, which is a service to the community and the nation.

The study will be conducted in the spring of 2014 by trained Westat interviewers. **Westat interviewers will conduct all of the required work.** However, NCES asks that **each facility designate a liaison** who will provide (a) a list of inmates from which the interviewer on site will select a random sample of study participants, and (b) a secure, private room for conducting the interviews. Westat will accommodate the facility's security and scheduling requirements. Specific interview dates would be determined after facility participation is confirmed.

The interviews are completely voluntary. Interviewers will not take identifying information about the inmates from the facility. All questionnaire data obtained during the course of the study will be maintained by key research staff and no information identifying institutions will be released to outside parties for any reason. Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information participants provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Neither participating individuals nor institutions are identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents. NCES requests that you contact the facility wardens, either by letter, email or phone, to inform them of their selection for this important study. If you prefer, Westat can assume responsibility for making this initial contact. I have enclosed a sample letter that your agency can mail to the facility wardens. Also enclosed are endorsement letters from XXXXXXXX. A copy of the study brochure is provided for your information.

A Westat representative will contact you within the next few days to answer any questions you may have and to discuss how best to proceed with obtaining cooperation of the sampled facilities. Should you have any questions concerning the study prior to that time, please contact Dr. Eugene Owen at the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education at 202-502-7422 or Eugene.Owen@ed.gov; or the Westat Study Manager, 1-888-367-5419 or email him at [XXXX@Westat.com](mailto:XXXX@Westat.com). Additional information can also be found at the study web site: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/PIAAC>.

Sincerely,

Dan McGrath  
Director of the International Activities Program  
NCES/IES/ED

Enclosures

## **Introduction Letter to Warden from Agency**

Dear {WARDEN NAME},

Your facility has been randomly selected to participate in the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Prison Sample. The study is being conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) as part of an international study of adult skills that will provide information about the education, work experiences, and skills of adults in this country and around the world. We are writing to ask you for your assistance in expanding this study in the United States to include a sample of adult inmates in federal and state correctional facilities, as was done for the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) study.

This study is intended to gather information that will help this country develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For this study, NCES plans to assess the literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills of about 1,200 adult inmates, age 16 to 74, who will be randomly selected to participate in the study.

To conduct this study, NCES has contracted with Westat, a research firm located in the Washington, D.C. area. Westat staff will select approximately 12 inmates in your facility to participate in a two-hour individual, in-person interview conducted by a Westat interviewer during which participants will complete a brief background questionnaire and a series of tasks that represent common everyday activities, such as figuring out the expiration date on a food product, using a map, following instructions on a prescription label, using a bus schedule, or interpreting a chart in a newspaper article. Inmates who complete the interview can receive a certificate of appreciation to recognize their participation.

{NAME of STATE CORRECTIONAL AGENCY} has given Westat permission to conduct the study and encourages your facility's participation. The completeness and accuracy of the study depends on the participation of each sampled facility.

Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information participants provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups.

A Westat representative will contact you within the next few days to answer any questions you may have and to discuss procedures for conducting the study. Westat will ask you to designate a liaison from your facility to assist with coordination of the study. The liaison's primary responsibility is to provide a list of inmates from which Westat interviewers will on site randomly select study participants. Westat interviewers will conduct all of the required work.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at {phone &/or email}.

Sincerely,

DOC Official  
Title

## **Introduction Letter to Warden from Westat**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This facility has been selected to participate in the U. S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) international study of adult skills. Officially called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), this study has already been conducted in over 3,000 households across the United States. The purpose of the PIAAC is provide information about the education, work experiences, and skills of adults in this country and around the world.

As part of the PIAAC, NCES plans to assess the skills of about 1,200 adult inmates at randomly selected Federal and state correctional facilities as was done in the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL). To conduct this study, NCES has contracted with Westat, a research firm located in the Washington, D.C. area. Westat received approval from your state's Department of Corrections prior to contacting this facility. Each facility designated a liaison who agreed to provide a list of inmates from which the interviewer on site will select a random sample of study participants as well as a secure, private room for conducting the interviews. Westat will accommodate the facility's security and scheduling requirements.

The study will be conducted between January and April 2014 by trained Westat interviewers. We will be interviewing randomly selected inmates ages 16 to 74 within each facility. The study consists of a two-hour individual, in-person interview during which participants will be asked to complete a brief background questionnaire and a set of everyday tasks. Westat interviewers will conduct all of the required work. Also, as we did in the 2003 study, we would like to present respondents with a certificate of appreciation to recognize their participation.

Again, the interviews are completely voluntary. Interviewers will not take identifying information about the inmates from the facility. All questionnaire data obtained during the course of the study will be maintained by key research staff and no information identifying institutions will be released to outside parties for any reason. Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information participants provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Neither participating individuals nor institutions are identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents.

Should you have any questions concerning the study, please contact Dr. Eugene Owen at the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education at 202-502-XXX or XXXXXXXXXXX, Westat Study Manager, 1-888-XXX-XXXX or email him at [XXXX@Westat.com](mailto:XXXX@Westat.com). Additional information can also be found at the study web site: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/PIAAC>.

Sincerely,

Dan McGrath  
Director of the International Activities Program  
NCES/IES/ED

## **Facility Confirmation Letter**

Date

Contact

Title

Facility

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear {Prison Coordinator}:

The attached facility confirmation sheet outlines the arrangements we have agreed to for your participation in the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) (also known as the International Survey of Adult Skills). The second page of the confirmation sheet includes information on the Westat interviewers who will be assigned to your facility. Also attached is a fact sheet which details sampling requirements.

As we discussed, two Westat interviewers will meet with [sampling contact] on [sampling date] at [time] to select approximately 12 residents from the [type of sampling log]. Our interviewers will conduct interviews with selected inmates beginning [interviewing date]. Please alert all personnel who will come in contact with the interviewers of their upcoming visit.

Again, the interviews are completely voluntary. Interviewers will not take identifying information about the inmates from the facility. All questionnaire data obtained during the course of the study will be maintained by key research staff and no information identifying institutions will be released to outside parties for any reason. Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information participants provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Neither participating individuals nor institutions are identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents.

Please call me immediately at 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX, if there are any problems with data on the confirmation sheet.

Again, thank you and your staff for helping us arrange to conduct the study in your facility. We appreciate your cooperation on this important research effort.

Sincerely,



XXXXXXXXX  
Study Manager

## **Letter Sent to the Prison Coordinator**

Dear {Prison Coordinator},

During a recent phone call, we discussed your facility's participation in the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Prison Sample, which is being conducted by the U. S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) with the help of Westat, a research company in the Washington, D.C. area. Westat is currently completing arrangements for participating with correctional facilities across the country. You will be contacted within the next few weeks to finalize interviewing dates for your facility. The period during which data will be collected is between January and April 2014. The information you requested to secure clearance for Westat interviewers who may be assigned to your facility is attached.

The following information provides a more detailed description of the interviewing process and the study materials interviewers are required to use. The study consists of two parts, the Background Questionnaire and Exercises.

- The Background Questionnaire (BQ) is a 50-minute computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) instrument that is administered to the sampled inmate (the respondent). The BQ asks a wide range of questions covering subjects such as education, employment, health, and language background.
- The Exercises are broken into two sections: the core items and a set of tasks. The core items consist of 8 simple activities for the respondent to complete. The tasks include both simple and more complex activities. Some respondents will complete these activities on the interviewer's computer and some will complete them in a paper exercise booklet with a pencil. Some of these tasks require the use of materials including a calculator and a ruler. The interviewer will guide the respondent through these tasks using prompts from the Interviewer Guide section of the CAPI system.

For the Exercises, the interviewer presents the materials to the respondent. The materials and their use are described below. All materials remain with the interviewer at the conclusion of the study.

- Laptop: All items for the computer-based assessment are presented on a laptop that is not connected to the Internet.
- Calculator: Some items require the respondent to use arithmetic operations for such tasks as completing an order form or determining the amount of interest in a bank account.
- Photo and Ruler - Some items require the respondent to measure specific items on a printed photograph.

Each interviewer will carry all of the required materials for one day of interviewing in two canvas tote bags. Enclosed is a general inventory of these supplies for your

review. These materials are an integral part of the study and critical in comparing prison and household populations.

Again, the interviews are completely voluntary. Interviewers will not take identifying information about the inmates from the facility. All questionnaire data obtained during the course of the study will be maintained by key research staff and no information identifying institutions will be released to outside parties for any reason. Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information participants provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Neither participating individuals nor institutions are identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents.

In addition, the confidentiality of all study instruments, both unused and completed, must be maintained in accordance with our contract with the U. S. Department of Education. No materials are allowed to be left unattended. Therefore, we request that the interviewer be permitted to keep the tote bags at all times, or that the interviewer be provided with a locker or locked space to which only he or she has access.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me at 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXX  
Study Manager  
Enclosure

## **Sampling Confirmation Script**

*Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for Westat. I'm calling about the list of inmates that you are preparing for the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). I understand that you are my contact person for obtaining the inmate list for sampling. Is this list being prepared? Will it be ready for me when I visit your facility on (date) at (time)?*

(The Sampling Contact will either confirm that he/she is the contact person or refer you to someone else who has been given the responsibility since we last spoke with the Sampling Contact. Note: If a new Sampling Contact has been identified, get the name and phone number of that person and record this change. You should then contact that person to confirm that the list will be generated on the day of sampling.)

*I look forward to meeting you at that time. Thank you for your assistance.*

## **Introduction Letter for Sampled Inmates**

Dear Respondent,

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is doing a study called the "International Survey of Adult Skills." NCES has hired Westat, a research group from the Washington, D.C. area, to do the study. We are doing this study with 8,800 adults in households across the United States and 1,200 inmates in Federal and State prisons.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to respond to a questionnaire read out loud to you by a field representative who visits your facility. The questionnaire asks you about your education, work experiences, use of computers, and other information. After the questionnaire, you will be asked to complete a series of tasks that represent common everyday activities such as filling out a form or figuring out the expiration date on a milk carton. You will be asked to complete these tasks either on a computer or with paper and pencil. In all, the interview will take about two hours.

Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information participants provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Participating individuals are not identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents.

It is your decision whether or not to be in this study as the interviews are completely voluntary. If you decide to be in the study, you may choose to not answer any question you don't want to answer. Your decision either way will not affect your release date or parole eligibility.

If you have any questions about the study, the interviewer will be glad to answer them.

Sincerely,

Dan McGrath  
Director of the International Activities Program  
NCES/IES/ED

## **PIAAC Brochure Text - Prison Sample**

### **What is the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies?**

It is an international study designed to measure a range of skills among the adult population in the more than 30 countries that are participating worldwide. Specifically, this study looks at adults' reading and math skills as well as how they use computers and the Internet in their daily lives to locate information and solve problems. This study also collects information from participants about their background, work, and educational experiences.

In the United States, the National Center for Education Statistics, a part of U.S. Department of Education, is conducting this international study.

### **Why is this study important?**

The results of this study will provide a snapshot of U.S. adults' skills and help us as a country develop the educational and training programs to help prepare our population to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For example, this study will be the first national study in the United States to give us an accurate picture of how often and how effectively U.S. adults use computers in their work and daily lives. Such information is important for policymakers, educators, and researchers trying to develop educational and training policies and programs to improve adults' skills in the United States.

### **How was I chosen?**

Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Thus, the National Center for Education Statistics uses statistical methods to randomly select several thousand individual adults across the country in households and prisons who can represent the entire nation.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

You will be asked to respond to a questionnaire read to you by a field representative who visits your facility. The questionnaire asks you about your education, work experiences, use of computers, and other information. After the questionnaire, you will be asked to complete a series of tasks that represent common everyday activities, such as figuring out the expiration date on a food product, using a map to give directions, following instructions on a prescription label, using a bus schedule, or interpreting a chart in a newspaper article. You will be asked to complete these tasks with a computer or with paper and pencil.

### **How much time will it take?**

The study takes around two hours to complete.

### **Why should I participate?**

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation. You represent thousands of other adults throughout the country. And, because of the statistical methods used to select you, we cannot substitute anyone else for you if you do not participate. If you do participate, you will help us get an accurate picture of the variety and range of adult skills in the United States.

### **I haven't been in school in years. I don't think I can help.**

Yes, you can! The success of this study depends on having an accurate representation of U.S. adults between the ages of 16 and 74. Thus, we need information from:

- adults who attended school many years ago; as well as those currently in school, and
- adults who went to school for only a few years; as well as those who have gone to school for many years.

### **I don't use a computer in my day-to-day life. I don't think I can participate in this study.**

Yes, you can! Not everyone uses a computer in his or her daily life. One of the purposes of this study is to find out how often people actually use computers. If you do not use a computer on a regular basis or are not comfortable using one, you can receive a printed version of the tasks.

### **How do I know my answers will be kept confidential?**

Under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543), which authorized the National Center for Education Statistics to conduct this study, any information you provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect all information provided by respondents. As soon as the survey is completed, all personal information that links data to respondents is removed.

### **How will I recognize the field representative?**

The field representative who contacts you will be carrying a study photo identification issued by the National Center for Education Statistics.

### **What if I have more questions?**

The field representative who visits your facility will be able to answer questions you may have about this study. You may also contact the \_\_\_\_\_ at your facility.

Thank you in advance for participating in this important study.