

ATTACHMENT A: FOCUS GROUP RECRUITER’S GUIDE

**IRS W&I Adjustments Customer Satisfaction Survey Focus Group OMB #: 1545-1349
Screener Guide**

- *Two 60 minute focus group sessions total. Recruit 10 for 8 to show for total number of sessions.*

Use survey participants that have indicated that they are interested in participating in additional IRS-related research by providing their phone numbers and/or email addresses at the end of the Adjustments survey. We would like a mix of:

- *Survey participants who answered Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied to any of the following Adjustments Customer Satisfaction Survey questions (this information will be pulled from survey responses).*
 - a. Ease of getting more information about issue (Q7A)
 - b. Extent that IRS keeps taxpayer informed about case status (Q8D)
 - c. Explanation regarding resolution of issue (Q8E)

Hello, my name is _____. I’m a researcher working with the IRS and we are conducting focus groups to receive feedback on how to help improve their customer service. You had some correspondence with the IRS regarding your tax return or amended return, and we received your contact information from the survey that you had completed earlier this year. Your identity will not be shared with the IRS or other agencies. We would like to ask you a couple of questions to see if you qualify for this study. Your participation is voluntary, but your help on this project would be very much appreciated.

We are holding two 60 minute focus groups over the phone on [Dates TBD] with people who had completed the survey and we wanted to see if you would be able to help by providing your feedback on your experience, your compensation would be \$75.

Note to recruiter: If respondent asks where we got their contact info from tell them: “At the end of the Adjustments survey, you were given the option to provide your contact information if you were interested in participating in future research.”

1. Are you interested in participating in this study?

- 1 Yes (continue)
- 2 No (Thank and Terminate)

2. Do you recall having contact with the IRS regarding your tax return or an amended return?

- 1 Yes (continue)
 - 2 No (Thank and Terminate)
3. Do you feel that you can recall this experience well enough to answer some detailed questions about the process?
- 1 Yes (continue)
 - 2 No (Thank and Terminate)
4. Do you have a cell phone or landline to call in to the focus group?
- 1 Yes (continue)
 - 2 No (Thank and Terminate)

If respondent qualifies for the study:

This study will take about 60 minutes to complete and we will give you a \$75.00 check for your time. We would like to go ahead and schedule an interview time for you. [Provide Options].

Would you please provide us with your phone number and email address so that we can send you a reminder and instruction?

[EMAIL]
[Phone Number]

I would like to confirm your address as well in order to send your compensation.

[Confirm Address]

The Paperwork Reduction Act required that IRS provide an OMB Control Number on all approved public information requests. That number is OMB 1545-1349. Also, if you like, I can give you a name and address where you can send comments and questions regarding this process or suggestions for making it simpler.

[Provide the following information only if respondent asks for address:]

Internal Revenue Service
Tax Products Coordinating Committee, Room #IR-6406
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20224

Thank you and have a nice day. We look forward to speaking with you on (DATE) at (TIME)

NOTE: If they ask, we will be mailing a check to them after they complete their session. Checks will be mailed out the day following the focus group.

ATTACHMENT B: FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR'S GUIDE*IRS W&I Adjustments Customer Satisfaction Survey Focus Group*

Section 1: Introduction

Moderator's Guide

Welcome and Topic Introduction *5 Minutes*

Hello, I'm <MODERATOR>, and I am a researcher with Fors Marsh Group. We receive feedback from people, like yourselves that helps to make products and organizations better.

We've asked you here today to discuss the IRS's Adjustments process.

I want to let you know that I'm not an expert on the topics we will be discussing. I am not employed by the IRS, so please do not feel like you have to hold back on your thoughts to be polite to me. I'm interested in both your positive and negative reactions to the process. My job as a moderator is to:

- Help guide the flow of conversation
- Ensure that questions about various aspects of the topic are covered

There are a few things I'd like to go over to help make our discussion more productive:

- I have a discussion guide in front of me that includes all the points of discussion I need to raise, and helps me keep the discussion on track. It is important that we cover all the topics. Therefore, I may have to break off the conversation in order to move on to another area in the guide.
- We are audio recording this session for use in preparing a report with our findings. Because we are recording this meeting, I ask that you speak loudly and clearly.
- Please speak one at a time and try not to engage in any side conversations during the discussion. I want to hear what everyone has to say - either today or when I go back to listen to the audio files to write up the report.
- I want to hear from everyone, but not every person has to answer every question.
- I want to hear a range of experiences, so if you have an opinion different from what most in the group are saying, please don't hesitate to speak up - there are no right or wrong answers.

We have a few more things to cover before we get started:

- Your contributions to our discussion will be private to the extent allowed by law, and your names will not appear in the summary report. Likewise, we will not share any of our discussion from today with others who are not actively working on this project.
- Some people from my team as well as the IRS may be viewing remotely. They want to hear what you have to say about the topics we'll discuss, so please do not feel constrained by their presence.
- Your participation is voluntary. Therefore, at any point in time you may leave the meeting room. And you can choose not to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

Are there any questions about anything I've said so far?

[Allow participants to introduce themselves. Ask first name and where they live.]

Section 2: Questions and Discussion

1. Opening questions *5 Minutes*

- a. Let's start by going around the room and saying a little bit about what prompted you to file an amended return.
- b. What was your experience like with the adjustments process?

2. Ease of getting more information about issue (Q7A) *15 Minutes*

- a. We'd like to know more about how you went about finding more information about your issue before you filed. If you needed more information about your issue, can you walk me through the steps you took to find it?
 - i. *Possible probes:* Did you search online? Email the IRS? Call the Toll-Free line? Visit an IRS office in-person? Use some other method to contact the IRS?
 - ii. Can you describe your experience with this?
- b. What did you think about the ease of getting additional information?
 - i. Was there anything that made the process difficult to get additional information?

- ii. [IF YES] What made it difficult?
- c. What would have made it easier to get more information about your issue?
- d. Did any of you access the Amended Tax Return FAQ?
 - i. [IF YES] Was it helpful?
 - ii. [IF YES] Is there anything you would add?
- e. How well did the survey questions capture your experience about the ease of getting more information about your issue?

3. Extent that IRS keeps taxpayer informed about case status (Q8D)
15 Minutes

- a. Think back to when you filed your amended return and were waiting for it to be resolved.
 - i. Did you check your case status?
 - ii. [If YES] How did you check your case status?
 - iii. [If YES] What did you think about the efficiency of getting information from the IRS about your case status?
 - iv. Do you feel like the IRS kept you adequately informed?
 - v. [IF NO] How could the IRS have kept you better informed?
- b. Did anyone use the IRS's "Where's My Amended Return" tool during the process to check the status of their return?
 - i. What did you think about this tool?
 - ii. Was this tool helpful?
 - iii. If you didn't know about this tool, what would be the best way to get people that information?
- c. How well did the survey questions capture your experience about the extent of keeping you informed about your case status?

4. Explanation regarding resolution of issue (Q8E) *15 Minutes*

- a. What do you think about the explanation that you received about the resolution of your issue?
 - i. Was there anything in the resolution that was unclear?
 - ii. [IF YES] What about the resolution was not explained clearly?
 - iii. Did anyone disagree with the resolution?
 - iv. [IF YES] Did disagreeing with the resolution affect if you thought it was clear?
- b. How well did the survey questions capture your experience about the explanation you received regarding the resolution of your issue?

Section 3: Debriefing Questions

Closing question *5 Minutes*

1. Were there any other aspects about your experience with the adjustments process that were not discussed in this focus group?

Thank you for participating. This has been very informative and helpful.